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What's the Cost?: A Phenomenological Study of Black Male Teachers' Persistence

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ABSTRACT

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Black male teachers comprise 2% of the teacher population in the United States. In light of this disparity, there is a need to diversify the teacher workforce by recruiting and retaining Black male teachers. Black teachers are influential in students' academic performance and personal growth. Without their presence, we are missing a key demographic and a key part of a student's educational experience. While Black male teachers' experiences have been studied, we are less clear on the motivational processes behind their decision to teach. Therefore, this qualitative study takes a phenomenological approach to understand the lived experiences of Black male teachers' and the factors that have impacted their persistence in teaching. The study is grounded in Situated Expectancy-Value theory, which is ideal for understanding an individual's reasons for engaging and persisting in a career path. However, there has also been a call to reimage traditional theories to center race to better support racially-minoritized groups. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 Black male teachers who have persisted in the field for at least 3 years. Through Hycner's (1999) data explication process, five major themes were revealed: (1) Cultural Connection and Relationships, (2) Navigating Marginality, (3) Organizational and Affective Challenges, (4) Supports, and (5) Value and Expectancies. The Black male teachers reported persisting in the field mainly for communal reasons despite racialized challenges (i.e., stereotypes and assumptions) and systemic issues in the schools.

Findings have implications for teacher preparation programs, retention, and recruitment efforts, as well as expanding theory and future research with Situated Expectancy-Value theory.

Dedicated to my son, Greyson. You're the best thing that's ever happened to me.

And to my late grandmother, Alice, who knew I would be something special, thank you for speaking life over me.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There has been a pervasive shortage of elementary and secondary Black teachers, comprising a mere 7% of the 3.3 million teachers in the United States overall (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). As Black teachers represent such a small proportion of the population of teachers, elementary and secondary students can complete their entire compulsory education without having a single teacher of color. Prior to legal desegregation in 1954, Black teachers constituted 35-50% of the teacher workforce in segregated states. (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). Laws were enacted to desegregate the student body; however, they did not protect the jobs of Black teachers. Following Brown v. Board, 38,000 Black teachers lost their jobs due to several new orders, practices, and policies (Tillman, 2004). With the drastic decline in the number of Black teachers in the United States, Hispanic teachers have surpassed Black teachers as the second largest racial group of public-school teachers. There is also a drastic difference in the gender demographics of teachers and students. Data shows that nearly 75% of all teachers are women and only 2% are Black males (Hanford, 2017; Schaeffer, 2021). Consequently, the education system in the United States has been and continues to be predominantly led by White women, while the student body becomes increasingly racially and ethnically diverse (Hart, 2020). In the 2017-2018 school year, 80% of public-school teachers identified as non-Hispanic White, as compared to the 52% of students who identified as Hispanic, Black, Asian, or multi-racial (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). While there has been a slight increase in teachers of color over recent years, the diversity of the student population continues to surpass that growth.

Teachers are vital to students' learning experiences in a multitude of ways. Research has noted the influence of teacher expectations and instruction on students' emotional and academic

outcomes (Bol & Berry, 2005; Griffin & Tackie, 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2009), particularly for Black students who, on average, perform lower on standardized achievement tests compared to other racial groups (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Research has linked the cultural insights and culturally appropriate pedagogical approaches of Black teachers to improved outcomes for not only Black students, but all students, highlighting the significance of an equitable and just approach to education (Acosta, 2018; Ingersoll et al., 2019). It is apparent that there is a growing need for the racial and ethnic diversity of the teaching workforce to match that of its' students. Further, the demographic mismatch between the student and teacher population raises questions of how to recruit and retain a more diverse teacher workforce. In this study, I will explore in-service Black male teachers' lived experiences and the contextual factors that may influence Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field. The aim of this study will be to provide insights into how we can recruit and retain more diverse P-12 teachers into the teaching workforce.

Impact of a Diverse Teacher Population

Research highlights several benefits of increasing the racial and gender diversity of the teaching workforce, specifically increasing the number of Black teachers. This includes the importance of Black teachers as role models, their ability to relate to students, and their motivation to work with disadvantaged students (Ingersoll et al., 2019). Black teachers believe they impact Black students differently than their White counterparts by relating to their out of school experiences and are positive role models (Griffin & Tackie, 2017). Many teachers in the study also believed this impacted the quality of instruction. While the race of a teacher may not be directly related to student achievement, research supports the need for diverse teacher representation and presence, as well as students having teachers who look like them. This sentiment was echoed in an interview study with African American male teachers where a

participant stated "... There has to be exposure. They have to see in elementary school I've got an African American male teacher and he's a fantastic teacher (Wallace & Gagen, 2020, p. 425)." Another teacher from Wallace and colleagues (2022) mentioned the impact his presence has in the classroom, "a lot of the students need a Black male figure in their life because they don't have it at home" (p. 11).

The presence of a Black educator can positively influence the performance of racially-minoritized students in low-performing schools (DeRuy, 2014; Edelman, 2015; Ingersoll et al., 2019; Richman, 2018) as well as with non-minoritized students (DeRuy, 2014; Ingersoll et al., 2019; Richman, 2018). Conversely, a predominately White teacher workforce can have an adverse impact on racially-minoritized students. White teachers who do not share the same demographic traits as their students often hold lower expectations for them and tend to exhibit biases toward these students (Bol & Berry, 2005; Grissom & Redding, 2016). While observing K-12 classrooms, Kunjuju (1995) found that White teachers failed to stimulate eagerness for learning with Black male students. A participant from a study by Griffin and Tackie (2017) stated, "Where I'm at, sometimes there are Caucasian teachers that don't even have patience with the kids. Or the kids will do one thing wrong, and they're ready to nail them to the cross (p. 38)." Whereas, Black teachers often do not focus on student challenges, but instead focus on their success (Griffin & Tackie, 2017). It is essential to realize the importance of this, as it transforms the pedagogical approach from deficits-based to strengths-based, which is essential for the academic success of racially-minoritized students.

Black teachers can relate to students of color who experience discrimination, racial profiling, and stereotyping. Their capacity to relate, which may be related to the likelihood of sharing similar past experiences and cultural backgrounds with their students, has been shown to

provide academic, cultural, and self-image benefits for these students (Griffin & Tackie, 2017; Henfield, 2011; Noel, 2018). This is supported in a study by Wallace and colleagues (2022) where a participant stated, “I show them one time that I can relate to what their situation is. That I understand where they are coming from and even that I have been there before” (p. 10). Lastly, Black teachers are likely to be intrinsically motivated to teach students of color and help them academically and personally (Ingersoll et al., 2019). They often believe that they have a responsibility to go beyond their academic responsibilities, due to the lack of representation of Black teachers. At the same time, some participants noted that they shouldn’t be expected to have a strong connection with every Black student, as every White teacher is not expected to be the same with their students (Griffin & Tackie, 2017). This can be a burden on Black teachers and feel they are also the “representative for all children” (p. 38).

Black Teacher Turnover

While research has demonstrated the benefits of students having Black teachers, there are several barriers to Black teachers having a presence in schools. Black teachers are disproportionately placed in high-poverty, urban schools where the working conditions are less favorable, and resources are in short supply. This is often coupled with a lack of administrative and collegial support (Ingersoll et al., 2017; Wallace et al., 2022). While Black teachers’ placement in urban, low-income public-school districts may contribute to diversifying the teacher workforce, there remains a question of how to successfully retain Black teachers once they enter the teaching profession.

Twenty to 30 percent of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years, and this is even higher for those who serve urban, low-income communities (Sorenson & Ladd, 2020). Moreover, racially-minoritized teachers have consistently had higher turnover rates than teachers from non-minority groups. This gap has widened in the past decade with rates growing

from 18% to 25% higher turnover for racially-minoritized teachers, compared to nonracially-minoritized teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2017). Ingersoll and colleagues (2017) also found that gender is a factor in turnover rates, but only for minority teachers. Male minority teacher turnover was over 50% higher than for female minority teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2017).

To discover the underlying reasons for the growing turnover rates of teachers of color, researchers have examined potential reasons and contemporary issues that impact the Black teacher shortage, which has most often focused on Black male teachers. Studies have found that the shortage of Black teachers is often related to institutional pipeline issues, such as Black men being less likely to graduate college and less likely to major in education (Sandles, 2020). This is reflected in the drastic difference in racial groups majoring in education; 73% of education majors are White and only 12% of education majors are Black (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Further, Black men who major in education may not become teachers due to barriers with teacher licensure and preparation programs. Participation and performance in a quality teacher education program are two of the most salient factors related to male teacher retention (Bastian & Marks, 2017). In a qualitative study, only three of the 11 African American male teachers passed all required examinations on their first attempt (Wallace & Gagen, 2020).

Ingersoll and colleagues (2017) also highlight systemic issues, such as racially-minoritized students' lower performance in their compulsory education that may result in lower higher education attainment. This extends to lower pass rates by racially-minoritized teacher candidates on teacher entry tests that further increases the Black teacher shortage (Nettles et al., 2011). Some researchers suggest that standardized tests may be culturally biased and certification exams have shown varied predictive validity for different groups of candidates (Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010). Other barriers that may contribute to lower pass rates for racially-minoritized teacher candidates include, negative (racial) interactions with test proctors and

administrators, and a lack of peers or examples who have passed the teacher exams (Petchauer 2012; 2014). Further, the current practice to hire teacher candidates based on the highest scores, regardless of race, perpetuates the White majority in the teaching field (Milner & Howard, 2013).

For the Black men who do become teachers, there are a variety of reasons that they leave the profession, leading to higher turnover rates for Black male teachers. For example, Black men may become overwhelmed with the responsibility of being a role model for their students, even feeling that they hold a primary responsibility for Black students' success (Bristol, 2015), causing them to leave the profession (Sandles, 2020). Brooms (2017) cited this responsibility as *otherfathering*, where Black male teachers and personnel are predominately involved in the caregiving for Black students. For some prospective Black male teachers, the idea of *otherfathering* is overwhelming and leads them to consider alternative career paths.

In their meta-analysis of racially-minoritized teachers, defined as those who identify as Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific/Islander or Asian, Native American/Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latin, and those of multiple races, Ingersoll and colleagues (2019) found some of the most common reasons for leaving the teaching field pertained to dissatisfaction with their career and administration, student discipline problems, lack of autonomy and influence, and poor workplace conditions. Similarly, a study by Wallace and colleagues (2022) revealed that significant problems in teaching relate to poor working conditions for Black males. These poor working conditions included issues with stereotyping, strained collegial relationships, and additional responsibilities such as being pigeon-holed as a disciplinarian. Black male teachers expressed how others impose stereotypes such as being violent or unintelligent and they have to protect their professional stature due to these assumptions (Wallace et al., 2022).

Black male teachers across studies have also attributed some of the challenges they experience to the limited number of Black males in the public schools. A Black male from a focus group study stated, “There are a lot of challenges, and there will be a lot of challenges because we are a minority of people who teach in the teaching profession. There are not a lot of us (Griffin & Tackie, 2017, p. 39).” In a school environment where they are the only Black male, a participant stated, “I would say a challenge that I have faced before is the support and understanding of being a Black male.” The voices of Black male teachers need to be amplified to increase the success of efforts to recruit and retain Black male teachers in public schools.

RESEARCH PURPOSE

While there has been research on the reasons why Black teachers have left the field of education, it is also essential to examine why Black teachers have remained in the field. For example, researchers have noted that despite the barriers many racially-minorized teachers face, they still chose to enter and persist in the teaching field (Bergey et al., 2019; Wallace et al., 2022). The experiences of in-service Black male teachers who have persisted in the teaching field, as opposed to pre-service teachers who have yet to experience the profession, can inform how to better recruit and retain a diverse teacher workforce in the long-term. Examining Black male teachers’ persistence also pushes against a deficit perspective that holds historically oppressed populations, such as Black teachers, as solely responsible for challenges and inequities they face (Davis & Museus, 2019). This study centers Black male teachers’ voices to challenge deficit thinking, repair misconceptions, and oppose literature that may blame the victim (e.g., oppressed populations) for the lack of diverse teachers. The study will explore Black male teachers’ experience in the teaching profession, their perceived values for engaging in teaching, what barriers, or costs, they may experience, and reasons for persisting despite costs.

Understanding why Black males choose to persist in the teaching field, as well as reasons for entering the field can inform efforts to retain Black male teachers.

While this study will center Black male teachers' voices, it will also be framed within Situated Expectancy-Value theory, which is a prominent motivation theory that is well suited for explaining and understanding teachers' career persistence (Bergey, 2021; Watt & Richardson, 2007). Specifically, this theory focuses on the many factors that influence the development of individuals' expectations for success and values for a particular task (e.g., persistence in the teaching profession). According to Situated Expectancy-Value theory, expectancy beliefs and perceived values are influenced by various cultural, societal, and social factors such as gender role systems, family demographics, and sociocultural beliefs. Although this theory is often used to understand students' motivations, it has also been applied to research on career motivations and decisions (Bergey, 2021; Watt & Richardson, 2007).

The aim of this phenomenological, qualitative study is to amplify the lived experiences of Black male teachers as they persist in the field and understand the contextual factors that impact Black male teachers' motivations (e.g., expectancy beliefs and task values) to persist in the teaching field, using a Situated Expectancy-Value theory lens.

Research Questions

In this qualitative study, the following research questions will be explored:

1. What is the experience of being a Black male teacher who persists for three years or more?
2. What are the contextual factors that support Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field, considering perceived costs and values?

The first research question explores what the participants experienced in the phenomenon as a Black male teacher who has persisted for a least three years. The second research question

explores whether there are specific factors or sociocultural influences that impact Black male teachers' experience persisting in the teaching field. This includes, but is not limited to, race and gender identity, family, and family circumstances. The second research question will also highlight experiences that influenced the participants' choices to enter the profession. The data may inform what, if any, costs are salient to their experience and highlight values that offset the costs of teaching, allowing them to persist in the field.

Rationale and Significance

While there is a body of research focused on Black male teachers, it is important to expand the literature and focus on their unique racial, gender, and ethnic identities as a teaching professional. The intersection of ethnicity, race, and gender, in addition to the diversity of context can impact certain motivational processes (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). These should be explored given that male teachers of color have diverse and unique racial, cultural, and gendered experiences that interact with their membership to a particular group (Woodson & Bristol, 2020). By highlighting the intersection of race and gender in the context of Black male teachers' motivation to persist, the current study is an avenue to encourage and inform the recruitment and retainment of Black male P-12 teachers.

While current literature often explores teacher persistence, few studies have centered solely on Black male in-service teachers, particularly using a Situated Expectancy-Value theory lens. This lens allows for a focus on the precedence of the situation's influence on motivation. The anticipated findings will highlight a traditional educational psychology theory, Situated Expectancy-Value, through a culturally inclusive lens, while also pushing against the deficit perspective associated with racially-minoritized groups. The study will advance theory and impact future research by providing a better understanding of how Black males may experience these beliefs (e.g., perceived cost, utility value, etc.) and how the beliefs influence their career

choices. The meaning and or salience of being a Black male teacher may depend on the school context, family history, or a myriad of other contextual factors that should be considered and centered in the research. Further, study findings may inform retention and recruitment efforts of Black male teachers. School officials must prioritize how to retain teachers of color which will require an understanding of the teachers' needs, experiences, and perspectives.

RESEARCH PURPOSE SUMMARY

This phenomenological study addressed two research aims. The first aim is to explore what the participants experienced as Black male in-service teachers who has persisted in the teaching profession for at least three years. The second aim explores whether there are specific factors or sociocultural influences that impact Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field. Next, in Chapter Two, I will provide additional context for the study including an overview of the theoretical framework, relevant research pertaining to Situated Expectancy-Value theory, racially-minoritized teachers' persistence, perceived costs and values, and Black male teachers' experiences. Chapter Three details the study's design and methodology for phenomenology. This includes the demographics of the prospective participants, recruitment process, data collection process, and data analysis plan.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents relevant literature that focuses on Situated Expectancy-Value theory, reimaging Situated Expectancy-Value theory, racially-minoritized teacher experiences, and the perceived costs and values of teaching. It also includes an exploration of cost and values as they relate to Black male teachers' experiences in teaching. I conclude this chapter with gaps in the literature that lend to the significance of this research such as limited studies on this topic and providing a contribution to theory.

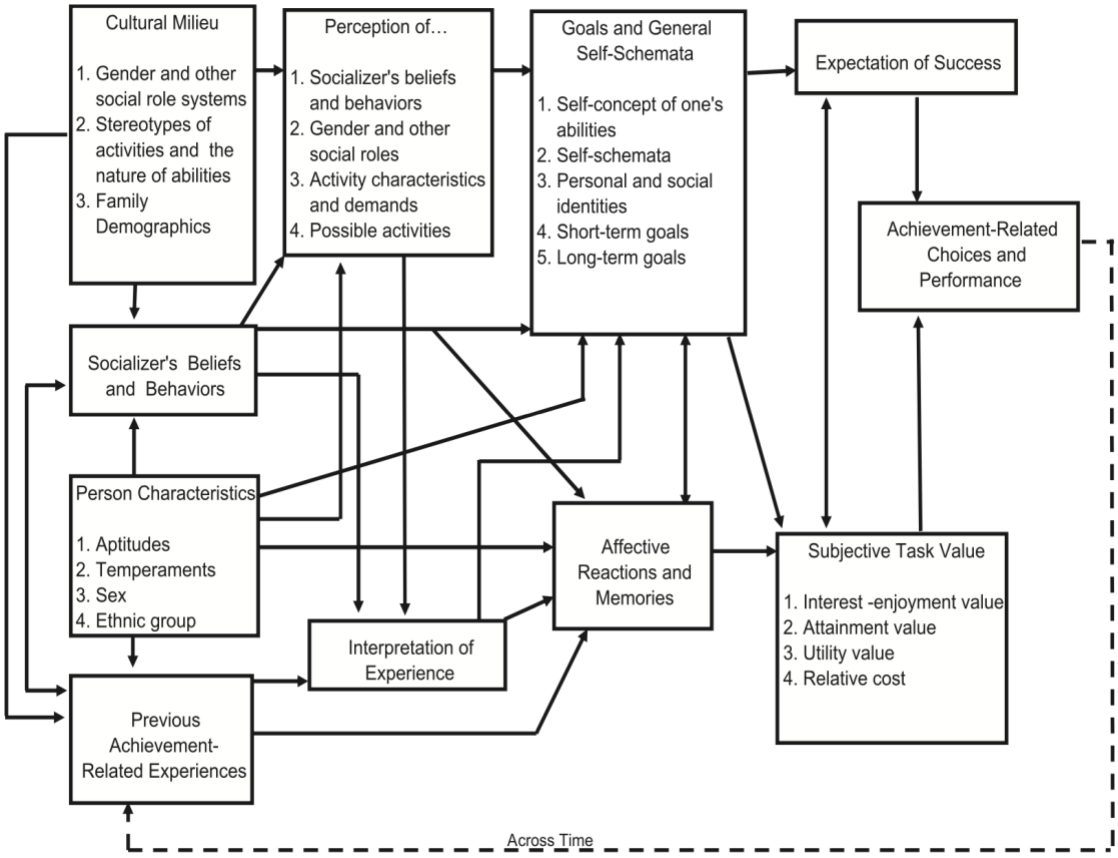
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Situated Expectancy-Value Theory

Situated Expectancy-Value theory (see Figure 1) proposes that an individual's expectancies for success and subjective task values are the main determinants of their activity choice and engagement (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Importantly, the term "situated" was recently added to emphasize the "situative" nature of an individual's motivation and decision making (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020, p. 10). That is, an individual's choices are "situationally specific and culturally bound" (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020, p. 2). This situated nature highlights the origin of a person's expectancies and values in relation to various cultural and social influences. The theory highlights factors that shape expectancy beliefs and values such as cultural stereotypes about gender roles and activities and socializer's beliefs such as the beliefs of family, community members, and peers. These factors are particularly vital to this study as Black male teachers' experiences and motivations may be influenced by their race, gender, or societal contexts.

Figure 1

Eccles Expectancy value model of achievement choices.



Note. This figure was created by Eccles and Wigfield as a broad theoretical framework to guide research on an individuals' motivation and achievement-related choices. From "From expectancy-value theory to situated expectancy-value theory: A developmental, social cognitive, and sociocultural perspective on motivation," by Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A., 2020, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *61*, p. 2. Reprinted with permission.

Expectancies for success, an individual's belief about how they will perform on a given task, is related to persistence and achievement (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). If someone believes they will be successful on a task, they are more likely to persist. For example, if a Black male teacher believes he is skilled and proficient in his position, he may be more likely to persist as a teacher. Subjective task values, or one's reasons for engaging in a task, are also related to persistence on a task, such that individuals are more likely to persist in tasks they perceive to be valuable. Subjective values are divided into three subcomponents: (1) intrinsic or interest value (i.e., enjoyment when engaging in a task); (2) utility value (i.e., usefulness of the task to their present or future goals); and (3) attainment value (i.e., identity-based importance of performing or engaging in the task; Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). The values one perceives for a task are highly related to their identity (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). For example, if a Black male has a strong traditional gender-role identity, he may not perceive teaching as having attainment value if the teaching profession is viewed as a female role and therefore in conflict with his gender-role beliefs (Graham & Erwin, 2011). Black males may also feel like men are not cut out for teaching young children due to gender role stereotypes and public ideas that men are pedophiles or have inappropriate relations with students (Skeleton, 2010). These examples highlight how expectancies for success and subjective task values are influenced by various factors, such as cultural and social norms. The socio-cultural context or cultural milieu can include cultural or gender stereotypes about the activity, family demographics, social perceptions (i.e., family or peer socializers), and self-perceptions. As culture permeates the entire model, these influences become an anchor for what an individual sees as a viable career path (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

The overall value of a task is also determined by individuals' perceived drawbacks of engaging in a task, or their perceived costs. Cost perceptions, although less researched than

subjective values, have been negatively associated with persistence in a college major, which is connected to one's career trajectory (e.g., Perez et al., 2014). Eccles and colleagues (1993) noted that every task has costs that, if too costly, will cause the individual to avoid the task. Similar to subjective values, perceived costs can be divided into several subcomponents, including: (1) effort cost (i.e., amount of effort needed to engage in a task and whether the effort is worth it); (2) opportunity cost (i.e., perception that other valued tasks must be sacrificed in order to engage in the task); and (3) psychological or emotional cost (i.e., stress, anxiety, or social costs; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). In the context of teaching, if a teacher finds that the demands of teaching (i.e., costs) are too high relative to the perceived benefits (i.e., values) of teaching, they may choose to leave the field. Perceived costs could be particularly salient for Black teachers who are often placed in demanding teaching environments that lack the support they need to succeed in a challenging teaching environment. Furthermore, Black teachers may face unique barriers that may increase perceived costs.

Reimaging Situated Expectancy-Value Theory

There is limited educational psychology literature that examines the role of race in motivation theories, such as Situated Expectancy-Value theory. In fact, DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz (2014) only found two articles that address Expectancy-Value Theory from a race-focused lens. DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz further discuss the need for race-focused constructs and race-reimaged approaches that center race and go beyond simply comparing racial groups. Race-focused constructs are grounded in cultural theories and racial literature; however, such constructs are not particularly prevalent. Race-reimaged approaches take a traditional construct and conceptualize it through a sociocultural or racialized lens to highlight how race and culture influences its meaning (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014).

In this study, I applied sociocultural perspectives to reimage Situated Expectancy-Value theory and center it on what a specific racial group perceives as the costs and values of teaching and the factors that shape those perceptions. It is important to highlight the intersectionality (i.e., male and Black) of these teachers and how they may experience disadvantages based on their membership in multiple groups (Cole, 2009). The intersection of these groups may also shape their unique experiences and meaning systems. Cole (2009) suggests that while exploring the intersection of groups may reveal similarities, there may also be significant differences. Therefore, in alignment with DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz (2014), as well as Cole (2009), this study will examine how Black male teachers' racial identity impacts their experience and persistence in teaching. Values and perceived costs will be re-imaged from Situated Expectancy-Value theory by exploring how Black male teachers experience these constructs within their cultural and educational context. This framing moves away from *person-centered research* to *person in-context*. Further, the study contributes to the broader theory as it will address identity, intersectionality, cultural meaning systems, and how these factors shape expectancies and values for teaching.

Perceived Cost and Values Associated with Teaching

Teachers' motivations and decisions to enter the field have been a focus for teacher preparation programs, developing policies, improving retention, and improving the quality of teaching. Many enter the field for altruistic or intrinsic reasons, such as wanting to help students or having a passion for teaching (Jungert et al., 2014; Massari, 2014). When exploring research using the FIT-Choice (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) Model, a model developed to understand teachers' motivations to teach based on Expectancy-Value theory, common reasons pre-service teachers gave for choosing the teaching profession aligned with task values including social utility value, intrinsic value of teaching, personal utility value, perceived teaching ability,

and prior teaching experiences (Bergey & Ranellucci, 2021; Fray & Gore, 2018). Scott & Rodriguez (2015) found that prior negative educational experiences such as stereotyping and racial microaggressions may impact decisions to teach. Therefore, Black pre-service teachers may aspire to continue in the field to change the experiences of racism for their students of color.

Bergey and colleagues (2019) explored Latino/Latinx pre-service teachers' perceptions of cost and barriers within teaching. Prior to Bergey and colleagues (2019), research had not explored the role of cost perceptions in teachers' planned persistence directly with racially/ethnically diverse teachers. In their study, they found that the demands of teaching, as well as the challenging work conditions, were significant costs to a career in teaching. The demands included meeting the needs of diverse students while challenges involved issues of underrepresentation and unsupportive administration and colleagues. In terms of drawbacks, participants specifically mentioned the lack of male teachers and the stigma that men of color face when entering or choosing the teaching profession. A study participant specifically stated, "So when you are both a man and a man of color, you have generational obstacles that you must overcome to become successful." This aligns with findings from Wallace and colleagues (2022), where Black men raised legitimate concerns about a lack of support from administration and the strain of being "the only African American male teacher" (p. 13). However, Bergey and colleagues (2019) noted that these perceived costs do not deter participants from their planned persistence. This finding highlights how racially-minoritized teachers may experience these barriers differently than the Situated Expectancy-Value theory suggests or that the benefits of teaching may outweigh the costs. This lends to the need for further exploration in this area and raises questions about whether Situated Expectancy-Value theory can fully capture the unique stigmas and barriers racially-minoritized teachers face in relation to their persistence and choices in the teaching profession.

In a quantitative profile analysis, Bergey and Ranellucci (2021) examined motivation profiles across Black, Asian American, Latinx, multi-racial, and White pre-service teachers. Their research revealed four distinct profiles: high values, low costs; high values, moderate-to-high costs; moderate values, low costs; and moderate values, moderate-to-high costs. These profiles highlighted how pre-service teachers viewed the costs of teaching differently and how cost perceptions combined with values. Roughly 60% of the participants demonstrated patterns of cost and value perceptions that do not align with persistence in the field of teaching. Perceived costs of teaching varied across profiles in terms of how salient costs were and in their relations to ability beliefs, values, and perceptions of the profession. For example, profile 1 had high value perceptions and low costs, while profile 4 showed moderate values and moderate-to-high costs. Asian Americans were underrepresented in profiles 1 and 2, while overrepresented in profile 4, meaning they were more likely to be in groups with moderate-to-high costs. Black and Hispanic teachers were randomly distributed across profiles. This suggests that although teaching has been noted as a demanding field, particularly for teachers of color, not all teachers perceive these demands or costs in the same way.

Most of the research described applies quantitative or mixed-method approaches and centers on racially-minoritized pre-service teachers; however, a significant gap in the literature remains for a qualitative exploration of this phenomena using Situated Expectancy-Value theory. Qualitative methods allow for a deeper understanding of how Black teachers' experience costs and how their motivation beliefs impact their persistence as teachers, as well as set the stage for race-reimaging of Situated Expectancy-Value theory. Further, studies described above only explore pre-service teachers' experiences who have yet to enter and experience the teaching field first-hand. The current study centers Black male in-service teachers to reveal the true lived experiences and voices of a historically marginalized population. This is important since

literature that centers on Black male teachers' stories are scarce and has not been explored using Situated-Expectancy Value theory.

This study extends prior literature by exploring how Black male teachers experience the costs of teaching, the reasons they persist despite costs, and how researchers can center Black voices to race-reimage constructs within Situated Expectancy-Value theory and shed a deficit lens. The study may also add to the literature above by extending the research with in-service Black male teachers and providing an avenue for future studies in this area. The stories from the participants may give us insight into how to support them in their work environment and help them build fulfilling, long-term careers.

Factors Impacting Black Teachers' Experiences

External factors such as work environment or conditions can impact a teachers' experience (Ingersoll et al., 2019). Too often Black teachers report feeling undervalued, pigeonholed, and stifled as a professional (Griffin & Tackie, 2017; Wallace et al., 2022). Scott and Rodriguez (2015) conducted in-depth interviews with three African American pre-service teachers to examine factors impacting their motivations to teach. The study revealed three major themes pertaining to factors impacting their educational career: (1) stereotype threat in the air (i.e., being stereotyped by social images and portrayed only as athletes); (2) coping and grappling (i.e., doing things outside of their morals and values); and (3) role models (i.e., individuals that had an impact on their career aspirations). Research has also highlighted that Black male in-service teachers have racialized experiences that include feeling isolated from colleagues, experiencing direct acts of racism, indirect acts of racism (i.e., microaggressions and colloquialisms), and being the subject of stereotyping in their institutions (Bristol & Goings, 2018; Kelly, 2007; Wallace et al., 2022). The pressure for Black teachers to represent their race may be particularly high in predominantly White institutions (Bristol & Goings, 2018).

Further, Black teachers have described the stress associated with dispelling negative stereotypes and issues of being questioned about their knowledge, role, or capabilities as a teacher (Bristol & Goings, 2018; Cormier et al., 2022; Kelly, 2007; Wallace et al., 2022). Interviews from Kelly (2007) revealed that although Black teachers can feel singled out in predominantly White institutions, they feel a responsibility to fight this racism through personal contact and raising consciousness with their White colleagues. Specifically for Black male teachers, they have reported that they perceive that their colleagues often fear them because of their race, and they have to protect their professional identity (Bristol, 2018; Wallace et al., 2022). Black male pre-service teachers also expressed concentrated types of stereotype threat that can disrupt their aspirations to be a teacher (Scott & Rodriguez, 2015). This not only raises the concern of stereotypical racism within P-12 schools, but also the concern of persistence and sustainability of Black male teachers in an uncomfortable and unwelcoming environment. These concerns, coupled with other challenges with their colleagues, influence their intention to leave the field. However, having a greater number of Black male teachers in the school led to increased intentions to persist and lower perceptions of a racially challenged work environment, further necessitating the need for strong Black male presence in the schools (Bristol, 2018).

Accounts from these studies speak to the extent to which Black teachers must actively manage stress and oppressive structures in their work environments. These experiences may be conceptualized as cost (i.e., what is lost in order to engage in the task) to Black male teachers and impact their persistence (positively or negatively). Research has demonstrated that cost aligns with intentions to persist and choice for pre-service Latinx teachers (Bergey et al., 2019). The literature presented emphasizes the need to understand Black male teachers' cost perceptions while in the field of teaching and navigating a challenging work environment. By capturing these costs, we can get a better understanding of Black male teachers' choice to enter and remain in the

field and inform retention efforts. Further, this literature lends to the need to understand how to support Black male teachers through these socioemotional challenges to impact policy and teacher preparation programs.

Gaps in the Literature

The reviewed literature points to several gaps in research pertaining to in-service racially-minoritized teachers. First, research has mostly centered on the experience of pre-service teachers as an avenue to improve recruitment and retention efforts (Scott & Rodriguez, 2015; Bergey et al., 2019; Bergey & Ranellucci, 2021). As outlined above, there is limited research that examines racially diverse in-service teachers' career motivations, particularly for Black teachers. More specifically, prior literature has focused on pre-service teachers or students, Hispanic/Latinx, White, and Asian racial/ethnic groups (Bergey, 2021; Bergey et al., 2019; Bergey & Ranellucci, 2021; Graham & Erwin, 2011). These studies have noted various racial experiences such as stereotypes and challenging work environments; however, there is a need to explore Black male teachers' perceptions of teaching and their conceptualization of costs and values attached to persisting in the profession. That is, no studies have examined the Black male teacher experience through a Situated Expectancy-Value theory lens (Bristol & Goings, 2018; Griffin & Tackie, 2017; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015).

Secondly, in-service teachers are facing barriers and costs in their institutions that, when explored, could better inform how to support them, and improve their retention. As previously mentioned, cost has been shown to be a predictor of intentions and choice (Bergey et al., 2019; Perez et al., 2014), yet limited studies have explored cost perceptions of Black male teachers. Studies are needed that address Black male teachers' cost perceptions as an avenue to inform retention and recruitment efforts on how this population experiences teaching and make their choice to remain in the field. This cannot be thoroughly explored through pre-service teachers,

the voices of those who have yet to enter the profession. Further, Black male teachers who have persisted in the field beyond 3 years could highlight motivations that brought them to and kept them in the profession. Black male teachers' lived experiences in the profession may also shed light on the current climate in P-12 educational settings.

The current study 'reimages' a traditional theoretical framework, Situated Expectancy-Value theory, that has not been used to examine Black male teachers' experiences. The exploration of how Situated Expectancy-Value theory is conceptualized by Black teachers can add to the role of race and gender within a traditional psychological theory (DeCuir & Gunby, 2014). Therefore, a phenomenological approach is appropriate to understand not only what and how they experience being a teacher, but also the meaning and how that informs theory (Vagle, 2010; Husserl, 1980).

This qualitative, phenomenological study will address the gaps listed above through the following research questions:

1. What is the experience of being a Black male teacher who persists for three years or more?
2. What are the contextual factors that support Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field, considering perceived costs and values?

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A qualitative, phenomenological study was employed to examine the shared, lived experiences of Black male teachers who have been in the teaching profession for at least three years. The three-year minimum is used as a factor since it is often noted in research as the new teacher attrition time frame (Inman & Marlow, 2004). Phenomenology is appropriate since it focuses on participants' first-hand experiences and gives accurate voice to their story. "Phenomenology is the first method of knowledge because it begins with 'things themselves"' (Moustakas, 1994, p. 41). The phenomenological method allows for an in-depth exploration of the common meaning Black male teachers who have persisted in the field for at least three years may share given any barriers (i.e., stereotypes, lack of support, challenging work environments), which many racially-minoritized teachers face. The Black male teachers who share this common experience may also inform how race and gender interact with the context to manifest Situated Expectancy-Value theory motivation beliefs. This chapter provides an overview of the research questions, study design, and data analysis methods.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Phenomenology

Phenomenological research is focused on understanding a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those who live it. This form of research allows for the researcher to gather an essential essence from the participants and make an interpretation of the subject-matter based on their shared experiences (Alase, 2017; Vagle, 2018).

According to Vagle (2018), "the phenomenon manifests ontologically in particular situations and contexts and that understanding the phenomenon is an act of ongoing interpretation" (p. 16). The ontological assumption behind this method lends to the creation of

knowledge between the researcher and the participants. The aim is then to extract what the experience as a Black male teacher who has been a teacher for at least three years means for the participants in the context of their racial and gender identity and find the essence of that phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2018). However, the essence is not a generalization of the participants, but of the phenomenon itself. Thus, the researcher can examine the relationship between Black male teachers, their sociocultural contexts, and motivational constructs within the phenomenon of their persistence. Further, phenomenology values meaning over statistical findings, allowing a deeper meaning to surface, which will inform research and theory beyond quantitative methods.

Primary Researcher Positionality

In phenomenology, it is important to understand the essential features of the phenomenon without judgment. Epoché, meaning to refrain from judgment or mainstream thinking, is used to bring a fresh perspective to the data (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, to be reflective, transparent, and enhance epoché, I describe myself as a Black and Native American woman, researcher, and lifelong learner. Education has always been a central part of my identity and has had a great influence in my day-to-day life. Consequently, so have the many teachers I have encountered throughout my 25 years of education. I have attended predominantly Black and predominately White institutions where the teacher demographics were the same, mostly White. However, I have had the opportunity to be taught by at least ten different Black teachers in my compulsory education that have had an immense impact on my education. This is not to discredit the many non-minority teachers that have taught me, but to instead highlight what the research evidence suggests; Black teachers can relate to and impact students (especially Black students) differently than White teachers. My time as a doctoral student at Old Dominion University has allowed me to reflect on my experiences and explore the experiences of other students and teachers alike. It

has also brought forth the opportunity to see gaps in the literature where Black teachers are simply missed or viewed through a deficit lens. As a racially-minoritized woman, I am more than familiar with being viewed as less than, being discriminated against, and feeling the need to prove myself. Further, the intersection of my identity (i.e., Black, Native-American, and female) is essential to understanding that the participants' identities (i.e., Black and male) cannot be separated from the context. My educational and professional experiences are inextricably connected the intersectionality of who I am. No matter what setting I enter, I always experience it as both Black and a female.

Research Team

The research team included me (the primary researcher), an auditor, and an additional coder. The auditor, a White female, was selected as a person who has content knowledge in Situated Expectancy-Value theory, and training in qualitative research. The coder, a White male, was selected as a person who also has knowledge in Situated Expectancy-Value theory and has assisted with several qualitative projects. As the primary researcher, I am a Black and Native American female who has knowledge of Situated Expectancy-Value theory and has both assisted with and published qualitative research. All team members were doctoral candidates who have completed one or more qualitative research courses, completed their coursework in their program of study, and were in the dissertation phase of the doctoral program.

Assumptions and Biases

For the purposes of this study and based on prior research, I assumed that Black male teachers experience teaching differently than their White female, Black female, and White male counterparts based on the intersection of gender, race, opportunity, and societal biases. I acknowledge these assumptions and potential biases on this study based on my personal educational experiences. However, I took caution and aimed to diminish this bias through a

structured coding procedure, including an additional coder, validation tactics, journaling (i.e., memos) and using a semi-structured interview protocol. Additionally, I engaged in bracketing, "the process where preconceived beliefs and opinions concerning the phenomenon research are identified and held in abeyance" (Greening, 2019, p. 89). This is an essential in phenomenological reduction, which will allow me to mitigate the potential effects of any preconceptions and instead, include the views of the participants (Dowling, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Lastly, I reflected on these assumptions and biases with the research team (described above) who had less experience with the target population and associated research on Black male teachers. It is also important to acknowledge potential bias from the co-researchers who could have formed assumptions based on their experience as a White female and a White male.

DATA COLLECTION

Participants

In a phenomenological study, it is important that the participants have all experienced the phenomenon at hand and can clearly articulate their lived experiences (van Manen, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). To participate in the study, there were three inclusion criteria. Participants had to self-identify as Black or African American, be an in-service P-12 teacher, and have remained in the field for a minimum of three years. The term "Black or African American" includes all individuals who identify with one or more ethnic groups originating in Africa (e.g., Caribbean, Bahamian, Somali, etc.).

In phenomenological studies, interviews are conducted with a participant pool of between two and 25 participants (Alase, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenological studies do not require a large pool of participants to achieve validity or saturation (Englander, 2012). For the current study, 11 Black male teachers were interviewed, and their ages ranged from 23 – 62

years of age (see Table 1). The participants had 3 – 20 years of experience. Four participants had experience in or were currently teaching in an elementary school (grades P – 5), two participants had experience in or were currently teaching in a middle school (grades 6 – 8), and five participants had experience in or were currently teaching in a high school (grades 9 – 12). Seven participants were employed at a public school, three participants were employed at a private school, and one participant was employed at a magnet school. Six participants worked at schools where the student population was primarily Black, two were at schools with a primarily White student population, and three worked at schools with mixed ethnicities (approximately equal racial distributions). Most teachers (7 of 11) taught a core subject (e.g., Math, Social Studies), two were in special education, and two taught physical education. Ten of the 11 participants were teaching in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia and one taught in the Metropolitan DC area. Since the participant from the Metropolitan DC area met the inclusion criteria and was in a demographically similar school as other participants, he was included in the study. Table 1 presents the varied demographics including, participant age, location of the school, years of teaching experience, subject area, grades taught, student demographics, and institution type.

Table 1

Participant Demographics.

Participant	Age	Location	Years of Experience	Subject	Grade Level	Student Demographic	Institution Type
Elijah	36	Hampton Roads, VA	7	Special Education	Middle	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Public
Karter	48	Hampton Roads, VA	22	Social Studies	High	Primarily White (more than 50%)	Private
Gabriel	43	Washington, DC	15	Social Studies	High	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Magnet
Adrian	44	Hampton Roads, VA	7	Economics	High	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Public
Jasper	43	Hampton Roads, VA	20	Physical Education	Middle	Mix of ethnicities (approximately equal)	Public
Davis	23	Hampton Roads, VA	3	All subjects	Elementary	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Private
Orion	46	Hampton Roads, VA	14	Social Studies	High	Mix of ethnicities (approximately equal)	Public
John-Paul	37	Hampton Roads, VA	5	Special Education	Elementary	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Public
Omar	43	Hampton Roads, VA	8	All subjects	Elementary	Mix of ethnicities (approximately equal)	Public
Khalil	29	Hampton Roads, VA	5	Physical Education	High	Primarily Black (more than 50%)	Public
Scott	62	Hampton Roads, VA	9	Math	Elementary	Primarily White (more than 50%)	Private

Recruitment Procedures

Purposive sampling was initially used to provide more information-rich data and gather a range of participants that fit these criteria but also represent various ages, institution types, subjects, grade levels (within P-12), years of teaching (3 years or more), and demographically different school districts. Recruiting for a relatively diverse range of institution types, years of teaching, grade level, and subjects within the phenomenon of persisting as a Black male teacher allowed for comparisons of Black male teachers' experiences in different contexts. However, it is still important to have common characteristics to capture to overall essence of the experience for all participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The response rate for the study was initially low, therefore snowball sampling was implemented based on networking and referral. This method is often used when seeking populations that are low in number, stigmatized, or widely dispersed in an area (Parker et al., 2019).

Participants were recruited from P-12 schools in Southeastern, United States. School districts varied to include those that serve a large percentage of racially-minoritized students, students who receive free or reduced lunch, predominately White serving institutions, and those with higher socioeconomic status.

To identify candidates, a link was sent out on social media sites (e.g., X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn), to various schools in the Hampton Roads, Virginia area, and to personal contacts, where the Black male teachers could respond and indicate their interest in the study. The link directed the candidates to a short, online Qualtrics survey asking their race, gender, age, job position, years of teaching, and school location for pre-screening. Participants who fit the inclusion criteria from the prescreening questionnaire, were asked to share the opportunity with other Black male teachers who fit the research criteria in their respective school or area. This method may have enhanced entrée, or gaining permission, for the study since some

of the participants were familiar with one another. Participants identified using snowball sampling, were sent an invitation letter via email with a link to the Qualtrics survey.

Procedure

Participants who fit the criteria set in the prescreening questionnaire (i.e., Black male and teaching for three years) were directed to complete an informed consent prior to any interviews being conducted. The consent document was embedded in the prescreening Qualtrics survey, and skip logic was used to ensure only those who fit the inclusion criteria were selected. In the informed consent, the participants received preliminary information about the study including the purpose and procedures, protections for confidentiality, risks, and benefits associated with the study. Participants were also notified that they can voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Once participants submitted their signed informed consents, they were redirected to the Calendly scheduling platform to schedule an interview time with the primary researcher.

Interview Process

To provide flexibility and access to the participants, interviews took place on Zoom conferencing software and were recorded with the participants' explicit consent. The online platform provided flexibility in terms of location and allowed me to accommodate their schedules throughout the week and weekends if necessary. Further, Creswell (2013) suggests that web-based data collection supports a non-threatening environment for the participant to discuss sensitive issues.

For their voluntary participation and time, all participants received a $10 Amazon gift card as compensation. One interview was planned per participant; however, for additional clarification, a follow-up interview was requested with one interviewee. Interviews took approximately 30 - 60 minutes.

One of the most important steps at the beginning of the study is to establish rapport with the participant (Alase, 2017). Prior to recording the interview, I openly discussed my position with this research, a Black female who had several Black teachers, as a method of epoché and reflection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 1990). Participants were assured once more that their responses would be kept confidential and reminded of the purpose of the study. Participants were also allowed to ask any questions before we began the interview. The transcripts resulting from the interviews were the only source of data for the analysis process.

Confidentiality

During data analysis, research identification numbers were used for participants' protection and confidentiality and all personally identifiable information was redacted. To further ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms are used to reference to each participant in the study. Each participant was contacted and given the opportunity to select their own pseudonym. If they did not have a preference, a pseudonym was chosen for them. This approach helped to protect their identity while maintaining the integrity of their personal experiences shared during the study.

Participants had the option to conduct the interviews with their cameras off and only be audio recorded if they requested. The data collected from the interviews was kept in a password protected university system as an additional precaution for confidentiality. This includes all video, audio, and transcription files. In alignment with federal regulations, the video and audio recordings will be deleted within the three to five-year timeframe.

Interview Protocol

The protocol (see Appendix), adapted from Bergey (2021), uses phenomenological interviewing recommendations that suggest researchers focus on open-ended questions and build upon participants' responses (Alase, 2017; Seidman, 2006). The open-ended questions allow the participant to "reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under the study" (Seidman,

2006, p. 15). Phenomenological data collection focuses on two major questions: (1) What has the participant experienced within the phenomenon? (2) What contexts have influenced the participants' experience within the phenomenon? The interview protocol used semi-structured interview questions to allow for probing and modifications based on participants' responses (Alase, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants were asked to describe life experiences that led them to become a teacher, describe any barriers or drawbacks that they have faced as a Black male teacher, motivations to persist despite barriers/drawbacks, and describe the role race and/or gender has on their experience. They were asked questions such as "When you think about being a Black male teacher, describe drawbacks or barriers come to mind, if any?", and "What role, if any, has being a Black male had in your career decision?"

To capture the participants' value of teaching and reasons for persisting and/or entering the field, they were asked "How is being a teacher important to who you are?" Questions are worded in such a way to encourage participants to fully express their ideas. Probes such as "You mentioned _____ can you describe that in detail from the beginning" or "Can you elaborate on that experience?" were included in case of ambiguous or vague responses that require more in-depth information to capture the experience. To conclude the interview, participants were asked if there is anything else they feel is important to understanding their experience as a Black male teacher who has persisted in the field.

Validation. I took several steps to ensure the qualitative methods and interview protocol used were aligned with the research aims. First, the protocol was reviewed, before recruitment began, by a colleague in the education field that is versed in qualitative interviewing. This assessment highlighted any potential biased or misleading questions in the protocol and assessed the appropriateness for the research focus (Kallio et al., 2016). To further validate, refine, and

develop the interview protocol, a pilot interview was conducted prior to the start of the study. This field-testing technique was conducted with a Black male teacher (Kallio et al., 2016). The interview mimicked a real interview scenario and provided feedback on its' implementation, relevance of the questions, and participants' understanding of the questions. The findings from the pilot interview allowed me to reorganize or re-formulate probe questions, assess my own bias in interviewing, and confirm the protocols' coverage of the research questions. Since the pilot interview did not lend to major changes to the interview protocol, the pilot data was included in the final results.

Data Analysis

The interviews were recorded via Zoom conferencing software and transcribed verbatim using Rev AI transcription services. Prior to the coding process, a comprehensive review of the transcripts was undertaken to ensure accuracy, including checking for misspellings and translation errors. During this review, memos (i.e., notes taken during data collection that document the researcher's observations and experiences), were consulted as a form of reflection (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

In adopting a phenomenological method, the data was approached in its purest form to extract meaning from the lived experience of the phenomenon. This involved open coding, an unstructured exploration of the transcripts line by line, to discern meaning from participants' voices. Two rounds of open coding were conducted to understand the essence of participants' experiences before identifying patterns and creating a codebook. The transcripts were coded using Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis and research software, following the analytical methods outlined in Table 2. To ensure the participants' stories were heard, primarily inductive coding was used; however, given the theoretical basis of the study, Situated Expectancy-Value Theory (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020) also guided the coding process.

The next step involved delineating units of meaning in the data and deriving codes to label the relevant text segments (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Coding occurred in an iterative process with the research team, re-reading transcripts, applying codes, and/or identifying new codes. Due to the small sample size, we calculated percentage agreement or intercoder agreement to establish reliability (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Cohen's Kappa was not considered appropriate for this study, as it is best used in studies with at least 20 cases (Blackman & Koval, 2000). Percentage agreement was calculated by dividing the number of times the raters agreed by the total number of observations. This number was then multiplied by 100 to convert it to a percentage. After an acceptable agreement was achieved (see Chapter Four for percentage agreement), the remaining eight transcripts were coded. Throughout this process, the coders and auditor iteratively refined code descriptions to accurately represent the data. Codes were then collapsed and organized into themes to represent relationships or patterns in the data. Codes that did not have 25% participation rate (i.e., at least three of 11 participants mentioned the event) were dropped for low saturation (Creswell, 2008). The themes provided a basis for interpreting the data as it addressed the research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994).

It was also important to capture the "what" and "how" of the participants' experience through structural codes (i.e., the school location, school type; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 201). These data provided additional context when identifying implications and recommendations for retention efforts and future research. The structural descriptions add context to what the participant experienced and factors that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon. For example, the experience of a Black male teacher at a primarily White private school may differ from the experience of a Black male teacher at a primarily Black public school. Further, the environment (i.e., location and who was in it) can impact how the participant

perceives the costs and/or values of being a teacher. Each transcript was summarized to capture the data and acknowledge that each participant experienced the phenomenon uniquely. This approach helped demonstrate that their experiences can be understood in relation to one another. The coded data is represented in a table in Chapter Four (see Table 3) with significant statements that represent the codes and their associated theme. The table also includes a "formulated meaning" or description to clearly represent the participants' experiences to the audience (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 354).

Table 2

Data Explication Process.

Data Explication Methods	Coding Methods
Phenomenological reduction: An analytic process designed to explicate underlying units of meaning framed within the ecological and lived context of that phenomenon under investigation (Groenewald, 2004; Hycner, 1999). The “conscious, effortful, opening of ourselves to the phenomenon as a phenomenon” (Keen, 1975, p. 38). Listening to and identifying meaning from the voices of the participants in its most rudimentary and unstructured form.	**Open coding**: An open discovery process of reading, re-reading, and combing over transcripts and/or other data, sentence by sentence in search of the answer to the repeated question "what is this about?
Delineating units of meaning: Extracting and defining those statements that are seen as illuminating the phenomenon being explored (Hycner, 1999). These units of meaning are carefully examined, and refined, and redundant units of meaning are collapsed or eliminated (Moustakas, 1994)	**Axial coding**: With the discovery that takes place through several rounds of open coding, the researchers begin looking for patterns, relationships, and ways that the open codes are structured – seeking to find order and meaning to the otherwise individual and independent open codes.
Clustering of units of meaning to form themes: The researcher examines or “interrogates” (Hycner, 1999, p. 153) the units of meaning, carefully to allow the voices and lived experiences of the participants to be fully heard and to avoid any presuppositions, seeking the essence of meaning within the larger ecological context (Moustakas, 1994).	

Table 2

Continued

Data Explication Methods	Coding Methods
Summarizing each interview: Recognizes that each research participant experiences the phenomenon in their own way, but that each of these unique experiences can be understood with reference to the other participants and the larger ecological context that the phenomenon takes place in. In this way, there is a healthy tension between the unique individual and their interactions with others and social context.	**Selective coding**: Building from the axial codes as a creative and adaptive interim step, selective coding seeks to develop and clarify a comprehensive organizational coding structure that captures the overarching meaning discovered in the data.
Creating composite summaries: Here the researcher seeks to strike a balance between the unique voices of the individual and the features of the larger ecological context that give shape to those individual's experiences. Through this process, these are given equal weight in the analytic process and allowed to maintain their importance in the findings. The composite summary then serves as the final step in balancing these different perspectives. Themes that don't resonate across participants are noted and framed as important counterpoints for the unique or minority voices.	

Note. Reprinted from Holemon (2022) *Underrepresentation Of Black Males In Gifted Education: A Phenomenology Study Of The Underrepresentation Of Black Males In Gifted Education.*

Credibility and Trustworthiness

"Phenomenological research studies should make sure that quality is paramount in everything that the study does and produces" (Alase, 2017, p. 17). This is essential, as the quality, accuracy, and credibility of a study begins with the selection of appropriate data collection methods (Kallio et al., 2016). To enhance credibility, I based the methodology of the study on prior research and performed a thorough literature review. Further, during data analysis, coding was conducted with an additional coder and an auditor to ensure consensus of the analysis and transcripts audits. First, the two coders coded three transcripts separately and then met to establish interrater reliability, the degree to which (multiple) individual coders examine an artifact and reach the same conclusion (Lombard et al., 2002), and discussed any disagreements in the codes. The auditor played a pivotal role in examining any disagreements and ensuring the codebook accurately reflected the experiences captured in the data.

Credibility was also reflected by accurately describing the phenomenon and lived experience of the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). During interviews, I clarified any unclear responses and checked in with the participants. When reviewing the transcripts, I also contacted participants to clarify or expand on any responses that were unclear.

Phenomenological studies intend to elucidate the lived experiences of the participants and therefore the researcher must understand those lived experiences. According to Alase (2017), one way this can be accomplished is by having the researcher situate themselves in the 'shoes' of the participants. As a Black female who has struggled with barriers in education, I can understand some of the issues Black teachers face in their institutions. Creswell and Poth (2018) state that our writing "is a reflection of our own interpretation based on the cultural, social, gender, class, and personal politics that we bring to the research" (p. 228). In contrast to most students in the United States who can complete their K-12 education without having a single teacher of color

(Hart, 2020), I had over ten different Black teachers from preschool to high school. Their positive impact on my education and persistence in the field were drivers for my interest in this research. Prior to recording the interview, I openly discussed my position with the research as a Black female who had several Black teachers as a method of entreé and reflection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 1990). This also added to the trustworthiness of the study. Creswell (2013) stated that an author's ability to be reflective throughout the study is a standard of quality for phenomenology. In the next chapter, I present the study findings, including summaries of each of the participants' experiences and the themes identified across all interviews.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Eleven Black male teachers participated in this phenomenological, qualitative study. The study explored Black male teachers' experience persisting in the field for three years or more and the contextual factors that support their persistence. First, this chapter will present summaries of each participant to provide context for the resulting data. For confidentiality purposes, pseudonyms were used for each participant. Following the summaries, I present the findings from this study organized by research question and theme. As outlined in Chapter 3, Hyncer's (1999) method of data explication was used for data analysis. A data summary table (Table 3) is provided which presents the themes and codes that resulted from the data analysis.

SUMMARIES

The following section provides a summary of each participant involved in the study. The summaries offer a comprehensive understanding of the diverse experiences and backgrounds of the participants and their experiences in relationship to others. The summaries are vital for contextualizing the results of the study as well as focusing on the essence of the participants' lived experiences. By presenting these individual stories, the aim is to highlight the unique perspectives and lived experiences that each participant brings to the study as well as how the context (school location, type) impacted their experience. Hycner (1999) describes the summaries as follows:

> Whatever the method used for a phenomenological analysis the aim of the investigator is the reconstruction of the inner world of experience of the subject. Each individual has his own way of experiencing temporality, spatiality, materiality, but each of these coordinates must be understood in relation to the others and to the total inner 'world'. (p. 153–154)

The summaries include an overview of participants' demographic characteristics, teaching position, personal motivations, and challenges they have encountered in their roles. These narratives served as a basis for confirming themes present across interviews and creating a composite summary, which highlighted the holistic context of the experiences while also recognizing any counterpoints (Moustakas, 1994; Hycner, 1999).

Elijah

Elijah, age 36, had been a teacher for seven years. At the time of the interview, he taught Special Education at a primarily Black, public middle school in Southeastern, Virginia. He entered the teaching field largely due to the profound influence of his father, who was also a teacher. His early years were spent assisting his father in the classroom during summer breaks, which fostered a deep-seated passion for teaching. This exposure, coupled with the admiration he held for his father's role, created a foundation for his eventual career choice. Although he initially pursued a major in business education, he transitioned to special education after his aptitude for working with students with special needs was recognized. He felt a responsibility to have a positive influence on his students, emphasizing relatability and building a rapport with them.

While facing cultural biases and stigmas associated with the teaching profession, he has found fulfillment in coaching and building relationships with his students. Despite sometimes being pulled into disciplinary roles due to being a Black male teacher, he remained motivated by the structured schedule (i.e., summers off), personal fulfillment of teaching his students, and support from the school community. Moreover, the positive reinforcement from colleagues and principals has been another motivator, encouraging him to remain in teaching. His commitment to teaching is particularly evident in his approach with students which includes a sense of communal responsibility and protection for his students of color.

Karter

Karter, age 48, had been teaching for 22 years. At the time of the interview, he taught Social Studies at a primarily White, private high school in Southeastern, Virginia. Influenced by his mother who had a career in special education, the participant chose education over architecture once he realized his passion. The participant loved to work with kids, mentor students, and make a positive impact. His dedication to teaching stemmed from a desire to help others.

The participant described several challenges particularly related to race and his role as a Black male teacher. He described facing the challenge of constantly proving himself in a predominantly White, female-dominated profession coupled with biases and stereotypes. Despite the mental toll of administrative demands and the need for work-life balance, he remained committed to teaching as a lifelong calling. He aimed to support students of color, providing guidance and mentorship while advocating for systemic change. He expressed a role as surrogate parent for students of color and stressed the importance of community. Despite inherent challenges, he viewed being an educator as a blessing and remained dedicated to the profession.

Gabriel

Gabriel, age 43, had been teaching for 15 years. At the time of the interview, he taught Social Studies at a primarily Black, magnet high school in the Metropolitan, DC area. His decision to teach was inspired by family members who were educators, including his mother and three aunts. He decided to become a teacher during his junior year of college, driven by an interest in teaching, passion for social studies, and a desire to give back and witness students' "light bulb moments." He valued building rapport with students and emphasized the importance of classroom management as a teacher. He expressed the uniqueness of being a Black male teacher as they relate well with Black students and parents, connecting on a personal level.

While supported by a large Black faculty at his current school, he acknowledged potential barriers in different environments. He also acknowledged the demanding nature of teaching, with work often going beyond school hours, that led to stress and anxiety. The participant planned to leave teaching this year due to exhaustion and stress. He expressed that this stemmed from not receiving adequate pay for the level of effort required in teaching. However, he remained motivated thus far by his students.

Adrian

Adrian, age 44, had been teaching for 7 years. At the time of the interview, he taught economics at a primarily Black, public high school in Southeastern, Virginia. The participant began his teaching career after working in the banking sector for several years. Following a layoff and the birth of his daughter, he sought a more fulfilling and stable career. A grant for teacher certification led him to the education field, where he transitioned from teaching adults about finance to teaching children. His background in finance and desire to help others drove his decision to become a teacher.

In working with his students, he discussed the importance of establishing trust and building rapport with them. He also discussed the importance of Black male teachers in terms of being a role model, relating to and supporting students. Challenges he experienced as a teacher included dealing with a lack of discipline and accountability in the school, student disengagement, and systemic issues. Despite considering leaving due to these frustrations, the success stories and relationships with his students provided a strong motivation to persist. He believed in the need for more Black male teachers to support and relate to students and this need also contributed to his decision to persist.

Jasper

Jasper, age 43, had been teaching for 20 years. At the time of the interview, he taught physical education at a public middle school in Southeastern, Virginia with a diverse student population. Initially a biology major, the participant shifted to health sciences and decided to teach due to influences from his mother who was a teacher, a desire to coach, and a need for more Black male teachers. A significant influence came from a professor who highlighted the participants' fit as a teacher and the lack of Black male teachers in schools. The participants' interest in seeing student growth and building relationships solidified his commitment to the field.

Throughout his career, he faced several challenges including feeling isolated as the only Black male teacher in a predominantly white female staff and experiencing assumptions (e.g., aggressive) as a Black male. He described being scrutinized more closely than his colleagues and misunderstanding from administration and peers. Due to low pay as a teacher and challenging work environments, he had considered leaving but remain motivated by the positive impact he has on students and the flexible school schedule (i.e., summers off). He acknowledges that being a Black male teacher brings unique benefits, such as providing a relatable figure for Black students and challenging stereotypes about Black men not being nurturing or patient.

Davis

Davis, age 23, had been teaching for 3 years. At the time of the interview, he taught all subjects at a primarily Black, private elementary school in Southeastern, Virginia. Initially working towards a degree in criminal justice, the participant discovered a passion for teaching while working as a literacy tutor. The experience of witnessing students' progress firsthand was rewarding and influenced his decision to pursue a career in education. Further, the desire to make

an impact on students' lives and the importance of having more Black male teachers, played a crucial role in his commitment to teaching.

As a teacher, he valued creating a safe space for students, building rapport, and supporting students beyond academics. He felt confident in his teaching abilities, especially in relating to Black students and parents, despite being younger and the only male (and Black male) in the environment. Challenges he experienced included relating to colleagues with different backgrounds and managing interactions in a female-dominated workplace. He often felt isolated as the only Black male teacher in his current school, which contrasts with previous experience with majority Black staff. Despite experiencing stress and anxiety, he was determined to stay in teaching to inspire other Black males and overcome obstacles. He aspired to move into administrative roles but felt that it can be more difficult to obtain such roles as a Black male.

Orion

Orion, age 46, had been teaching for 14 years. At the time of the interview, he taught social studies at a public high school in Southeastern, Virginia with a diverse population. His decision to enter the field was heavily influenced by teachers and mentorship received in his formative years. Their positive influence and fun they brought to teaching inspired him to switch from business to history education. This influence combined with a desire to coach solidified his decision to become a teacher. He found fulfillment in engaging with students, understanding their diverse backgrounds, and making a positive impact on their lives. He believed a good teacher builds rapport and provides support beyond academics.

While confident in his ability to support and relate to his students, he faced challenges related to teaching sensitive historical topics and misconceptions about his role. Overall, he felt the time and effort to be a teacher is demanding regardless of race. Despite these challenges, he has not considered leaving teaching, motivated by the personal growth of students and the long-

term relationships they build. He aimed to be a positive role model for African American students and strived to help them understand how societal perceptions can impact them; however, he encouraged them to navigate these challenges without changing their core identities.

John-Paul

John-Paul, age 37, had been teaching for 5 years. At the time of the interview, he taught special education at a primarily Black, public elementary school in Southeastern, Virginia. Growing up, this participant faced bullying and negative interactions in school; however, his love for learning and influence from a few inspirational teachers led him to the path of teaching. Initially planning to teach English, logistical issues with his degree led him to shift to special education and found satisfaction in seeing students' progress in his class. He also found that being a Black male is a positive asset for relating to his students.

As a Black male teacher, he faced challenges with interactions in a predominantly female environment, dealing with rigid administration policies that inhibit learning, and behavior issues. Despite stress and frustration, he remained committed to teaching due to the rewarding nature of helping students succeed, being a positive male role model, and being relatable to his students. He found that both male and female students sought his mentorship and guidance, particularly with Black student populations where his presence was helpful in building trust.

Omar

Omar, age 43, had been teaching for 8 years. At the time of the interview, he taught all subjects at a public elementary school in Southeastern, Virginia with a diverse population. This participant did not initially decide to become a teacher himself; his mother, who was an educator, directed his career path by paying for his education and insisting he enter the field. The participant embraced the position and found it to be a calling, enjoying the roles of mentor, counselor, and encourager.

He believed being a good teacher involved more than just grades, emphasizing positive communication, and creating a supportive environment. Despite feeling isolated as the only Black male teacher, he highlighted having numerous opportunities for advancement and was motivated by being a role model for his students. He aimed to change perceptions about Black males and Black males as teachers, committed to staying in the profession despite challenges.

Khalil

Khalil, age 29, had been teaching for 5 years. At the time of the interview, he taught physical education at a primarily Black, public high school in Southeastern, Virginia. The participant was influenced by his mother, who was a teacher, and by his high school coaches who combined teaching with mentoring. The participant ultimately chose to be a physical education teacher due to the potential dual role of educator and mentor that coaching afforded. He valued mentoring and guiding students, believing a good teacher relates to students and leaves a lasting impression.

Despite often being the default mentor or disciplinarian for Black students and feeling isolated as one of a few Black male teachers in his school, he felt confident in his role and is motivated by student success. However, the additional responsibility he carried was not equally shared among his White colleagues. Additionally, the lack of Black male colleagues made finding relatable peers difficult. However, he has not considered leaving teaching, finding fulfillment in the relationships and positive impact he has on students' lives. His presence provided relatability and comfort for students and parents, reinforcing his commitment to the field. The participant does plan to move to high school in hopes of being in a more diverse staff population.

Scott

Scott, age 62, had been teaching for 9 years. At the time of the interview, he taught math at a primarily White, private elementary school in Southeastern, Virginia. After a career in business, the participant joined Teach for America to pursue a meaningful career in teaching. He viewed teaching as a way to serve the community and positively influence the lives of African American children. Teaching allowed for the participant to fulfill his philosophy of servant leadership, helping to address educational disparities.

While confident in his teaching abilities, he faced preconceived notions about being a disciplinarian or diversity officer due to being a Black male. Being one of a few Black males in a majority White staff was a challenge within itself. He also discussed the economic disparities in teaching salaries, compared to other professions, as a significant barrier. Despite isolation as a Black male teacher and financial considerations, he remained committed to teaching due to the meaningful impact he had on students and his passion for education. He found that his presence was a significant benefit for his students, providing them with a relatable role model.

THEMES

The following section details the results of the study. Following the steps detailed in Chapter Three, theme development occurred using Hyncer's (1999) five step data explication process: (1) phenomenological reduction, (2) delineating units of meaning, (3) clustering units of meaning to form themes, (4) summarizing each interview, and (5) creating composite summaries. After two rounds of open coding, which takes place during phenomenological reduction, an additional coder and I coded three transcripts to establish percentage agreement. Acceptable agreement is reported to be minimum of 75% and high agreement is estimated to be 90% (Stemler, 2004). In this study, we achieved 81% agreement, which was in the acceptable range. During the coding process, the additional coder and I would discuss any disagreements in

order to reconcile them. If we could not agree on a code, we would then meet with the auditor to ensure all discrepancies were resolved.

The five themes that pertained to the lived experience of being a Black male teacher that has persisted in teaching for three years, or more were as follows: (1) Cultural Connection and Relationships, (2) Navigating Marginality, (3) Organizational and Affective Challenges, (4) Supports, and (5) Value and Expectancies. Table 3 (Research question one) and Table 4 (Research question two) show each theme with its associated codes, a formulated description, and an example quote. Each theme is discussed below in relation to the specific research question it addresses.

Table 3

Themes and Codes for Research Question One.

Theme	Initial Code	Description	Significant Statements
Cultural Connection and Relationships	Relates with Students	Describes connecting with students due to phenotypical or cultural similarities, this includes classroom practices (i.e., taking additional steps to ensure the students are engaged)	"I just said that relatability, I come from the same place you come from. I don't need to sugarcoat a lot of things because I understand the different things that you may be going through. I understand, I came from it, my friends came from it. So just having that relatability and that comfortability and creating that comfortable space for students."
	Building Rapport and Trust	Describes the importance of building a relationship or trust with students and/or how this may differ from other teachers' relationships	"I would say that the one thing I always tell people is the biggest thing you need to have is a rapport more so than anything else, is having a strong rapport with your students."
	Ingroup Comfort	Describes a level of comfort in the school environment with more Black teachers, male teachers, Black male teachers, or Black students	"I want to say for instance, the black staff is one of the highest importance just to having that support system you need to thrive."
Navigating Marginality	Rarity/Need	Describes a general need for more Black male teachers in the field due to representation, the rareness of "core" BMTs, and/or expresses this as a reason they entered/remained in the field	"And that's what I think I found the subject matter of your interview important because it is a miss in education and there's lots of reasons. You're probably diving into those why black men are not teaching, but we need more, we need more, that's for sure."
	Female Dominated Field	Describes teaching as a mostly female or predominately white, female field	"...and education in general is, I don't even know the statistics on the population of the educators, but it's predominantly women and predominantly white"
	Lack of Relatedness	Describes a lack of comfortability with colleagues or a need to assimilate/adjust themselves to fit into group with their colleagues	"I mean you kind of have that professional talk versus how you kind of talk to some of your other, so how I talk to some of the other male teachers here versus how I talk, well especially African American teachers versus how I talk to some of these other teachers. It is a difference."
	Assumptions/Stereotypes	Describes racial, cultural, societal, or gender stereotypes and assumptions are made about Black male teachers and or students	"the perception of just black men in general, it doesn't always equal someone who is going to be like caring and nurturing you know, who wants the best for students or kids or you know... you're still seen as like this dominant, aggressive figure no matter what, no matter what comes out of your mouth until a person like actually gets to know you. Their first perception is always..., even if they don't say it, you kind of just feel it"

Table 3

Continued.

Theme	Initial Code	Description	Significant Statements
Organizational and Affective Challenges	Emotional Cost	Describes frustration, stress, or other negative emotion with teaching	"I want to be able to plan effectively and so that I want to be able to give students grades, give 'em students feedback. But you also are just tired. So, you oftentimes are highly stressed, highly anxious."
	Effort Cost	Describes how effort in teaching is extensive, not worth the pay, or exceeds the recognition they deserve	"You don't get paid enough to do the amount of work that you actually do....You love the students, but it's not as much as it used to be. And so that becomes, you become more exhausted. And so I've kind of hit that point of just exhaustion."
	School Policies	Describes issues with school policies, discipline, or curriculum standards that interfere with learning or their ability to be a teacher	“For example, say you've been teaching a subject, a content area for X amount of time and all of a sudden they want you to change and make you have a new prep. That could be tough, that could be stressful.”

Table 4

Themes and Codes for Research Question Two.

Theme	Initial Code	Description	Significant Statements
Supports	Outside Influences	Describes how choice to enter/remain teaching field was influenced by a family member, school experience, or confirmation from another individual	"...my college professor, she motivated me to become a teacher just as far as being a black man and not being enough black males in schools."
	School Support	Describes positive support from colleagues or administration that helps remain in the field of teaching	"…if I wasn't at the school that I'm at and if I didn't have the support, then I definitely would've been turned off in a profession as a whole and I would just definitely started working in the shipyard or something."
	Opportunities	Describes additional opportunities inside and outside the classroom due to race and/ or pay	"And plus, there's so many opportunities beyond the classroom. Again, for a black male because there's not many of us."
Value and Expectancies	Expectancies for Success	Describes their expectation that they can exceed at teaching	"I'm confident that I'm there for my kids. I won't say I'm a great teacher or a good teacher, I'm just a teacher. But I'm confident that once these kids leave this building, these kids learn more than the subject."
	Communal Value	Describes how their choice to enter/remain in field is due to desire to work with/help others, make a difference, and/or allow for forming lasting bonds with others	"I just want to make a difference in people's lives...my calling is working with kids. My calling is working with any type of kid from any type of place, from any type of community, just to help them out, just to give back and to make my, and help them make their mark."
	Interest Value	Describes interest or enjoyment associated with teaching	"I like teaching the next generation. It is very rewarding, even with the drawbacks."

RQ1: What is the experience of being a Black male teacher who persists for three years or more?

Theme 1: Cultural Connection and Relationships

The theme of Cultural Connection and Relationships was supported by the following codes: *Building Rapport and Trust, Relates with Students, and Ingroup Comfort*. It addressed the importance of Black male teachers having relationships with students, parents, and their colleagues and the role that race may play in these relationships.

Building Rapport and Trust. All participants mentioned the importance of *building rapport* or relationships with students. "…the biggest thing you need to have is a rapport, more so than anything else" (Gabriel). Building rapport was often noted as one of the most important aspects of being a "good" teacher and necessary to connect with the students. "…the first step in being a good teacher is being able to build a trust or a comfort between you and your student (Adrian). Davis stated:

> To me, what it means to be a good teacher is to first, before teachers dive into academics and teaching, is to first build a rapport with students enough where they feel comfortable enough to you, you create a safe space when they don't have any other safe spaces.

When referencing the relationship with their Black students, participants mentioned an ability to build rapport with these students due to phenotypic or cultural similarities. Elijah described how he is confident in building rapport with his students because, as a Black male, he can connect with them. He stated, "…the confidence as far as building the rapport with the kids… they look at you and see, you remind me of my dad, or you remind me of my uncle." Some participants also noted how this relationship may differ from "other" teachers or White

teachers. The difference was often attributed to the students' lack of trust or comfortability with "other " teachers or non-Black teacher's assumptions about Black students. Khalil stated:

> A lot of teachers just kind of see kids for one way. They may be loud, they may be arguing, they talk back, but you're not really... being a good teacher is kind of getting underneath all of that and figuring out why they do the things that they do.

Gabriel expressed a similar ability to engage with both students and parents differently than his colleagues:

> Whether it be talking parents being receptive to what I have to say, even when they may come in hostile, the ability to listen and engage is I think paramount because I am a Black man and I would say educated in…I'm not talking down on them, it's just being able to talk with them about this process, even if it may be something that is tough where I have seen my White counterparts or White female counterparts struggle with that process. Being able to engage with my students I think is huge because I'm a Black male and I function as… I remind students of their father, sometimes their uncle, sometimes their brother sometimes. So, that allows for that rapport to really kind of occur either sooner or better.

Relates with Students. Ten of 11 participants mentioned their ability to or importance of connecting to students due to phenotypic or cultural similarities. *Relating with students* often overlapped with *building rapport and* trust as participants described that their ability to relate impacted the trust build with their students. Davis described how his ability to relate to his students' experiences growing up in the same area has been beneficial to building rapport. He stated:

> …this is why I love working in the Hampton Roads area, because I grew up in the same… close to the same areas that you [his students] grew up in. So, I know some of the struggles, I know some of the thought processes that you encounter. I know some of the things that you might see as a Black 10-year-old or a Black 5-year-old. I've kind of experienced some of the things that you experienced. So, me knowing, me experiencing some of the things that you experienced, it's easier for me to relate to you and once we relate, we build rapport.

Relating with students also highlighted the importance of Black students and especially Black male students having someone that looks like them at the school. Omar expressed this by stating, "It's somebody they can directly relate to because in most settings they don't see people who look like them, especially a male." Adrian described how students felt more comfortable, "just them being more comfortable because I look like them." Khalil shared a similar sentiment:

> …just having that relatability and being able to create a comfort. I'm just not a teacher. You can come to me as just a mentor, an advisor or anything like that. So just being that for some of these students I feel like is very helpful. I feel like how they talk to me versus how they may talk to some of the other teachers who aren't male or just who aren't even African American is kind of just a different feel, that I sense.

All participants felt that as a Black male, they had a unique and important role in their students' lives in terms of relatability and being a role model. Scott stated, "When a Black man is teaching children, the impact is palpable and measurable." The participants mentioned not only relating due to race but also based on sharing the same interests or growing up in the same area as their Black students. Khalil shared this sentiment when asked about the unique assets he brings to teaching, "…that relatability, I come from the same place you come from… I understand the

different things that you may be going through." All the participants acknowledged that their presence, as a Black male, was significant and helped their students feel supported and understood. This was frequently noted specifically for their Black students or Black male students. Karter stated:

> I'm a reflection of them and their families, but that's the role that I take and not just for my people of color, but what's for anybody, but more so you just have to take the extra step for your own people. It's an expectation that is there. That's built in from the jump. It is like you should know what to do. And I read between the lines without even saying the word, you will know what to do.

Ingroup Comfort. Some of the Black male teachers shared a level of *ingroup comfort* when they were serving a majority Black population of students. Participant 1 stated:

> I feel like I can be me and nobody's really judging. And I feel like me being a Black male in a school that has a majority Black student body, there's no shame of being Black. I don't have to hide being Black.

This *ingroup comfort* extended to the parents of their Black students. A few of the participants mentioned that they felt more comfortable and could relate with the Black parents and that the Black parents felt similarly. Elijah expressed this about Black parents:

> I feel like they kind of see you and it's kind of like, hey, it looks like somebody I could easily talk to. I don't have to kind of code switch or anything like that. We can have a real conversation about your child, about life and anything like that.

Davis felt similarly:

> So, me being a Black male has to, I love the interactions with my, it is easier for me to interact with my students and their parents because... how can I explain this? I could relate to them, if that makes sense.

The comfortability with the Black parents was connected to a sense of community between them. This related to a sense of responsibility that some participants felt for their students, but specifically with Black students. “When you're in a private school, an independent school and parents of color see you, there is an unspoken acknowledgement that you're going to be looking out for my kids, that you're going to take care of my kids.” Not only was it viewed as a responsibility but also a communal expectation:

> I'm a reflection of them and their families, but that's the role that I take and not just for my people of color, but that's for anybody, but more so you just have to take the extra step for your own people. It's an expectation that is there (Karter).

The participants recognized that not only was there presence significant for their students, but also for the parents and community. Since the Black male teachers are often the “only” or minority in their schools, there is a level of expectation from the school and larger Black community for them to be present for the students and serve as a mentor or role model.

Theme 2: Navigating Marginality

The theme of Navigating Marginality was supported by the following three codes: *Female Dominated Field, Rarity/Need, Assumptions/Stereotypes,* and *Lack of Relatedness*. It described the underrepresentation of Black males in the teaching field and assumptions that may be associated with being a Black male teacher.

Female Dominated Field. Ninety-one percent of the participants mentioned the extent to which teaching is either a *female dominated field* or White female dominated field. Karter

stated, “that's just the reality of the situation, especially that you're in a predominantly White environment or predominantly, White woman dominated environment…I mean you stick out like a sore thumb.” Elijah felt similarly and described the social stigma of the teaching field as a barrier. He stated, “social stigma is a barrier because I mean, historically teaching has been a woman-based profession.” Omar also felt this stigma is a unique challenge for Black males, “the stigmatism of I'm a Black male in a white woman's world.”

The experience of being a Black male in a female dominated field, included feelings of isolation and differential treatment. Elijah expressed this by stating, “…there's only four Black male teachers. So, I mean, we're definitely having a different experience than predominantly White teachers or White female teachers. They just have a different aspect of what they go through and what we go through.” Further, the Black male teachers have to find a way to navigate this environment where they are one of a few. Scott stated, “...it's a female dominated industry, and then you put on top of that Black male, and that's a whole dynamic in itself that we've got to negotiate.”

Lack of Relatedness. *Lack of relatedness* connected to the code, *female dominated field* because the participants felt like the “only” in their work environment and struggled to relate to their colleagues. The code captured instances where participants described a lack of comfortability with colleagues or a need to assimilate to fit into group with their colleagues. The aforementioned experiences highlighted in *Theme 1: Cultural Connection and Relationships* emphasized the importance of *ingroup comfort* and *building rapport* with the students and parents, as opposed to their experiences with their White female and White male colleagues.

Seventy-three percent of the participants mentioned a *lack of relatedness* with their White and/or White female colleagues, which was often in opposition to having *ingroup comfort* when

being surrounded by others who looked like them. Gabriel stated, “the Black staff is one of the highest importance just to having that support system you need to thrive.” He also noted how that familiar space “cultivates a better working environment” where faculty, staff, and students feel supported because there are people who look like them in the building. When participants did not have this support, they did not feel they had a social/emotional outlet or someone to relate to. “So as a Black male, because you're typically the only, you don't have a lot of people to lean on” (Omar). Davis stated:

> Being the only Black male can be challenging sometimes because sometimes it feels like I can't relate to anybody or I can't truly, yeah… I can't relate to. I feel like if I had another Black educator in the building, we could share ideas or we could share, or even outside of school, we could just share our favorite football teams or stuff like that.

The *lack of relatedness* with their White colleagues caused some participants to few collegial relationships as a challenge. Omar stated, “I think it's challenging because in most settings or on most teams, I've been the only Black person or the only Black male. And so, my interaction with them [White colleagues] at work is strictly work related.”

Some participants also mentioned a need to speak differently to other colleagues due to this lack of comfortability. Khalil and Davis specifically distinguished between “professional talk” and “code switching” with their White or White female colleagues versus how they speak to other Black teachers. Omar described how he had to adjust his social interactions and interests to speak with a White colleague:

> I had to spend time watching sports center on ESPN, trying to figure out how to engage this person in conversation to just be able to have a conversation with my colleague. So, it changes a lot of what my social skills have been and what my social skills are.

The necessity to fit into the majority group lends to the Black male teacher having to balance between remaining authentic and assimilating, even adjusting their physical appearance. Elijah stated:

> I would say challenges as far as being a Black male teacher, I would say just remaining, remaining authentic could be a challenge. Again, a lot of times it all depends on the culture of the school. So, a lot of times you might feel uncomfortable and if I had locks, if I didn't have 'em, tied back, I might feel uncomfortable wearing 'em out.

Black male teachers often find themselves in environments where they are culturally and phenotypically different from their colleagues, being the "only" in a female dominated field. This leads to feelings of isolation and having to adapt to what's appropriate for the dominant culture. Karter stated:

> You just fit in…fit in where you get in, but sometimes it's not even worth it. Sometimes the steak's not worth the sizzle….and some they just don't understand where we come from. They just don't understand us or don't want to get and understand us. Just don't have the time to understand and get us.

However, Scott discussed how even though he is one of a few Black males in his private school, he strives to be "uninhibited by surroundings."

> I'm going to rock a dashiki. When I want to rock a dashiki, I'm going to wear my fraternity colors. I'm going to do all those things that are me. And I think that brings an energy that is different than buttoned up, bow tied, straight laced. And I think a good organization is a mixture of all those things. And so, I think Black men bring a different energy, a different gravitas, and I think that makes the whole better. And I think if you

> can come in and not feel like you have to usurp to existing things, but you can be yourself, I love that.

Karter shared a similar perspective, “This is what it is, there's no code switching. This is what it is. I don't have to do any of that stuff. We're not doing that here. This is me. This is who I am.”

Rarity/Need. This code was represented well by Omar’s statement, **“**We are what's not. Most teachers in 2024 are of a different gender and of a different ethnicity. We fill that void. Being successful as a Black male in any career field, you will be in the minority unfortunately” (Omar). Participants often acknowledged the *rarity* of Black male teachers in their respective schools and in education generally. Jasper stated, “'I’m the only Black male teacher in that whole school of like a hundred teachers, which is crazy.” Davis was also the only Black male teacher at his school. Other participants described having two to four Black male teachers in their school; however, they often mentioned a lack of “core teachers” who were Black males. Omar stated:

> …there's not a lot of us in this building. There is 1, 2, 3 Black, no… two Black male core teachers and we are both history teachers. There's no Black male math teachers. They're special ed teachers, they're gym teachers, but like math, English and science, there's only two Black male core teachers.

Elijah stated, “...we don't have a lot of male staff, but we have male counselors, custodians, security, front office staff. But as far as Black male teachers, they’re slim and few.” He further described them by content area, “Three of the Black male teachers are special ed teachers. And then you have one that teaches math seven, and I can't really think of any other Black male teachers.”

Scott discussed being an “anomaly” at his private school:

> …being the anomaly on a job is always interesting. I don't care what age you are. I'm the only Black male teaching in the elementary school. We don't have any Black males teaching in our middle school…So when I look around, I don't see any Black men besides me.

The need for more Black male teachers was also discussed and related to reasons they entered the field. Gabriel stated, "for me being in a city that my student body has predominantly been Black, me being a Black male coming in where clearly there's a shortage…" Davis stated, "That was one of the reasons why I wanted to get into education too, is because it's not, it's not a lot of males, but it's definitely not a lot of Black males."

Rarity/Need often overlapped with other codes such as *female dominated field*:

> …there's only four Black male teachers. So, I mean, we're definitely having a different experience than predominantly white teachers or white female teachers. They just have a different aspect of what they go through and what we go through. (Elijah)

Assumptions/Stereotypes, "I'm used to being the unicorn. I'm used to being the spokesperson. I'm used to being, well, you don't fit the mold because you win" (Omar). *Opportunities*, "plus there's so many opportunities beyond the classroom. Again, for a Black male because there's not many of us" (Omar). *Relates with Students,* "I think there's more kids that could be reached if we have more African American males in, in the school system." and *Communal Value*:

> …seeing the direct relationship between a man of color standing in front of a room to boys of color, what that meant to their outcome…and so that dearth, that element that is not happening, I wanted to step into that gap a little bit. And so that's exactly why I did it. How can I step in the gap and be a little bit of a help? (Scott)

Rarity/Need is further discussed in Research Question 2 in relation to *communal value*.

Assumptions/Stereotypes. With being the minority at their schools, 91% of participants mentioned various racial, cultural, societal, or gender assumptions and stereotypes they have been subjected to. This included having imposed responsibilities or roles, assumptions about their abilities as a teacher, and assumptions about their demeanor. Scott stated:

> I think in the teaching field, Black men could be looked at as the disciplinarian and that tag can maybe be a weight that you either don't want to carry or you don't feel comfortable with. I think it's a position that sometimes we get moved into just like diversity equity officer, and it may not be something that really resonates with you. So, I think that's a reality. What are they doing with you? Are they using your natural abilities or are they preconceived ideas about what a Black man is?

Sixty-four percent of the participants discussed how other teachers would send students (often Black students or Black male students) to their class to "calm down." This was related to the assumption that the Black male teacher was more adept at discipline or their "stature could be more intimidating." Jasper described how he is expected to handle Black students when his other colleagues are not. He stated:

> I'm expected to do certain things sometimes that other teachers, maybe in my department, aren't expected to do. You know, like…as far as effort goes, like, I don't know, like if another Black male student is having an issue, you know, they want, they look at me like, even if it's not my kid, but they look at me to like, you know, help them fix this issue.

Colleagues imposed roles on the Black male teachers that are beyond their formal job descriptions and that are expected of them because of their race and gender. Omar stated:

> The staff might try to put you in a role that you didn't sign up. So yeah, I'm a teacher, but I'm not a security guard, so I'm not going to be in there checking passes, checking the

> bathroom, doing this and the third. I mean, I don't mind every now and then, but I'm not responsible for being security and teaching.

Khalil described how his experience as a Black male is unique as students are often sent to him for “behavior issues”:

> So, I feel like that's the kind of barrier, it's a lot put on you and you're usually not going to have the same kind of experience as your other teachers because usually you're going to be one of few male teachers and then at that one of few very, very Black male teachers at a school.

Assumptions about their stature or being a Black male has impact beyond additional roles and responsibilities. The participants also described misconceptions about their abilities as a teacher. Gabriel stated:

> …some of those barriers can be the expectations that you are qualified to do this job. So, the questioning of whether or not you are fit for this, your expertise or where did you get your degrees from, what certifications you have, things of that nature. So, the questioning of your professionalism or your educational background.

Assumptions and “being labeled” led some participants to have to “prove themselves.” Karter stated:

> Being a six foot 6, 240 pound educated Black man, you got to prove yourself more than anything else. You just have to prove your worth. You have to prove your standing. You have to prove your position…It's like there are certain things you can do, certain things you can't do that other people can, there's the way that you walk, the way that you talk, the way that you speak, the way that you project your voice, the diction of your words, your vocabulary. It's all of these things wrapped into one, your body language, all of

> those types of things, the way you cut your eyes, the way you speak, the way you carry yourself, you being watched each and every day I mean to the point where it's like, is that a burden I carry?

The need to "prove themselves" may have also stemmed from being compared to their colleagues. Jasper stated, "people may think that you aren't as good of a teacher as someone else." The participant also related this to teaching physical education, as opposed to a core subject such as math or science, "just not thinking that I'm as good of a teacher as anyone else, as other people are. Especially because, you know, I'm in physical education and health." Orion described a similar experience where others assume he is not a core subject teacher:

> …because I coach baseball, the first thing they'll ask is, you're a gym teacher? And I say, no, I'm a history teacher. And all of a sudden, they're like, ohhhh, you know what I'm saying? So, it is like, oh, and then they look at you differently...different perspective.

The participants also described assumptions from their colleagues such as being aggressive. Jasper stated, "I work with a lot of white women and that's just across the school. They sometimes feel like intimidated by me." He further described how this had led to colleagues falsely depicting his interactions, "I've had times where people have gone over me and said that I came to them, and I talked to them a certain way or been aggressive when I was speaking to them and of course that's not true." These assumptions were also noted to make relationships challenging with their colleagues. Omar stated, "So it was challenging to make relationships in those settings because they would assume something about me instead of just, lemme just ask him, let me just talk to him." Jasper described how his fellow colleagues and administrators may treat him differently based on assumptions, "because I'm a male and I'm

Black. I'm automatically seen as more aggressive at times, so I feel like I get the counteraction of some teachers being aggressive towards me at times, administrators as well."

Theme 3: Organizational and Affective Challenges

The theme of Organizational and Affective Challenges was supported by three codes: *Emotional Cost, School Policies,* and *Effort Cost*. It describes the various challenges, effort costs, and emotional costs of being a teacher.

Emotional Cost. "I would say if you're in this occupation as a teacher in the role of position that you play, it really does take a toll on you." (Karter). *Emotional cost,* defined as frustration, stress, or other negative emotion with teaching, often overlapped with other codes such as *effort cost, school policies,* and *lack of relatedness*. For example, Scott described how navigating social situations with his colleagues can be exhausting:

> So, I do think that when you're in those situations and you are one of few, that always feels a little funny. And what would it be if I was in a different situation? When we have social gatherings, I tend not to run to most of those because I'm going to be in that room looking around for somebody to chop it up with and I really don't have any folks that I really chop it up with. So, I think that's a reality for all of us when we're in spaces where we are one of many and there's not many of us. So that can just feel a little tiring sometime. Yeah, just a little tiring.

Jasper and John-Paul also described "dealing with colleagues" as an emotional barrier. John-Paul discussed his frustration with having a *lack of relatedness* with all female or White colleagues:

> …if we want to get into the racial aspect, if it's a bunch of Black dudes, we have a common point where we are all start at, maybe some of y'all are from the ghetto or some of y'all from the, and some of y'all from the suburbs. But we have a common starting

> point, and a lot of cultural aspects are similar, even if we don't come from similar areas. So, let's start there. And it's a lot easier to get along. But if it's a Black guy in all white school or a guy in an all-female school or whatever, you might have some issues with the people in charge or the other people who are working there simply because you don't have any place to start at. You don't have any starting point. And the frustration is that I don't even know what to do because I don't have a way to connect with you. And I think that is more frustration than anxiety or depression.

Jasper further described how this emotional barrier is also related to how his [White] colleagues handle Black students:

> I have issues with kind of with that when another teacher addresses a student, especially a Black student, male or female, in a way that I don't think they would address a white student. You know like more aggressively, you know because the student is louder or doing something they don't understand. That definitely bothers me. It definitely sparks some emotional stuff inside. So that's a difficulty sometimes, like, holding back.

In addition to the emotional cost of navigating an environment where they are the minority, 82% of participants described how other aspects of teaching can become “stressful”, “tiring” and “anxiety” inducing. When asked about any emotional barriers he’s experienced, Elijah talked about the stress with students. This included the emotional toll when his students are sick, have severe health issues, and students being disrespectful toward teachers. He stated:

> I even got a situation one of my students is not in my class going through health issues. They have health issues where they're pretty, their recovery is unlikely…and then even kids, like I said, these kids is disrespectful. I ain't going to lie. A lot of these kids, a lot of times they don't know how to talk to adults.

Gabriel discussed how the stress from work continues into his personal life. “The stress of work comes home, but then that stress then bleeds over into work the next day and the next day after that. So, you're constantly playing catch up where you don't have balance, at least for me.” Similarly, Adrian elaborated on how he has to choose between having balance of mind or focusing on work, “I won't be as effective as I was as a teacher because it's either your sanity or mine when I go home at the end of the day.”

A few of the participants associated the stress of teaching specifically with their subject area, special education. Gabriel stated:

> …if teaching is stressful, then I would say special education is the most stressful of teachers. So that stress was becoming too much and so therefore I did not want to be in special education anymore. So, I decided to leave that.”

This stress was so substantial for Gabriel, that he left special education and transitioned to social studies for a time period. He later ultimately decided to leave the teaching profession altogether.

Orion did not feel teaching was stressful. He stated:

> Teaching is not, I don't think teaching is a stressful job. It's just the stressful part of the job is that you want all your kids to succeed no matter what. But you have those kids that don't live up to their potential and have gifts that nobody else has and they're not using it. That's the stressful part.

School Policies. Participants attributed some of the stress of teaching to issues with school policies, discipline, or curriculum standards that interfered with learning or their ability to be a teacher. For example, Orion stated “They put a lot on us of how to teach to a test.” Participants described an extant amount of effort to attain these deadlines and “crunch to get all

these skills" for the students. There was also concern for the students' level of learning within these strict time limits. Elijah discussed these issues in relation to teaching being moved online:

> …I think it's the way things line up in certain curriculums. So, they try to teach based on this pacing guide as given at the beginning of the school year where they have to follow. And it's so rigid where if you fall off, your lead might be like, Hey, well you guys we're on unit three, you guys are still on unit two. What's going on? Well, why is your class behind? Things like that where they're not necessarily taking the kids for the individual learning needs and accountability, but even special ed kids are not getting that benefit of the doubt where they learn different.

Karter shared a similar sentiment, "virtual learning was just another burden that was just placed on anybody and everybody and a lot of people just could not."

The participants also described a lack of accountability and discipline in the school system as a hindrance to the level of learning. Over 50% of the participants mentioned issues with cell phone policies and lack of consequences for the students. Adrian described how this has just made teaching "tougher." He stated, "It's super frustrating. Like, I have to choose whether I'm going to keep redirecting, questioning, yelling, or am I gonna get through my lesson." With the growing rate of cell phone use and technology in the schools and decline in disciplinary actions, some participants described being "frustrated" and felt that they're "less effective" as teachers. Adrian stated, "sometimes I think the phones has a lot of people consider considering leaving, not just myself. Um, because it, again, it gets so frustrating…"

The disciplinarily aspect was closely related to emotional cost:

> When you writing up six kids a day and all that stuff, it takes a toll on you. And it, it can make you, I guess, make you wanna shift out of that career or give you a bad, a bitter taste daily or have you upset frequently (Adrian).

Jasper discussed how he left a school due to a lack of disciplinary actions in the school:

> It became overwhelming to the point where I actually did leave, I left the city because of how the schools were run. As far as discipline, I'm going to be completely honest, kids were just off the chain and there wasn't any accountability.

Participants described having put in more effort to get students' attention and teach the content which could be "overwhelming" and "exhausting." However, the toll of disciplinary actions and various school policies were only described by participants from public schools.

Effort Cost. *Effort cost* described how the perceived effort in teaching can be extensive. Karter stated:

> So, after two o'clock, I'm dead, I'm tired, but there's an expectation that we'll go to a meeting and that could be a department meeting, faculty meeting, data meeting, whatever other meetings in a given week. And so, it becomes very taxing to be able to do all these things.

Elijah described a similar sentiment but within special education, "...time management could be a drawback because a lot of times the stuff, especially in special education, put that on record. A lot of this paperwork and stuff is, I'm going to say unnecessary, but it's a little overwhelming…" Orion stated:

> It's like we put a lot of time in the lessons. We put a lot of time away, like grading papers, reading essays, it's a lot of time. And some people say, oh, you get summers off. It is not

> about the summers. It's not about that. It's what you have to do to get these kids engaged and make them use their brains and get them motivated. That's tough.

Seventy-three percent of participants mentioned the extent to which teaching can require a high level of effort without an equitable level of pay or recognition for their effort. Orion stated, “the drawback is doing a lot of work and trying to be efficient, but not getting the compensation or the credit for it.” Gabriel described how he felt that he doesn’t get paid sufficiently “to do the amount of work that you actually do.” Elijah echoed this sentiment by describing the additional tasks that teaching requires outside of paid work hours such as Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

Scott discussed how pay may relate to Black males entering the field:

> Is this really the energy and time component and income relationship that I want? And I do think young Black men look at this and say, I don't think, I just don't think it affords me what I need to.

Omar described a similar feeling about the stigma associated with teacher pay. When asked about unique challenges that Black male teacher face, he stated “The stigmatism of going into career field that will not produce money.”

The lack of pay, relative to the demands of teaching (i.e., effort required) was a factor that made some participants consider leaving the field of teaching; however, the students were a common factor for them to persist. Gabriel stated, “You don't get paid enough to do the amount of work that you actually do. And I'm too stressed to want to stay at my current school. The students are the reason why I have been back.” Karter stated, “So that's what it is, you live and breathe that, you don't go for it because of the pay, you go for it because it's your calling as a nurturer.”

Orion described how he felt all teachers don't get the credit they deserve:

> So, I don't think that the time and effort, the time and effort has a color. The time and effort for all teachers that we're doing more than we get paid for and we do more than we get more credit for.

However, several participants described having to work "twice as hard than everyone else" due to their race and sometimes gender. Even with their additional effort, it does not seem "good enough". Several Black male teachers also described a lack of acknowledgement overall, Karter stated, "…administrators will favor some folks better than others. And it's like, acknowledge me. I want to be acknowledged. I want to be respected." Jasper described how in certain situations he receives differential treatment, "being a Black man, like, oh, you know, I don't get the grace that some other teachers might get." Karter also described how "other colleagues" can do things that Black male teachers cannot:

> … you're not good enough, you don't fit in with the rest of them like that. It is not enough for a lot of these people. It's like some folks can do no wrong and make the same mistakes. They [Black males] can't make those same mistakes. They see their colleagues can make mistakes that they can't make. They see their colleagues can do certain things that they can't do again. And you got to work twice as hard than everyone else. And still, it's not good enough. It's not good enough. Test scores be danged, it's not good enough.

Some participants even felt that with the effort they put, they were overlooked for promotion due to their race. Davis stated, "I feel like it's harder to climb those ranks and to be recognized for the things that you do in and out the classroom on a day-to-day basis. And as a Black male educator, yeah, I feel like it's harder." Participants described how in contrast to their other White male or White female colleagues they have to go the extra mile. Karter stated,

"Some of us have to show improve time and time and time and time again more so than our colleagues."

Theme (4) Supports and Theme (5) Value and Expectancies related to research question 2. These themes will be discussed in the next section.

RQ2: What are the contextual factors that support Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field, considering perceived costs and values?

Theme 4: Support

The theme of Support was established by three codes: *Outside Influences*, *School Support,* and *Opportunities*. It describes the various external factors that support Black male teachers' persistence in the field of teaching or motivation to enter the field.

Outside Influences. Outside influences, described whether the participants' choice to enter or remain in the teaching field was influenced by a family member, school experience, or confirmation from another individual. The most common influence on their motivation to enter the field was from familial influences. Almost half of the participants attributed their decision to teach to their parents who were also teachers. Elijah stated, "I decided kind of early. My father was a teacher. I spent summers helping him...just being that son of a teacher and I just looked up to him." Gabriel described influence from several family members:

> I had family members who were teachers, so in different facets. So, my mother was a Sunday school teacher, always would see her lesson planning for her Sunday school classes. I have three aunts who were teachers. One did adult education, one stopped her career as an engineer to then become a professor after getting her doctorate in education, and then my other aunt is a math teacher for middle schoolers or was a math teacher for

some middle schoolers. So, having them around…I think just having them around was also an influence.

Influence from their parents or their teachers was sometimes compounded with the need for Black male teachers in schools. This reasoning or motivation to enter the field was also a reason for them to persist. Jasper explained how one of his professors helped him decide to enter the field. He quoted her in the interview, “I really think you should, look into teaching, like, we need more Black males in education, and your temperament, you know, you just fit the personality type of someone who, you know, helps students.”

School Support. Fifty-four percent of the participants described a level of positive support from the administration or colleagues at their schools. This support was described as vital to their persistence in the school. Further, three of the six participants who described support, related it to the race of their administration and colleagues, or to the staffs’ understanding of the importance of having a Black male teacher in the school. Scott stated, “I'm very happy that we hired a sister [Black female] who was the head of the lower school because her and I have a connection that I can touch upon at times.” Gabriel specifically mentioned the area he worked in (Washington, DC) and how the “large amount of Black faculty and staff” helped foster camaraderie and creativity in the school.

Support from various staff such as the principal or other teachers was also described as influential to their persistence as a teacher and/or motivation to pursue additional teaching opportunities. Elijah stated:

…if I wasn’t at the school that I'm at and if I didn't have the support, then I definitely would've been turned off in a profession as a whole and I would just definitely started

> working in the shipyard or something. I wouldn't have been a teacher if I wasn't at the school I was at for that long.

Jasper and Orion described that they "like their team" or had "great colleagues and great administrators."

Opportunities. Another factor contributing to the Black male teachers' persistence was the prospect of additional opportunities. Over half of the participants felt that they had more opportunities in teaching because they were a Black male. This included opportunities inside and outside of the classroom. Omar stated, "there's so many opportunities beyond the classroom. Again, for a Black male because there's not many of us." Orion stated:

> I don't think it's about challenges because I think in some ways there are opportunities. Some of these schools are becoming more and more diverse and more and more, some schools want to have more Black male teachers to become administrators. So, I think there's more opportunities.

Omar and Davis mentioned that the opportunities are available for Black male teachers, but you have to go out and actively pursue them.

A few participants mentioned that they explored these opportunities outside the classroom to coach or mentor their students. They recognized the benefit of being a Black male mentor or role model for their students and described personal value from pursuing these opportunities.

Theme 5: Value and Expectancies

The theme of Value and Expectancies was supported by three codes: *Communal Value, Interest Value, and Expectancies for Success.* It describes the various personal or intrinsic values that contribute to the participants' motivation to teach and persist in the teaching field.

Communal Value. All participants attributed some aspect of their desire to teach to *communal value,* defined as a desire to help others and make a difference. Karter stated, "Helping my people... making a difference in their life…This is where I need to be. This is what I need to do. I can really truly make a difference." Helping others was a common aspiration. Adrian shared, "I've always had the desire to help people." Teaching and/or helping students was termed as their "calling." This not only included helping Black students in their community but all students. Karter stated:

> I just want to make a difference in people's lives...my calling is working with kids. My calling is working with any type of kid from any type of place, from any type of community, just to help them out, just to give back and help them make their mark.

Gabriel described how it influenced his career choice, "I love when I see students have the light bulb moments and so being able to be a part of that is part of the reason why I got into teaching."

This sentiment was echoed throughout the interviews, with participants describing a desire to make a difference in their students' lives and be an agent of change for what people may believe or assume a Black male teacher to be. Even with participants describing their experience with assumptions as sometimes "exhausting" or "challenging", participants used these assumptions as an opportunity to dispute the stereotypes. Omar stated, "I love being able to be that person who changes the idea, either one for what a Black male is or two, what a teacher is." Jasper shared a similar desire to "be a role model" for some of the students because of the need for more Black male teachers. When asked "what role has being a Black male had in your career decision" Orion stated:

> To be a positive role model to the African American kids. Seeing a face. Some kids don't see a person that wears a tie or see somebody that is educated or somebody they don't see

> every day. Just being that positive influence on African American kids. Saying that we can do something different, we can be influential, you can do whatever.

Jasper responded similarly to this question:

> I definitely wanted to be in a high school, and I felt like, you know, like we needed more Black male teachers in the secondary level too because, you know, those are the ages where students make some of the most crucial decisions and they can be molded, I guess, a little more. So, you know, speaking of Black males, I feel like I could be a role model for some of those students in middle school as well.

Despite barriers that the participants previously described facing in the teaching field, their *communal value* was a consistent reason for them to persist as a teacher. Adrian expressed this by stating "those barriers actually make me want to stay. It actually makes me want to stay a teacher so that I can teach other Black people, especially Black males." Scott expressed a similar belief:

> ...so that's why I keep doing it. I know I'm making a difference... not a lot of students of color here, but I do know that the students of color who see me, it matters to them, I also believe that the students of non-color who see me, see a Black man getting it done here. And that's an important element as well.

Davis stated:

> The barriers actually... I know it's, it's weird, but those barriers actually make me want to stay. It actually makes me want to stay a teacher so that I can teach other Black people, especially Black males, that first it's okay to be a teacher, and second, it's okay to be faced with obstacles and things like that and to keep pushing through it…

Elijah mentioned that helps with his persistence. He stated, “It helps keep me going. It is a joyful feeling to know that you're changing lives, you're making an impact on their life.” Orion and Jasper described the impact the students have on their persistence because they are “motivating” and they “enjoy seeing growth in the students.”

Communal value related to the code *rarity/need,* as the participants connected the need for Black males in the schools to why they entered or remained in the field. Omar stated, “To be what I didn't have as a kid. I mean I'm from the number streets in [Hampton Roads]. I can count upon my one hand how many Black male teachers I had.” Adrian described why teaching was important to him:

> I figured, you know, being an African American male, and that's sometimes they say is needed in the school system, well, at least where, where, uh, demographically where I'm located in [Hampton Roads], um, it's, I guess it opened my eyes to maybe I can help kids.

Adrian shared a similar sentiment:

> …a lot of kids that, you know, again, my area, African American kids who are misguided, misunderstood and stuff like that. And if you could reach some of them, you won't reach all of them. You can reach some of them. And if that, if you're able to do that, I think is, is a success.

Communal value also encompassed *attainment value* (i.e., identity-based or personal importance) which was collapsed during analysis due to consistent overlap in coding (i.e., conceptually similar). For example, Adrian stated:

> So, I, like that aspect of making a difference in... whether it's the one or two kids’ life a year, or one or two kids' life in each class, you know. It's super important to me, so, it motivates me in that aspect also.

Omar shared a similar sentiment:

> I think it is part of my calling in terms of just being beneficial toward the next generation and imparting, I get paid to be a mentor. I get paid to be an encourager, I get paid to be a counselor. Those are hats that we complain about wearing, but at the same time it's amazing because if we don't do it, who is? So, I think it has encompassed who I am as a person.

Being a teacher and helping their students is not only something that the participants value, but something that they feel is a part of who they are. Gabriel stated, “I would love to help facilitate young people get to where they want to be.”, “I love helping folks. I love guiding people. I love mentoring people. I love being a coach.” (Karter).

Interest Value. All of the participants also described *interest* in teaching as a reason to either enter or remain in the field. Several participants discussed how once they started working with children or working in the classroom, they knew they found what they “loved” or were “supposed” to do. Karter described a similar experience, “I just found my love of working with kids and that's what happened. I ended up loving it. I've been doing this ever since." Khalil stated:

> I've always had interests in a form of teaching. I knew I wanted to be a coach, so most of the coaches that I knew in high school, they usually taught some type of subject in the school. And I've always liked mentoring and doing different things with youth. So, teaching kind of came easy to me.

Statements such as “love my job”, “love being a teacher”, and “passion” were common across the interviews. Some of the reasons for teaching overlapped with participants’ attainment value or identity. Adrian stated this when asked about becoming a teacher:

> ...helping people is one of the things I do. I'm a people person. Um, so I like to get to know people, get to know kids…So getting to know people and making a difference has always been something that I enjoyed, or I found as a passion, whether I realized it or not.

Others knew they wanted to enter teaching before even entering the classroom. For example, Jasper described how they knew they wanted to be a teacher as early as high school. Gabriel described how he decided to be a teacher his junior year of college when he knew he "really liked to teach."

Some participants started in a different field but switched to teaching due to their interest. Davis shared this about his experience switching from criminal justice, "I liked working inside the classrooms. I liked being a literacy tutor. I mentored to the students. I graduated with my bachelor's, and I liked being inside the classroom more than I liked my criminal justice degree."

Interest value, like communal value often factored in their persistence as a teacher despite barriers they face. Karter stated, "being an educator is the best thing, the best thing ever. It could be the worst of times, the best of times, but you know what, I'd rather be here than anywhere else." Orion stated, "I don't think anything like that will push me away from teaching. I really do like my job. I love it."

Expectancies for Success. Another factor in the participants' persistence was their expectation that they could succeed at the task, or their *expectancies for success.* The participants' desire to teach and knowledge that Black male teachers were needed often coincided with their expectation that they could succeed at teaching. This also related to their ability to relate to and build relationships with their students. Elijah stated, "I'm very confident being a male teacher, a Black male teacher." He further ascribed his expectation for success to knowing that he was "making a difference" and having "the confidence as far as building the rapport with

the kids" This was echoed in the interview with Gabriel who was less confident in teaching but very confident in his ability to interact with his students:

> I have confidence in my observations of my students to get to know them and their quirks, their personalities and how I fit in with that, how I engage with them from student to student…But when it comes, I mean that's one aspect of teaching, the classroom management lesson, planning, all of these different things, communications with students, families, things of that nature. There's so many elements that come in with teaching that I can't ever say that, oh, I'm great or a great teacher because those things fall by the wayside for some of the other things that may be strong in.

Orion shared a similar experience:

> I'm confident that I'm there for my kids. I won't say I'm a great teacher or a good teacher, I'm just a teacher. But I'm confident that once these kids leave this building, these kids learn more than the subject. They learn life lessons, how to be a good citizen, and what makes me think I could be a good teacher is when years after they graduate, they all come back to see me. So that tells me that I did my purpose, my job.

Khalil shared this about his confidence, "So it is kind of 50/50, but I feel like honestly… I feel like I leave a lasting experience."

Other participants were more confident in both their ability to teach and build relationships with their students. Jasper stated, "...pretty confident that I'm a good teacher. I don't have much doubt in that because I hear people tell me. I've had a successful career." Scott shared, "I kill it. And I don't say that arrogantly, but I pour into students."

All participants shared confidence in being there for their students but not all expressed the same level of confidence in their ability a teacher.

SUMMARY

This phenomenological study explored the lived experience of 11 Black male teachers in Southeastern, Virginia and the Metropolitan, DC area. A summary of each participant who was interviewed was included. Interviews were used as the sole form of data collection. The data was analyzed using Hycner's (1999) five phases of explication: (1) phenomenological reduction, (2) delineating units of meaning, (3) clustering of units of meaning to form themes, (4) summarizing each interview, and (5) creating composite summaries. The analyzed data resulted in five major themes and 16 codes to support them (Table 3 and Table 4). Direct quotes from the participants were used to support development of the themes and their connection to the research questions. Chapter Five will delve into the findings with an emphasis on its' significance and novelty to the field.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the experience of Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field. This study addresses a significant gap in the literature by providing a qualitative exploration of this phenomena using Situated Expectancy-Value theory. Further, the study solely focused on Black male in-service teachers as opposed to using cross-cultural comparisons. In this study, I investigated how Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences influenced their motivational choices through a Situated-Expectancy Value lens. This was addressed with the following research questions:

1. What is the experience of being a Black male teacher who persists for three years or more?
2. What are the contextual factors that support Black male teachers' persistence in the teaching field, considering perceived costs and values?

This chapter will provide a summary of the findings, outline interpretations of the data by theme, and connect the findings to prior literature. Based on these interpretations, theoretical and practical implications are provided.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study yielded rich data regarding the experience of Black male teachers who have persisted for three years or more in teaching. Eleven interviews resulted in five main themes and 16 codes to examine the phenomenon. The conversations with the participants highlighted the various factors that were salient in their experience and persistence as a Black male teacher.

The experience of being a Black male teacher who persists for three years, or more was characterized by a combination of rewarding moments and significant challenges. The positive aspects included having a positive impact on their students' lives, building strong, lasting

relationships with their students, and gaining personal fulfillment in teaching. The participants felt they played a unique role in their students' lives by being able to relate to them and provide a positive role model since Black male teachers are "slim and few." Participants felt a strong sense of purpose as teachers as well a communal responsibility for their students of color.

In terms of cost, being a teacher, regardless of race, can be challenging. However, the data revealed that with being a Black male, those challenges can substantially grow with assumptions about their character or educational background, feeling a lack of relatedness with their colleagues, and being the "only" in many of their work settings. While other challenges with the workload of teaching and lack of pay were also mentioned, only one participant had made a finite decision to leave the field this year. This participant described how although the students have brought him back year after year, he had hit a point of exhaustion in teaching. The other ten participants all planned to remain in the field during this time. When asked "What motivates you to persist despite costs or barriers?" all participants noted an aspect of, or experience with their students. This was expressed through phrases including "making a difference", "success stories", and "relationships". While no two participants shared the exact same experience, all the participants mentioned having a passion for helping others and loving to see growth in their students.

The findings from this study contribute significantly to the broader literature on the experiences of Black male teachers by providing a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing their persistence in the profession. The rich data collected from the 11 interviews offer valuable insights into both the rewarding and challenging aspects of their roles. These insights help to illuminate the unique contributions of Black male teachers, particularly their ability to serve as relatable role models and their commitment to fostering positive student

relationships. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of addressing race-specific challenges, such as feelings of isolation and assumptions about their abilities, which can impact their professional experience and persistence.

This research adds to the growing body of literature by highlighting the critical need for supportive measures and policies that recognize and mitigate the unique challenges faced by Black male teachers. By doing so, it informs educational stakeholders and policymakers about the importance of creating inclusive and supportive environments that promote the retention of Black male teachers. Moreover, the study's emphasis on the intrinsic motivations and communal responsibilities felt by these teachers provides a framework for future research to explore strategies that can enhance the recruitment and retention of Black male teachers, ultimately contributing to a more diverse and effective educational workforce.

DISCUSSION OF THEMES

The following section expands on the findings of this study with comparisons to previous studies pertaining to Black teachers' experiences, motivations, and Situated Expectancy-Value theory. Findings that confirm or diverge from previous studies are discussed below and are organized by theme.

Theme 1: Cultural Connections and Relationships

Research has highlighted the unique relationships that Black teachers have with their Black students (Griffin & Tackie, 2017; Ware, 2006; Richman, 2018). This includes having an interpersonal connection and being an additional support to their academic well-being. Black teachers are invested in their Black students' well-being in a way that goes beyond the "typical" teacher (Ware, 2006). Participants in this study highly valued the connection they made with their students and acknowledged how their presence was significant, particularly for students of color. The unique connection with students of color expressed by the teachers in this study

seemed to stem from a communal responsibility for these students or a level of protection. Participants felt the need to defend students of color when they felt they were being treated differently by a White colleague. McKinney de Royston and colleagues (2021) reported that the Black teachers in their study had a sense of protection over their students due to overt and systemic racism embedded in the schools. White teachers may make assumptions about a students' behavior due to their race; Black teachers seek to understand the underlying concern with the student. Participants in this study expressed understanding of their Black students and found it to be a unique asset. Further, Black male teachers experience discrimination and racism themselves in schools (Wallace et al., 2022) and may therefore relate and feel a responsibility to protect their students from having a similar experience. Archer and colleagues (2022) reported that teachers of color act as advocates for their students of color, likely due to their own experiences of racial discrimination. In this study, participants mentioned using their own discriminatory experiences to prepare their Black male students for how the world may view them. This relates to a participant discussing the need to create a safe space for his students when they may not have this elsewhere.

The participants' cultural connection with their students both related to their experience as a teacher as well as their persistence in teaching. The data from this study, and prior research, suggests that their racial (and sometimes gender) identity further influenced the participants connection and dedication to their students (Ware, 2006). This study further supports these findings as participants described a distinct need to be there for students of color and young Black males both academically and emotionally.

Bristol (2018) reported significant differences in Black male teachers' experiences based on the number of other Black faculty in the schools. This study expands on this notion, as several participants also highlighted comfortability with a greater number of Black students and Black

parents. This is counter to prior research which indicates that teachers are more likely to leave the profession when serving a higher population of students of color (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Djonko-Moore, 2016). Findings from this study suggest that having *ingroup comfort* was highly valued and impacted both the experience of being a Black male teacher and their persistence. The value of *ingroup comfort* with Black students may be related to an increased sense of belonging or relatedness for the Black male teachers. "Individuals experiencing a sense of belonging feel that they are valued and respected members of a community" (Archer et al., 2022, p. 92). Being surrounded by majority Black students could create a sense of value and community for the Black male teachers since they can be themselves. This is contrary to often feeling like the "other" when surrounded by a majority White population which could impact emotional and effort cost perceptions.

Theme 2: Navigating Marginality

Prior research suggests that Black male teachers experience unique barriers within and outside of their institutions such as perceptions of colleagues fearing them and viewing them as incompetent (Bristol & Goings, 2018; Kelly, 2007; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015; Wallace et al., 2022). In this study, participants described similar experiences in addition to assumptions about their role in the school (e.g., being a disciplinarian) and regarding their content knowledge. Due to these assumptions, participants in this study described having imposed responsibilities such as being called to diffuse situations or deal with other teachers' male students, often Black male students (Wallace et al., 2022). This imposed role seemed to not only be a responsibility from their colleagues but also a communal responsibility for the Black male teachers. This also connected to a desire to protect the students because the Black male teachers knew their students of color were more comfortable with them and may act differently than with their White counterparts. Similar to findings from McKinney de Royston et al. (2020) the Black teachers

used different strategies when handling student behavior issues. For example, a participant mentioned having to have a one-on-one with their Black male to understand his behavior. This was described in contrast to how his White colleagues would handle the situation because they lacked the ability or "know-how" to relate to what the Black students are personally experiencing.

Black male teachers have reported other assumptions and stereotypes in schools, especially when they are the minority in the staff (Bristol, 2018; Bergey et al., 2019; Wallace et al., 2022). These assumptions hindered relationships with the participants' White colleagues (both male and female) because they sometimes felt they could not be themselves or relate to their colleagues. This finding related to the idea of boundary heightening; a response experienced by those who are the minority within a skewed group (Bristol & Goings, 2018). In this study, participants either tried to find common ground (lower boundaries) with their colleagues or avoided social events all together (heightened boundaries). This resulted in some participants having greater experiences of emotional and effort cost. Effort cost manifests as they may feel the need to put in more effort to "fit in" or relate with their colleagues. The emotional cost stems from feeling alone and not having anyone to relate with in their schools. Further, these experiences may relate to cultural cost, "a contextually and culturally situated phenomenon contingent on individuals' complex collective identities and perceived compromising of values" (Archer et al., 2022, p. 91). Participants who must navigate majority White spaces may find themselves having to compromise at the expense of their own personal and cultural values (Poort et al., 2019). In this study, participants mentioned not being able to comfortably attend work related social events or speak in their natural tone at work. A participant further discussed how remaining authentic in an environment where you are the minority can be difficult due to feeling uncomfortable. This shows a clear compromise of their values in a situated experience. However,

it is important to note a few participants did not waver in their authenticity regardless of their environment. Their identity helped them navigate their environment and may have reduced effort and emotional cost perceptions.

Prior studies suggest that Black teachers are more likely to leave when they are in racially or gender isolated environments (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Bristol, 2018), yet 10 of the 11 participants had no planned intentions to leave the teaching field. Further, the one participant who did plan to leave, did not attribute his decision to issues with his colleagues. Despite the costs associated with racial and gendered assumptions, participants felt they could use their positions to dispute stereotypes. This suggested that the Black male teachers felt a level of responsibility to show their students (and their colleagues) that Black males (and the larger Black community) can be more than what society paints them as. It seemed that the cultural costs were influential to their experience as well as their persistence. Since there is also gain or value from being a Black male teacher, the costs are not necessarily viewed as negative (Poort et al., 2019). This aligns with prior literature which has found that costs are not always deactivating (Johnson & Safavian, 2016). Costs are dependent on the individuals' experience of that cost relative to other values, goals, and contextual factors.

While prior research has examined Black male teachers' experiences working in a racially and gender isolated environment, this study adds to prior research by examining their experience through the Situated Expectancy-Value theory lens. This is important as Situated Expectancy-Value theory posits that the extent to which an individual values a task is dependent on their perception of subjective tasks values and costs (i.e., the cost-to-benefit ratio). Further, existing literature does not often capture that costs are multifaceted and can vary significantly based on the specific context. The consistent isolation and stereotyping reported across this study suggests there may be a missing component in Situated Expectancy-Value theory that captures

the cost of being in a space where you feel minoritized and lack support. Matthews and Wigfield (2024) call attention to this oversight where costs are mainly focused on tasks as opposed to focusing on the in-person context. They suggest an intentional inclusion and acknowledgement of cost throughout the model (as opposed to only on the right side) since racialized costs begins in the cultural milieu. Matthews and Wigfield (2024) focus this in the context of racially minoritized students, but I argue that Black male teachers must navigate similar psychological processes while navigating representational and psychosocial costs. Experiences within the cultural milieu inform the Black male teachers' subjective task values and expectancies for success. For example, the systemic racism Black male teachers' experience (e.g., being labeled as aggressive or a disciplinarian) impact the perceived effort it takes to remain in the field. This was evident when the participants' described having to work harder than their White colleagues to receive recognition.

Theme 3: Organizational and Affective Challenges

One participant described some of the perceived effort costs of being a teacher as common for all teachers while others seemed to be unique to the racial identity of the participants and cultural context. For example, issues with school policies, student discipline, or pay in relation to the amount of work required were common indicators of perceived cost. However, this may be true for all teachers, regardless of race (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Thomson & Palermo, 2018).

Participants in public schools more frequently mentioned issues with discipline. This finding aligns with prior research that suggest Black teachers are more often placed in public schools, specifically those categorized as high-poverty and high-minority. Sixty-four percent of participants were in public schools and of that percentage, over half were in majority Black schools. Therefore, while the aforementioned issues may be relatable for all teachers, Black male

teachers may experience them more saliently based on their frequent placement in these types of schools. In this context, the type of school and environment related to the manifestation of effort and emotional cost for the Black male teachers. Across all school types, the participants were more likely to be given additional disciplinary roles, specifically with male or Black male students. Interestingly, most participants did not view this as a burden, but as a responsibility because they were the only ones who could do it. This relates back to the notion that teachers of color serve as advocates for their students (Archer et al., 2022). This finding was also supported in a study by Cormier and colleagues (2022) where special education Black male teachers accepted the role of disciplinarian because they were best suited for the role. However, one participant from this study discussed how the additional responsibility to be a father figure puts more on the Black male teachers, making their experience in teaching much different from their colleagues.

Another aspect of teaching that *may* be true of all teachers is time and effort cost. In a study by Thomson and Palermo (2018), Expectancy-Value theory was used to explore pre-service teacher motivations and participants mentioned concerns with time and effort. Time and effort costs were salient in this study as well with participants describing teaching as taxing and requiring additional time outside of designated work hours. However, there was also mention of additional effort to get administrative positions or promotions. As mentioned above, this perceived effort cost was related to the race and gender of the participants.

Interestingly, special education was noted by two participants as requiring a significant level of time and effort. A participant even left the field of special education to be a social studies teacher, due to the amount of stress. This aligns with prior literature that notes the unique demands of being a Black male special education teacher such as being “school-wide disciplinarian and cultural broker” (Cormier et al., 2022, p. 90). The high stress environment has

been noted as a potential determent for Black male teachers to enter and/or persist in the special education field (Billingsley, 2004). A study by Bristol (2012) found that male teachers of color, as compared to their White female or White male colleagues, were more likely to work in special education classrooms that had majority Black male or Latino students. This suggests that special education can be more costly and impact their persistence. However, the other participant who was a special education teacher described a deep commitment to his students and a need to be there because he filled a unique role as a Black male. Participants from a study by Cormier and colleagues (2022), shared a similar need to persist because they filled a filled a role that they felt their White colleagues could not or would not fill.

In terms of compensation as a cost, some of the participants in a study by Thomson and Palermo (2018) viewed salary as an opportunity cost since pay as a teacher is often view as inferior to other careers. Other participants viewed teacher salary as a personal utility value as it can provide stability and increases over time. The participants in this study more frequently associated pay with the amount of effort as opposed to comparing it to other occupations. That is, the participants felt that they were putting in an additional effort that was not reflected in the amount of pay or recognition they received thus, contributing to their perceived effort cost. While pay was described as a factor to consider leaving the field, pay was not a finite deterrent to their persistence. This could be due to teaching holding a greater communal value relative to the costs for the participants in this study.

Emotional/psychological costs were also noted as impactful to teachers' persistence. The stress associated with high stakes testing can have an impact on teachers' anxiety and psychological health (Mahan et al., 2010). This was found in the results of this study as participants discussed having to fit a vast amount of content into a short window of time with their students. This led to an increase in perceived effort cost and stress for the Black male

teachers. This may have also related to the participants' report that they felt confident in relating to their students but less confident in their ability to successfully teach. Discipline issues in combination with the stress of various school policies increased effort cost and lowered expectancies for success.

Other instances of emotional cost were related to the racial context surrounding the Black male teachers. This is where the experience of being a Black male teacher presented distinct differences from non-minority and female teachers. Some participants in the study perceived dealing with their White colleagues as an emotional or psychological strain. Bristol and Goings (2018) acknowledge this "psychological toll" Black men experience from being the "only" in their schools. This emotional cost can stem from both feeling that they are isolated and navigating how to feel seen or acknowledged. The lack of acknowledgement can also manifest as effort cost as the Black male teachers have to work harder than their colleagues with less return. Wallace and colleagues (2022) reported that Black male teachers had to prove themselves and move cautiously around their administration and colleagues as a form of self-preservation. Participants in this study similarly described having to work twice as hard and be careful with their actions due to assumptions from others thus leading to an increase in perceived effort cost. Despite the many occurrences of racially centered challenges, the participants were not deterred from persisting in their current school climates. The environment was a part of their experience but did not outweigh the value they felt as Black male teachers.

Theme 4: Supports

The importance of various supports to retain Black teachers has been noted in the literature (Scott & Alexander, 2019; Ingersoll et al., 2019; Bristol, 2018). Participants in this study, specifically mentioned the importance of supportive faculty, colleagues, and administration in their persistence. One participant mentioned that he would likely not be a

teacher if he did not have the significant support that he did from the administration. Some participants specifically mentioned the importance of being in a culturally similar environment as support. This aligns with findings from Bristol (2018) that found that Black male teachers who were "groupers", located in a school with four or more Black male teachers, were more likely to remain in their schools than "loners." Additionally, a participant in this study mentioned the importance of having staff that understood the value of having a Black male teacher. If participants were surrounded by more Black male teachers, it would likely reduce the amount of perceived emotional cost of being a racial and gender minority in their schools. This relates back to Situated-Expectancy value theory that suggest lower costs perceptions may increase persistence (Bergey et al., 2019). It further highlights how context influences an individuals' choices, subjective task values, and perceived cost.

A support found in this study, that has not been mentioned in prior literature is the support of additional opportunities. Interestingly, some participants described how being a Black male teacher provided them additional opportunities inside and outside the classroom. The prospect of these opportunities positively influenced their persistence as teachers. This was also a factor for some participants to enter the field of teaching. Several participants mentioned that the need for Black male teachers is what drew them to pursue this career. This lends to a communal value perspective to both the recruitment and retention of Black male teachers. The Black male teachers valued the needs of the community and weighed these needs in their career aspirations. The importance of communal needs to communally oriented individuals has been noted in literature (Mattis et al., 2002).

Theme 5: Value and Expectancies

Within the theme of *Value and Expectancies,* participants' reporting of communal value was salient. Communal value, termed an "other-focused" value, is defined as the extent to which

a task involves working or helping others and forming long lasting bonds (Pohlmann, 2001). This code was present across all interviews, with participants wanting to give back to their students, community, and culture. This code was often related to *rarity/need* or the theme of *representation* as the participants noted the impact their presence (as a Black male) could have on students. That is, being a Black male teacher held communal value since their presence significantly benefitted their students' educational experience. Further, communal value was a common reason for the participants to enter the field of teaching. Similarly, Richardson and Watt (2005) reported social importance or social utility value as one of the highest motivations for teachers to enter the field. However, it is important to note that Black male teachers' motivation to enter teaching may differ due to the lack of Black males in the teaching field. Their motivation may stem from addressing a unique need for the community and students which lends to communal value. Further, prior research reflects the responsibility Black teachers may feel in terms of protecting and supporting their Black students (Ingersoll et al., 2019; McKinney de Royston et al., 2021). This brings forth the notion of whether the Black male teachers would hold such high value for teaching if they did not experience a high level of communal responsibility for their Black students and the Black community as a whole. Prior research notes that the responsibility for Black male teachers may feel for their students, termed *otherfathering,* can be overwhelming and lead them to pursue other career paths (Brooms, 2017); however, most participants in this study did not describe this as a burden or a deterrence to their persistence.

There was also an overlap between attainment and communal value as teaching was described as an important part of who they are (attainment value) and motivating because they were helping others (communal value). A similar overlap was present with attainment and interest value. Some participants interest in teaching related to their identity as a people person or mentor. This supports literature that suggests communally oriented individuals' identity and

goals are connected to the identity and goals of the community (Mattis et al., 2022). Similarly, their desire to help students was a motivator to persist in the field of teaching despite perceived costs. This finding suggests that communal and/or attainment value may buffer the impact of perceived costs. Black male teachers may have found the costs of teaching to be worthwhile due to their conceptualization of value pertaining to teaching. Further, they may value the needs of their students and the Black community over their own welfare (Mattis et al., 2022). This may suggest that emphasizing communal value and identity as teacher may support Black male teachers' retention. This finding also suggests that as we further center race in Situated Expectancy-Value theory, we should consider who values what, and within what context. Research often focuses on quantitative cross-cultural comparison, missing the dynamics within "cultural/contextual socializers" (Matthews & Wigfield 2024). Historically, we see that certain racial groups hold more communal value than others (Boykin et al., 1997; Thoman et al., 2015); therefore, further research is needed to explore how to integrate these values into theory.

Another aspect of Situated-Expectancy Value theory that has not often considered racial implications are expectancies for success. Participants described both how confident they were in being a teacher (self-efficacy) and whether they felt they were and will continue to be successful as a teacher (expectancies for success). When asked "How confident do you feel that you are a good teacher, as you define it?", most participants in this study described feeling confident in being there for their students in a capacity beyond what is "normal". That is, they felt confident in building lasting relationships with their students, relating to them, and teaching them life skills. The interview responses that did not speak to their ability to teach was likely due to their own definition of being a "good teacher." Most participants described being a good teacher as building relationships with their students, creating comfortability, and creating safe spaces. Further, the participants' confidence in relating and being there for their students likely related to

the racial context. They often mentioned how having similar experiences as their Black students was beneficial to their relationship. Further, Black students felt more comfortable with the Black male teachers due to phenotypic similarities. Similarly, a participant in Thomson and Palermo (2018) described being confident her abilities as a teacher because she was a minority and can relate to all students.

The findings from this study, emphasize the importance of communal value for Black male teachers' persistence in teaching. The inclusion of communal-type values into Situated Expectancy-Value theory contributes to the race-reimaging of the theory and context-centered research. Perceived costs and values can be conceptualized differently based on the in-person context (e.g., being a Black male teacher in a majority White school). More specifically, through the lens of Situated Expectancy-Value theory, the person cannot be separated from the context. Further, the intersectionality of being both Black and male cannot be separated from their experiences. They cannot experience their interactions solely as a male, which makes their experiences uniquely shaped by the intersection of their identities. The Black male teachers carry that identity with them into each school, classroom, meeting, etc. When they experience the costs and values of teaching, they experience it through the lens of both being Black and male.

Motivation research using Situated Expectancy-Value theory has often skirted around the "situated" aspect which posits that an individual's choices to pursue a task are dependent on the situation and influenced by the cultural milieu surrounding the individual. The study and findings support calls from scholars to race-reimage traditional motivational theories (DeCuir & Gunby, 2014; Kumar & DeCuir-Gunby, 2023) and focus on the context and cultural perspectives. Further, findings from this study have several implications for theory and practice. These are discussed in the following section.

IMPLICATIONS

This study has actionable theoretical and practical implications. Implications are provided for Situated Expectancy-Value theory, teacher preparation programs, and retention efforts for Black male teachers.

Theoretical Implications

First, the study has implications for Situated-Expectancy Value theory and other prominent theories in motivation which have not centered on the intersectionality of race and gender. Situated Expectancy-Value theory has been applied in various contexts to understand what drives an individual to persist and engage in a task, but the theory has yet to be applied specifically to Black male teachers' motivation to persist in the teaching profession. More specifically, there is a significant gap for Black male in-service teachers' experiences and motivations without comparison to other racial groups. Turning our sole focus to this population broadens the understanding of Black male teachers' motivational processes and their persistence in the teaching profession. The study addresses this gap to inform theorists and future researchers of the cost to benefit ratio for these Black male teachers as well as how they conceptualize those costs and values, thereby reimaging Situated Expectancy-Value theory.

The current study addresses the "left side" of the Situated Expectancy-Value model by understanding how socio-cultural factors shape and are inextricably connected to expectancy-value beliefs. For example, participants experienced racial and gender stereotypes from their colleagues and administration that manifested as emotional and effort costs. Therefore, the study adds to the "right side" of the model as well, suggesting that the racialized costs are linked to every part of the model. Experiences in the cultural milieu such as influence from early socializers are internalized can impact decisions later (Matthews & Wigfield, 2024). For

example, Black male teachers who had few Black male teachers in their compulsory education made the decision later to pursue this position and fill that need as a form of communal responsibility. Furthermore, participants who had family members who were also teachers, attributed their decision to become a teacher to this early influence. These culturally specific aspects of the model have been overlooked in research, limiting the theories' reach and applicability to racially-minoritized groups (Matthews & Wigfield, 2024).

The Black male teachers described various cost experiences that were specific to the intersectionality of being both Black and male speaking to the contextualized interpretations of components of Situated Expectancy-Value theory. For example, the lack of pay in combination with having to work harder to prove themselves contributed to their perceived effort costs. Effort cost perceptions were also shaped by the environment. Participants in majority White contexts felt they were treated differently and isolated manifesting as both effort and emotional costs. It brings forth a need to acknowledge deep systemic racism and marginalization that may not have been considered when the theory was created. Further, various contexts impacted the participants' expectancies for success. Participants in schools with more disciplinary issues sometimes felt more stress (i.e., perceived emotional costs) and lower expectancies for success. One participant left a school due to discipline issues. This is important because Black teachers are disproportionately placed in schools that are more likely have discipline issues; therefore, impacting their effort and emotional cost perceptions and may ultimately impact persistence. However, results also indicated that costs are subjective and are not always viewed as a detractor or deactivating. The Black male teachers' perception of cost was unique to their social, cultural, and contextual surroundings as well as their cost experience relative to their values. Cost can be perceived as a reason to continue engaging in a task as opposed to only viewed as detrimental to one's persistence.

Results also suggest a need for a deeper exploration of attainment and communal value in Situated Expectancy-Value theory as it can compensate for perceived costs. Communal forms of value and attainment value are likely advantageous for groups that prioritize community and are more likely to be present due to the situated nature of the research and impact cost perceptions.

This study sets the stage for future research in centering race within a traditional theory such as Situated Expectancy-Value theory and moving away from a deficit perspective. Participants were able to express their conceptualization of expectancy and values within their lived context as a Black male teacher. There is a grave need for more research in this area that includes an acute awareness of marginalization, racism, and systemic inequities.

Practical Implications

In terms of practice, the stories from the Black male teachers can help inform teacher preparation programs, recruitment, and retention efforts. Their racialized and gendered experiences should be considered when designing curriculum and professional development for teacher preparation programs. For example, some participants discussed rigid curriculum and standards that did not allow for engagement with all students. The opportunity for culturally relevant curriculum would provide more autonomy for the Black male teachers in their classrooms (Scott & Alexander, 2019).

In this study, support was a common indicator of persistence in their respective schools. Participants mentioned the importance of supportive administration and colleagues, as well feeling support in an environment with more Black staff. Providing a support network for the Black male teachers would allow for cultural congruency and a space where they can be authentically themselves. Not only do Black male teachers need support for the unique challenges they face, but non-minority teachers also need awareness of the challenges faced by their racially-minoritized colleagues. Thus, the results may inform the training and professional

development that all teachers (pre-service and in-service teachers) receive and may highlight the importance of addressing race in the workplace. Teacher preparation programs should provide an opportunity for all teachers to reflect on systemic racism and power relation in the context of race and gender. Retention efforts may also benefit from equal advancement opportunities for all Black male teachers. Some participants felt they had to work twice as hard to receive recognition for the same work their White colleagues did. Therefore, all staff in the schools should be required to complete awareness training on racial and gender privilege and how that can manifest in the workplace.

LIMITATIONS

While this study makes important contributions to the literature, there are several limitations to consider. The verbiage in the semi-structured protocol may have constrained some participants' responses. For example, several participants asked what was meant by "time and effort cost" or struggled to center on experience of a Black male when it was not specifically mentioned. Therefore, a protocol without technical language and more specific probes may be beneficial in getting a better understanding of their racialized experience.

Ten out of 11 participants were situated in Southeastern Virginia, which restricted the geographic diversity of the study. Consequently, there is a need for additional research to comprehensively explore the experiences of Black male teachers across a broader geographical spectrum, especially given differences across states in terms of the laws they enact in education (e.g., anti-DEI laws). For example, Black male teachers in the southwestern region of the United States or the west coast, may have very different experiences from those in Southeastern, Virginia. This includes demographic differences, societal norms, and teaching standards that may impact their experiences. Further, only one of the 11 participants was located in the

Metropolitan, DC area and may have had different experiences based on his location and type of institution (i.e., magnet school).

Despite employing methods to establish rapport, the personal nature of the interviews may have hindered participants from fully articulating their thoughts if they felt uncomfortable sharing. For example, participants were sometimes hesitant to say "White" when referring to their colleagues. Additionally, "pure" bracketing throughout the study (i.e., interviews and data analysis) may also be a limitation as bias is inherent in all research. As the sole interviewer and one of two coders, my interpretation of the data is informed by my positionality. For example, when participants discussed experiences with assumptions from others, that resonated with my own experience navigating majority White spaces. I made intentional efforts to remove bias in conversations with the interviewees and in analyzing the data to instead get a deeper understanding of the data and the participants' experiences. However, my interpretations may have been influenced to varying degrees by my personal experiences, identities, and existing knowledge, potentially leading to either an overemphasis or underestimation of certain aspects.

CONCLUSION

Black teachers represent only 7% of the P-12 teacher population in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020) and Black males represent only 2% (Hanford, 2017; Schaeffer, 2021). Findings from this study revealed several themes including the need for *representation.* The lack of Black male teachers limits the visibility of Black role models for student of color. Further, expanding the diversity of the teacher workforce is a crucial factor in facilitating instruction for *all* students. The need for more Black male teachers was extensively expressed throughout the interviews by participants describing their experiences being the "only" or "rare". This is a grave concern given the importance and positive impact Black teachers can have on racially-minoritized and non-minority students (Henfield, 2011; Ingersoll et al., 2019).

Further, it is significant for students of color to see someone like themselves in the classroom, not only as a mentor, but also to have pedagogical experiences that connect to their identities (Ingersoll et al., 2019). In alignment with prior research, participants expressed a desire to be a "positive influence" for their students, and particularly their Black students. While there were some "representational costs" or challenges with being minoritized (Tabron & Vanzent Chambers, 2019) associated with being the "only" in their school, the Black male teachers believed they played a vital role in this position; there was value. With these findings, it is imperative to recognize the varied experiences among Black male teachers to optimize the opportunities for recruitment and retention efforts.

This study aimed to shed light on the nuanced factors influencing the persistence and experiences of Black male teachers, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of their crucial role in education. Black male teachers have a unique experience in schools that are influenced by their racial and gender identities such as their socialization with their colleagues. They described a myriad of costs and values that interplay in influencing their persistence in schools. These findings suggested that cultural costs and communal value are integral parts of the Black male teachers experience and missing components in the Situated-Expectancy Value model. Further, they suggest that costs are not always a deterrent to an individual's persistence and provides evidence as to why.

By focusing on Black male teachers' racialized experiences, the findings extend a traditional motivation theory to a race-centered perspective. Situated Expectancy-Value theory calls for researchers to explore motivation within context, as the cultural milieu is often lost in the exploration of expectancy beliefs and values. The results demonstrate how race and gender are embedded in certain aspects of Black male teachers' experience (i.e., socializers and opportunities) and in their persistence and motivation to teach. This adds an additional layer to

prior literature by exploring how Black male teachers experience the phenomenon through a Situated Expectancy-Value Theory lens and centering the contexts or situations that not only influence but are an inseparable part of their experience.

The current study extends prior research on teacher motivations by focusing solely on Black male in-service teachers' experiences and their reasons for persisting in the field. The data from this study illuminates the cultural, racial, and gender-identity factors (and the intersection of these identities) that influence their persistence. It informed costs that are salient to the participants' experiences and highlighted values that offset the costs of teaching, allowing them to persist in the field. I hope this study provides an avenue for more race-reimage research as well as a pathway for understanding the supports needed to retain Black male teachers in schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

BACKGROUND

(Estimated time: 10-15 minutes)

Opening Questions

1. Tell me from the beginning how you decided to become a teacher. (Reference Q6 if race/gender is addressed)
    a. (Probe) Did your family members or family circumstances influence your decision to become a teacher? If so, how?
    b. (Probe) What about other people who influenced your decision?
    c. (Probe) What about experiences in school that may have influenced your decision?

VALUES, COSTS, PERSISTENCE, AND ABILITY BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING

(Estimated time: 25-35 minutes)

2. How is being a teacher important to who you are?
    a. Explore connections to interviewee's life experiences.

3. In your opinion, what does it mean to be a good teacher?
    a. How confident do you feel that you are a good teacher, as you define it?
    b. (Probe) Why do you feel that way?

4. When you think about being a teacher, what drawbacks or barriers come to mind, if any? (Reference Q7 & Q9 if race/gender is addressed)
    a. (Probe) Are there any other drawbacks or barriers you can think of?
    b. What do you see as your biggest drawback or barrier?
    c. How have you overcome this drawback or barrier?
    d. How about drawbacks or barriers in terms of the time and effort in being a teacher?
    e. Describe any emotional barriers (e.g., stress, anxiety, boredom, mental health).
    f. Describe any loss of other opportunities or sacrifices made while being a teacher (e.g., other jobs, time with family/friends, time for self).

5. Have any of the barriers you just described made you consider leaving the field, if so which ones, and why?
6. What motivates you to persist as a teacher, despite the drawbacks and barriers you mentioned?

PERCEPTIONS OF RACE AND GENDER IDENTITY
(Estimated time: 20-30 minutes)

7. What role, if any, has being a Black male had in your career decision?
8. What role, if any, has being a Black male had in your experiences as a teacher?
    a. (Probe) What about interactions with colleagues, students, and parents?
9. What unique assets, if any, do you think being a Black male brings to the field of teaching?
    a. (Probe) For example, in the classroom, with students…
10. What unique challenges, if any, do Black male teachers in general face?
    a. (Probe) What about in the school environment? With administration?

CLOSING
(Estimated time: 5 minutes)

11. Before we close, is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your experiences as a teacher?

APPENDIX B

PRESCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you self-identify as a Black or African-American male?
    - Yes
    - No

2. Are you currently a P-12 teacher in the United States?
    - Yes
    - No

3. Have you been teaching for three years or more?
    - Yes
    - No

4. How many years have you been teaching consecutively? _____

5. What grade level do you teach? (Please specify the grade level with answer [e.g., if you select High, type which grade 9th - 12th)
    - Elementary _____
    - Middle _____
    - High _____
    - Other _____

6. What subject do you teach?
    - Math
    - Science
    - Social Studies
    - Physical Education
    - Art
    - Other _____

7. What type of institution is the school you are employed with?
    - Private
    - Public
    - Charter
    - Magnet
    - Parochial (Religious)
    a. Other _____

8. What is the ethnic distribution of students in your school?
    - Primarily White (more than 50%)
    - Primarily Black (more than 50%)
    - Primarily Latinx (more than 50%)

- A mix of ethnicities (approx equal percentages)

9. How would you describe your school/district?
    - City/Urban (territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 100,000 more)
    - Suburb (territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 100,000 or more)
    - Rural (territory that is 5-25 miles from an urbanized area)

10. How many of your students receive free or reduced lunch?
    - 2/3
    - About half
    - 1/3
    - Less than 1/3
    - None

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT

PROJECT TITLE: What's the Cost?: A Phenomenological Study of Black Male Teachers' Persistence

INTRODUCTION The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES. This study focuses on your perceptions and experiences of what it is like to be a Black male teacher in P-12 educational settings. More specifically, the study explores how your experiences have influenced your persistence in the field of teaching. Your insight might help improve understanding of what it is like to be a Black male teacher, how we might address misconceptions, and ultimately how we might recruit and retain Black male teachers. For this interview study, your participation will involve one 60-minute one-on-one interview, which will be conducted online and will be recorded.

RESEARCHERS Responsible Project Investigator: Tony Perez, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies Investigators: Kendra Hall, MS.Ed, Doctoral Candidate in the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies, Doug Snuffer, Doctoral Candidate in the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies, and Faith Watrous, Doctoral Candidate in the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY If you decide to participate in this study, then you will join an interview study involving research of Black male teachers' persistence. We anticipate a maximum of 20 teachers will take part in the interview study. If you say YES, then you will be asked complete a one-on-one, 60-minute interview about your experience as a Black male teacher who has persisted for three years or more. You will be compensated with a $10 gift card for your participation in this interview, and your interview responses will remain confidential (see below).

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA The criteria for completing this interview study are that you are at least 18 years old or older, identify as a Black male, and have been teaching in a P-12 setting for three years or more. You are not eligible to participate in the interview study if you are younger than 18 years old, not a Black male, or have left the teaching field.

RISKS AND BENEFITS
RISKS: There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in the study. See the CONFIDENTIALITY section below for the steps the researchers will take to keep your information private. **BENEFITS:** The study is not designed to benefit any individual person. However, your participation may contribute to our understanding of why Black male teachers leave or stay in the field.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS The researchers want your decision about participating in this study to be absolutely voluntary. Yet they recognize that your participation will take some time on your part. In order to compensate you for your time, you will receive $10 Amazon e-gift card for participating in the interview.

NEW INFORMATION If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY The researchers will take every reasonable step to keep your private information confidential. We will not use your name in any recorded interviews. Your recorded interview will be saved with a unique study ID and/or pseudonym and will be stored on secure password-protected servers. The interviews will be transcribed verbatim, but no identifying information will be included in the transcription. Only members of the research team will have access to your recorded interview file. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will not identify you individually.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and withdraw from the study at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer harm as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact Dr. Tony Perez the responsible project investigator at 757-683-6939 or acperez@odu.edu, Dr. John Baaki, the current chair of the DCEPS Human Subjects Review Committee, at 757-683-5491 or jbaaki@odu.edu, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research at 757-683-3460 who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them: Contact: Kendra Hall at 757 615 8349 or khall017@odu.edu If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. John Baaki, the current chair of the DCEPS Human Subjects Review Committee, at 757-683-5491 or jbaaki@odu.edu, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460. And importantly, by typing your name and clicking the submit button below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this interview study and that you are least 18 years old. Please print a copy of this form for your records.

VITA

Kendra Yvonne Hall

EDUCATION

Ph.D Educational Psychology and Program Evaluation 2024
Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

MS.Ed Adult Education/Human Resource Development 2018
James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

B.S. Psychology 2016
James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Instructional Systems Designer II 2018-present
C^2 Technologies

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

American Educational Research Association 2020-present

PUBLICATIONS

Scott, L.A., Powell, C., Bruno, L., Cormier, C.J., **Hall, K**., Brendli, K., Taylor, J.P. (2023). The Other Fifty Percent: Expressions from Special Education Teachers About Why They Persist in the Profession. *Excelsior: Leadership in Teaching and Learning. 16*(1), 17-39. https://doi.org/10.14305/jn.19440413.2023.16.1.02

Cormier, C., Scott, L.A., Powell, C., & **Hall, K.** (2022). Locked in glass classrooms: Black male special education teachers socialized as everything but educators. *Teacher Education and Special Education*. *45*(1), 77-94. https://doi.org/10.1177/08884064211061038

Wallace. D., Bol, L., **Hall, K.**, & Cousins, E. (2022). Black male educators matters: Modeling and expectations in K-12 settings. *Journal of African American Male Educators (JAAME)*. *13*(2).