Black Teachers' Perceptions of the Obstacles and Catalysts to

Becoming and Remaining Teachers in Connecticut

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education
Department of Educational Leadership

Central Connecticut State University
New Britain, Connecticut

January 5, 2016

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The severe shortage of Black teachers poses a critical problem for school districts that strive to establish racial and cultural parity between the teacher and student populations. This mixed methods study examined the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of Black teachers in Connecticut to ascertain the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a public teacher in Connecticut; how Black teachers value diversity in the teaching force; and offered policy recommendations that could support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers in Connecticut.

The research design was a mixed methods design with quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data were drawn from an online survey of a sample population of 357 Black teachers who were employed in Connecticut public schools at the time of this study. A total of 357 (30.9% response rate) surveys were completed by Black teachers in Connecticut. The qualitative data consisted of an open-ended survey question, two focus group interviews, a related interview, and a written response questionnaire. The qualitative data were analyzed using a multi-staged, iterative open and axial coding process. A total of 252 respondents and 21 focus group participants participated in the qualitative phase of the study.

The results of the study revealed that Black teachers perceive salary, inadequate teacher support (particularly minority teacher support) unfair human resource recruiting and hiring practices, and poor perceptions of teaching to be the primary obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher. The vast majority of Black teachers were intrinsically motivated to become teachers. In addition, Black teachers affirmed the importance of a diverse faculty, multicultural curriculum, and culturally relevant instructional practices in the teacher workforce.

Recommendations include starting teachers on a higher step on the salary scale, providing mentoring and coaching support by Black teachers, actively recruiting from HBCUs and community colleges, and increasing racial and cultural diversity training and discussions in Connecticut public schools. These findings may provide educational leaders with valuable information to consider as they develop and design recruitment and retention methods aimed at increasing the number of Black teachers in Connecticut public schools.

Keywords: Black teachers, minority teachers, teacher recruitment and retention, critical race theory, barriers to teaching.

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Acknowledgement

I am deeply thankful to Almighty God for His grace and mercy. I give Him all the honor, glory, and praise. Thank you for being my midnight counselor and waymaker.

I would like to wholeheartedly thank Dr. Ellen Retelle, my dissertation advisor, to whom I will be forever indebted to for her steadfast support and invaluable guidance throughout the doctoral program. With her support and guidance, a simple idea has developed into a complete research study. Thank you for making this a thoughtful and rewarding journey.

I would also like to extend a special thanks to my dissertation committee members: Dr. Anthony Rigazio, Dr. Penelope Lisi, and Dr. Nancy Hoffman. Thank you for your assistance and valuable recommendations.

I would also like to thank my dear friend, Dr. Falguni Patel, for her support and encouragement.

I would like to thank the teachers who participated in this study who generously shared their time, experiences, and opinions. Without these teachers this study could not have been completed.

I am grateful to my parents, Ernel and Hazel Beckford, for their lifelong encouragement, support, and encouragement. Your examples of hard work, resilience, and dedication provided direction for my life. Thank you for the delicious meals that nourished and sustained me during the countless long days and nights of writing.

To my two sons, my inspiration, Brandon and Jordan, I hope that I have been and will continue to be a positive example and a source of inspiration for you. Motherhood, has inspired me to be the best that I can be for you.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my late husband, Robert Ursery, Jr., who always believed in me and provided the encouragement that I needed to take the initial steps toward this rigorous academic journey. Thank you, my love, and rest in peace.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

According to national demographic trends, Black teachers are severely underrepresented in America's public schools in comparison to Black students (NCES, 2010a). National demographic data reveal a severe shortage of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers. According to a 2010 report by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), in 2007-2008 there were approximately 3 million public school teachers in the United States. Of that number only 7.2% were Black teachers (NCES, 2010b). Research supports that the racial composition of the national teaching workforce is inconsistent with the national demographic student population trends (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Wood, 2001). Nationally, the total number of minority student enrollment in elementary and secondary public schools in the United States has steadily increased. By 2019, minority students will comprise about half the children in our nation's public schools. The total national public school enrollment is projected to increase from 49.3 million in 2008 to 52.3 million by 2019-2020. Of that projected number 26.2 million will be White, 14.2 million will be Hispanic, 8.0 million will be Black, 3.14 million will be Asian/Pacific Islander, and 671,000 will be American Indian/Alaskan Native (NCES, 2010b).

According to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Blacks make up 3.7% of Connecticut's teaching workforce; Black females make up 2.7% and Black males make up 1.0% (CSDE, 2010b). In 2008, Connecticut public school K-12 student enrollment was 569,237 (CSDE, 2010b). The report indicated that student enrollment will continue to decline before leveling off in 2019. This is important in terms

of racial/ethnic composition. White student enrollment is projected to decline over the next decade while minority student enrollment is expected to steadily increase. In the 2008-2009 school year, minority students accounted for 35.5% of the student population in Connecticut. The racial/ethnic breakdown was the following: 64.5% of the children were White, 17.1% were Hispanic, 13.9% were African American/Black, 4.1% were Asian, and 0.4% were American Indian. There were approximately 53,328 certified staff in Connecticut, 48,463 of which were teachers (NCES, 2010a). The difference between the Black student population and the teacher workforce in Connecticut and in the United States is substantial.

The underrepresentation of Black teachers in U.S. public schools is a problem that has deep roots. These roots are entrenched in the history of race relations in American society. From the free public common schools in the late 1700s to the era of court battles over equitable education, Black education has and continues to be a long and entangled struggle. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explain that the Constitution had excluded Blacks from the benefits afforded to Whites. They contend that:

> The purpose of the government was to protect the main object of society–property. The slave status of most African Americans (as well as women and children) resulted in their being objectified as property. And, a government constructed to protect the rights of property owners lacked the incentive to secure human rights for the African American. (p. 53)

Understanding the history of Black public schooling in the U.S. is important to understanding the decline of Blacks entering the teaching force (Gordon, 2000). The 1954 *Brown* v. *Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (*Brown* decision) is a landmark Supreme Court decision that deemed racial segregation of U.S. public schools to be unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment. Although the Supreme Court decision was

supposed to be a breakthrough for Blacks, many educational scholars identify the

subsequent loss of Black teachers and principals due to the Brown decision as a racial

setback for the Black community as Black educators were the cornerstone of the Black

community (Green, 2004; Hudson & Holmes, 1994; Kohli, 2009; Lindsay, 1994; Milner

& Howard, 2004; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). While the Brown decision

established provisions to integrate Black students into White schools, no provisions were

established to transfer and integrate Black teachers, administrators, and staff into the

schools (Milner & Howard, 2004; Torres et al., 2004). Hudson and Holmes (1994)

emphasize the negative aspect of the Brown decision. They state:

> [T]he loss of African American teachers in public school settings has had a lasting
> negative impact on all students, particularly African American students and the
> communities in which they reside.…[A]lthough the shrinking African American
> teacher pool has been attributable to several factors, it is partly a fall-out of how
> Brown was implemented by White American policy makers. (pp. 388-389)

According to Hudson and Holmes (1994), prior to the Brown decision,

approximately 82,000 Black teachers educated the nation's 2 million Black school

children. After the Brown decision, over 38,000 Black teachers and administrators were

demoted, dismissed, or displaced (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). The shortage of Black

teachers in U.S. public schools has worsened over time. Although school districts have

developed minority recruitment and retention initiatives, these strategies have not

sufficiently increased the pool of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers.

Another aspect of Black education is the curriculum in U.S. public schools. Over

seven decades ago, Woodson (1933) proclaimed that the practice of "mis-education" has

hindered the progress of Blacks. Woodson believed that the mis-education, that is, the

Eurocentric educational system which generally overlooks and ignores Black histories,

experiences, and contributions, was problematic for Blacks and contributed to their dire academic situation and performance. The Eurocentric curriculum continues to be prevalent in U.S. public schools. Notable scholars point out that a Eurocentric curriculum is not inclusive of all students and teachers (Banks, 2006; Grant & Sleeter, 2002; Sleeter, 2002) and perpetuates cultural invisibility (Kohli, 2009). In a similar vein, Eurocentric ideals dominate school policies, procedures, and practices rendering the dominant (White) group ignorant to the realities of the schooling process (Delgado, 2000). The byproduct, deficit thinking, is that the dominant White culture is generally unable to visualize realities outside their frame of reference. It is this unconscious, prevailing ideological creed that the dominant group embraces that often prevents comprehensive understanding of the academic, cultural, economic, moral, and social challenges that minority students experience and how, in fact, this prevailing ideology is a form of racism that impacts the schooling process (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado, 2000; Kohli, 2009; Witherspoon & Mitchell, 2009). Moreover, subtle exclusions affirm racial hierarchy in schools and send a powerful message of whose identity, culture, and history is important and normal; and thus, superior (Kohli, 2009). Critical race theorists explicate the pivotal role race plays in our nation's construction of institutionalized practices and highlight how discriminatory institutionalized practices are a manifestation of normal, ordinary educational operations and practices (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Crenshaw et al., 1995).

Additionally, Black academic success in schools has historical roots. Minority students have and continue to achieve at disproportionately lower rates than their White counterparts (Vanneman, Hamilton, Baldwin, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). The large

national Black-White achievement gap as measured by the National Assessment of
Education Progress (NAEP) assessments illuminates this point. According to NAEP,
there is a 26 point gap in fourth grade math, a 31 point gap in eighth grade math, a 27
point gap in fourth-grade reading, and a 26 point gap in eighth grade reading.
Connecticut's Black-White achievement gap is larger than the national gap in all areas
except eighth-grade reading (NCES, 2009). Mounting concern for the low achievement
of many Black students underpins the urgency to diversify the teaching force. Black
teachers teaching Black students is an important solution because Black teachers have
high expectations for and interact more positively and comfortably with Black students
(King, 1993b) than White teachers. According to several researchers, Black teachers
exhibit a first-hand cultural awareness, can relate to the life experiences of Black youth,
and bring Afrocentric perspectives and pedagogical practices into the Eurocentric
learning environment that benefit all students. Black teachers often serve as surrogate
parents and role models (King, 1993a). Moreover, Black students need to see individuals
who look like them in positive roles and careers (King, 1993a, 1993b; Villegas & Davis,
2008).

      The limited cultural experiences of White teachers with their Black students are
problematic in many schools (Ferguson, 2003). Critical race theorists contend that many
White teachers may be unaware of the social and educational realities because of their
common societal privileges (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado, 2000; Ladson-
Billings & Tate, 1995; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Taylor, 2009) and therefore may perhaps
unconsciously "distort or omit" realities (Foster, 1995). Milner (2006) asserts that the loss
of Black teachers has been harmful to the academic success of Black students. For far too

long, many White teachers, administrators, and educational decision makers have exhibited what Jackson (1999) and King (1991) refer to as dysconscious racism. This theory suggests that the dominant group unconsciously implements and perpetuates institutional policies and practices that legitimize assumptions and stereotypes about minority groups.

Black teachers serve as agents of change inspiring cultural awareness and providing positive images to combat negative perceptions of Blacks and counteracting mainstream assumptions (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011). Milner (2006) further asserts Black teachers demonstrate an "insiders' perspective." This suggests that they have a *cultural connection* and *cultural understanding*. Milner also asserts that Black teachers hold Black students to high expectations and are committed to the success of Black students. Implicit in the research literature review regarding minority student achievement is that some White teachers' expectations interact with their (conscious and/or unconscious) beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward minority students and influence minority student performance; and thus, contribute to the low academic performance (Ferguson, 2003; Kohli, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

The limited representation of Blacks in the teaching profession is a cause for great concern. Nationally, the current student population is considerably more diverse than the teaching population, and this gap is predicted to worsen over time. Similar demographic trends hold true for Connecticut's Black teacher-student ratio. All children, but specifically Black children, benefit from having Black teachers as role models. King (1993a) asserts that Black teachers set high standards and expectations for Black

students; emphasize the political, social, and economical importance of education to the Black community; and infuse culturally relevant pedagogy into their teaching strategies. Future racial/ethnic trajectories and the host of obstacles deterring Blacks from entering the profession must take precedence for policymakers.

In summary, to help stem the critical shortage of minority teachers the following need to occur: viable recruitment and retention policies and practices galvanizing renewed interest in teaching, efforts to understand factors associated with underrepresented minority groups, and support mechanisms that help retain beginning teachers, especially teachers from targeted populations. More empirical research is necessary to develop a comprehensive understanding of the importance of the Black presence in education, their experiences, pedagogical styles, and perspectives concerning the teaching profession, and the context in which recruitment and retention policies and practices affect teacher supply.

The Teacher Shortage in Connecticut

In 2008, Connecticut filled 93.5% of its 4,830 teaching vacancies and attributed the unfilled positions to areas of traditional shortage areas such as bilingual, comprehensive special education, and 7-12 mathematics, science, English, and world languages (CSDE, 2010b). In a study commissioned by the Connecticut Center for School Change and the Connecticut State Department of Education, Reichardt, Arnold and Hupfeld (2006) examined districts' teacher recruitment, hiring, and support policies and practices that impact hiring and retention of teachers. The researchers reported that between 2001 and 2004 teacher attrition rates in Connecticut were 13-16% and approximately one-third of first-year teachers intend to leave. In addition, the study found

that not all Connecticut students have equal access to high-quality teachers due to high turnover in the poorest districts. In 2006 a report issued by the Bureau of Education Preparation, Certification, Support and Assessment reported that in Connecticut's high poverty, high minority schools almost 5% of classes are taught by teachers who are not highly qualified, and 80% of Connecticut's inexperienced teachers work in urban schools (CSDE, 2006). The poorest school districts, DRG I, were unable to fill 15.3% of the 2005 teaching vacancies with qualified teachers and had the greatest numbers of teacher transfers. This suggests that a large proportion of teacher attrition occurs in the poorest districts. In fact, recent national studies reveal higher turnover rates for minority teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011b) and teachers in schools with high populations of minority students (Luekens, Lyter, & Fox, 2004). High teacher turnover rates pose a disruption to instruction and may contribute to low student performance levels.

Connecticut Minority Teacher Recruitment

In 2008, Connecticut reported that it will need 19,000 new teachers over the next 10 years due to teacher retirement and attrition (RESC MTR, 2008). In response to the ever-increasing gap between minority teachers and minority students, Connecticut seeks to recruit and retain more culturally and ethnically diverse teachers. Minority recruitment is supported by the Connecticut Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruiting (MTR) Alliance. RESC MTR Alliance was established in 1984 with the goal of assisting Connecticut school districts to recruit, hire, develop, support, and retain racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse teachers and administrators (Connecticut RESC, 2010). It is comprised of six members: Area Cooperative Educational Services

(ACES), Capitol Regional Education Council (CREC), Cooperative Educational Services
(CES), EASTCONN, Education Connection, and LEARN.
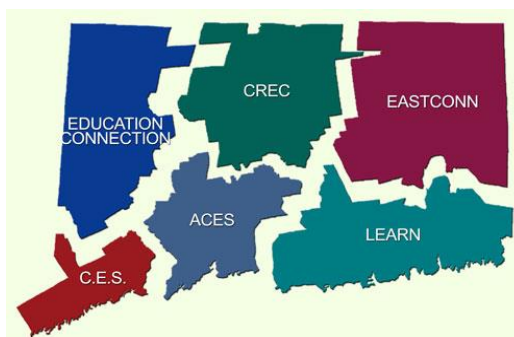
Figure 1. Connecticut's Six Regional Educational Service Centers.

The stated purpose of this collaborative taskforce is:

- to encourage minority middle and secondary school students to attend
  institutions of higher education and enter teacher preparation programs;

- to recruit minority students attending institutions of higher education to enroll
  in teacher preparation programs and pursue teaching careers; and

- to recruit and retain minority teachers in Connecticut schools.

In 2001, the Commission on Teacher and School Administration Shortage and
Minority Recruitment provided several recommendations to the Connecticut General
Assembly for minority teacher recruitment. The RESC MTR Alliance's three major
recruitment initiatives are the Accelerated Route to Teacher Certification programs,
Pathways to Teaching program, and Praxis I preparation (Connecticut RESC, 2010).

Accelerated route to teacher certification. The MTR Alliance offers scholarships to
career changers and teacher candidates. In 2009, 13 minority teachers were awarded a
total of $39,000 in scholarship. MTR Alliance Accelerated Route to Teacher Certification
Scholarships played an integral role in increasing minority representation in the teaching

workforce for candidates who otherwise would not have been able to enter the teaching

workforce. The awardees stated that they would not have been able to continue the

program without the support from MTR Alliance (Connecticut RESC, 2010).

Pathways to teaching. "The RESC MTR Alliance Pathways to Teaching is a

comprehensive teacher readiness program designed to encourage culturally and racially

diverse high school students to consider teaching as a career" (Connecticut RESC, 2010,

p. 9). There are seven Pathways to Teaching programs in Connecticut that provide

academic, social, and financial support for students from high school through college. In

addition, mentoring, SAT preparation, summer educational internships, college field

trips, tutoring, and scholarship assistance for tuition, books, and fees are provided

(Connecticut RESC, 2010). Today's Students Tomorrows Teachers (TSTT) is a

nationally recognized recruitment and training programs for high school students that was

piloted in four Connecticut high schools in Groton, New London, Hartford, and Windsor.

In support of the program, 20 colleges agreed to provide 50% scholarships to program

participants (RESC MTR, 2008).

Praxis I testing preparation. CSDE mandates that all individuals seeking to

become a teacher in Connecticut must pass the Praxis I and Praxis II examinations.

Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, under the guidance of EASTCONN and

Education Connection, MTR Alliance launched the Praxis Test Preparation Program. The

RESC MTR Alliance provides tutoring support in Praxis I Reading, Writing and

Mathematics for minority teacher candidates. In addition, qualified first time minority

teacher candidates receive textbooks and fee waivers (Connecticut RESC, 2010). Using

the 2000 through 2007 pass rates, EASTCONN and Education Connection sought to

pinpoint areas of weakness and provide support. Table 1 reports the combined

performance from 2000 through 2005 on the Pre-Professional Skills Test in Reading,

Writing, and Mathematics. During these years, the tests were predominantly paper and

pencil tests.

Table 1

2000-2005 Pre-Professional Skills Test in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics

Ethnicity	Reading		Writing		Mathematics	
	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate
All	14,560	85%	14,009	88%	14,969	80%
White	11,756	88%	11,298	91%	12,058	83%
Black	881	66%	859	72%	934	56%
Hispanic	834	65%	816	65%	885	58%
Asian American	292	70%	280	75%	276	86%
Native American	32	81%	28	93%	28	86%
Other	345	75%	325	84%	349	73%

Note. Source: RESC MTR Alliance Report to the Connecticut General Assembly, September 2008

Passing the Praxis is required to enter the professional education portion of

educational degree programs. Candidates can take the Praxis test multiple times. The data

represents initial pass rates. The pass rates for Blacks are considerably lower than those

of Whites. More Blacks took the math test than both reading and writing tests. Table 2

reports the 2006-2007 Pre-Professional Skills Tests in Reading, Writing, and

Mathematics.

Table 2

2006-2007 Pre-Professional Skills Tests in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics

	Reading		Writing		Mathematics	
Ethnicity	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate	Number Taking Test	Pass Rate
All	2,674	82%	2,508	88%	2,746	80%
White	2,161	87%	2,046	93%	2,205	85%
Black	181	56%	157	62%	194	45%
Hispanic	185	60%	175	66%	203	60%
Asian American	62	86%	52	69%	56	86%
Native American	11	64%	10	90%	8	88%

Note. Source: RESC MTR Alliance Report to the Connecticut General Assembly, September 2008

This information represents the data for computer-based test takers. During this school year, the tests converted to a predominantly computer based. These results reveal only 45% of Blacks passed state requirements for all three tests on the first administration. This is considerably lower than previous years. These trends underscore the need for strategic support. Six four-year colleges, two community colleges, and two RESC sites offer Praxis I preparation support.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of Black teachers in Connecticut to ascertain the catalysts and the obstacles they perceive to becoming a teacher in Connecticut. The goal of this study was to identify ways to increase the representation of qualified Black teachers in Connecticut. The voices and experiences of Black teachers helped to shed light on recruitment and retention efforts which may help to increase the number of Blacks entering the profession and may reduce the turnover rate of Blacks in Connecticut's public schools. The results from this study might assist school

districts in Connecticut to become more proactive and competitive in the recruitment and retention of Black teachers.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this research study:

1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?

4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, specific terms used in this research are defined in this section.

Afrocentric – This term refers to an African-centered consciousness.

Attrition – This term refers to teachers who leave the teaching profession; attrition decreases the supply of teachers (Ingersoll, 2001).

Black – This term is used to identify individuals of African descent. It may be used interchangeably with the term African American.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy – This term refers to a teaching approach that is culturally conscious of, sensitive to, and responsive to minority students whose culture is not a part of the White, middle-class mainstream education (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

District Reference Groups (DRG) – This term was created by the Connecticut State Department of Education to classify school districts that serve public school students from similar socioeconomic backgrounds.

Ethnocentrism – This term refers to a proclivity for viewing members of one's own race as superior to other social groups based on ethnic differences.

Migration - This term is used to refer to teachers who move to teaching jobs in other schools or districts; migration does not decrease the supply of teachers (Ingersoll, 2001).

Minority Student – This term refers to any K-12 public school student who identifies as Hispanic, African American/Black, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and/or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Minority Teacher – This term refers to any K-12 public school teacher who identifies as Hispanic, African American/Black, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and/or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Racism – This term refers to racial prejudice supported by institutional power, used to the advantage of one race and to the disadvantage of another race.

Recruitment – This term refers to efforts and strategies used to attract prospective teachers to the teaching profession.

Retention – This term refers to teachers who stay from one year to the next within the district or the profession.

Role Model – This term refers to an individual who is admired by or inspires others.

Turnover – This term refers to the collective effect of attrition and migration (Ingersoll, 2001).

White – This term refers to a North American person of European descent. It may be used interchangeably with the term European American.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) frames this study. CRT emerged out of critical legal studies (CLS) and radical feminism movements and has penetrated into education (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Witherspoon & Mitchell, 2009). Specifically, CRT was developed in the mid-1970s by a Black man named Derrick Bell and a White man named Alan Freeman who grew frustrated with CLS's failure to consider race and racism in its analysis of the law in order to sanction social change (Crenshaw et al., 1995; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Yosso, 2005). CRT contends that racism is a socially constructed phenomenon that promotes social justice advances for self-serving purposes and embraces the value of storytelling as a means of counteracting the Eurocentric ideologies. Critical race theorists seek to broaden the dialogue and highlight the unspoken and subtle ways in which race and racism shape the educational outcome for many minorities (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lynn & Parker, 2006) and Whites. At the heart of CRT is the notion of upholding racial and social justice.

Conceptual Framework

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   /        High Expectations             \
  / Cultural/Racial Knowledge and Sensitivity\
 /         Pedagogical Practices              \
/             Role Models                      \
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High Expectations
Cultural/Racial Knowledge and Sensitivity
Pedagogical Practices
Role Models

African American Teachers

Critical Race Theory
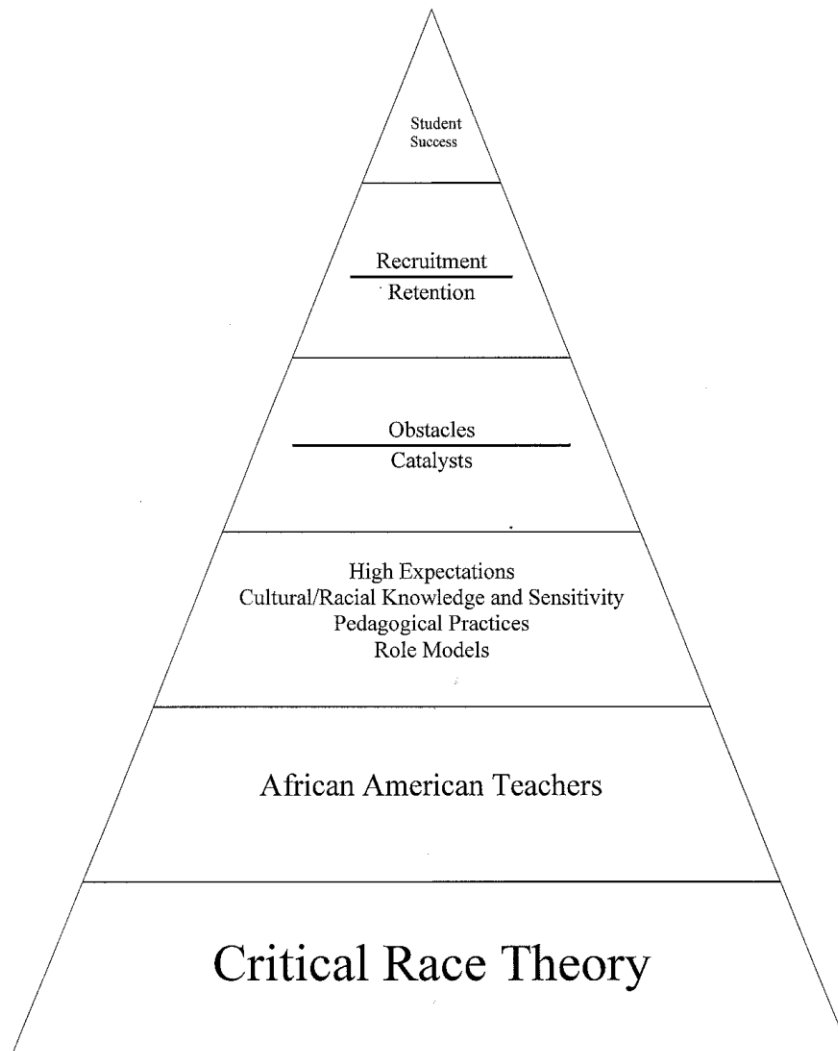
Figure 1. The conceptual framework represents steps toward success for all students, created by M. D. Ursery, 2011.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework consists of five levels; Black student success sits at the pinnacle of the pyramid. The pyramid reflects the factors that undergird Black students' success in schools. As the foundation for the pyramid, critical race theory (CRT) will be used to explore Black teachers' perspectives, opinions, and experiences concerning the lingering issue of the declining number of Black teachers in the U.S. and race and racism in public education. CRT represents the voices of minority groups that are routinely silenced and marginalized in school reform, educational policy, and discourse; thus, giving voice to Black teachers, their perspectives, their opinions, and their experiences, which are vital in understanding what measures are needed to recruit and retain Blacks in the teaching profession.

The first step of the pyramid represents Black teachers. The second step of the pyramid represents the important qualities that Black teachers bring to the learning environment. Black teachers demonstrate cultural and racial sensitivity toward Black students, have high expectations for all students, advance and sensitize cultural perspectives, embrace culturally relevant pedagogical practices, serve as role models, and surrogate parents. These are critical factors in improving the performance of Black students. The third step of the pyramid represents the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher. Barriers play a significant role in prospective teachers' decision to enter the profession and teachers' decision to leave a school, district, or education. Salary, perception of teaching, student academic preparedness, competency testing, and teacher working conditions impact the limited number of Black teachers. One way to increase the number of Black teachers is to overcome these barriers. The fourth step of

the pyramid represents recruitment and retention efforts. Significant increase in minority

representation is highly unlikely without proactive efforts to attract qualified minority

candidates into the profession and efforts to retain current teachers (Allen, 2005).

Recruitment and retention reform strategies must operate in unison to effectively

influence the number of Black teachers. The fifth step, the peak of the pyramid,

represents the manifestation of steps one through four. Systemically and systematically

galvanizing these steps will provide more equitable education opportunities and access

promoting success for all students, particularly Black students.

　　　　The academic success of Black students and other minority students is important

to America's economic future. According to the National Center for Educational

Statistics (2010b), by 2019-2020 minority students will comprise about half the children

in our nation's public schools. Considering the steady increase of minority student

enrollment across the nation, one can predict that the labor force will increasingly

demand skilled minority workers. Thus, our economy largely depends on the success of

all students regardless of racial or ethnic backgrounds.

Significance of the Study

　　　　The focus of this study is to gain insight into the perspectives and opinions of

Black teachers regarding the obstacles and catalysts to entering and remaining in the

teaching profession and their views on why there is a shortage of Black teachers in

Connecticut's public schools. It is important to identify and understand factors that

encourage prospective teachers to enter the profession and factors that discourage

teachers from remaining in the profession. Learning more about the factors Black

teachers report that led them to select teaching as a career and remaining in the profession

will help broaden our understanding of the Black teacher shortage. The professional viewpoints and experiences of Black teachers in Connecticut may also inform the practice and policy considerations for minority teacher recruitment and retention. Once the factors associated with the problem are understood, strategic steps can be taken to address the crisis.

Diversifying the teaching profession is beneficial at the classroom level; it increases the quality of student learning, increases respect for differences, and decreases racial prejudices. As a result of the limited presence of Black teachers, few students, particularly Black students, will have a Black teacher. Given the large and well documented achievement gap between Black and White students, both nationally and in Connecticut, it is vital that we have Black teachers that significantly contribute to the academic development of Black students, instill social and cultural awareness, and demonstrate a more accurate representation of our society. This study's findings will be significant for the Connecticut State Department of Education policymakers and Connecticut school districts. The results of this study will provide insights regarding specific obstacles and catalysts associated with attracting Black teachers, highlight organizational conditions that support and reduce success, and recommend innovative recruitment and retention approaches that may serve to increase the number and quality of Black teachers in Connecticut's teaching workforce.

Organization of the Dissertation

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction, an overview of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, definition of terms, conceptual framework, and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 presents the review of

literature relevant to the study. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in the study including the research design, the population and participants, the instrumentation, the data collection procedures, and data analysis. Chapter 4 will report the qualitative and quantitative findings of the study. Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to examine the factors related to the underrepresentation of Black teachers in Connecticut public schools through examining the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. Many previous studies have provided findings on the recruitment and retention of minority teachers. However, limited empirical research studies exist on the factors preventing Black teachers from entering and remaining in the teaching profession. This information may inform and expand educational leaders and policymakers' understanding and lead to the strategic development of specific programs that target recruiting and retaining Black teachers.

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter is a review of literature related to Blacks in the teaching workforce. It examines the factors that influence Blacks to enter and remain in the teaching profession. The review of literature is divided into four sections. First, a discussion of CRT, the lens that frames this study, is presented. Next, the need for Black teachers in education is explored. The third section highlights research on the declining presence of Black teachers, and the obstacles Blacks face in entering and remaining in the profession. The chapter concludes with research on Black teacher recruitment and retention strategies.

Search Strategy

The purpose of this study is to examine the obstacles and catalysts to becoming a teacher and remaining a teacher in K-12 public schools in the Connecticut for Blacks. Therefore, publications were first selected for inclusion if the research focused on Black

teacher recruitment and retention. Secondly, publications were included if they addressed: (a) the demographic racial and ethnic imbalance between teachers and students; (b) the value of having Black teachers; (c) the obstacles and catalysts to recruitment of prospective Black candidates; (d) effective minority teacher recruitment and retention strategies; or (e) a critical race theoretical perspective on K-12 public education. The search process yielded a variety of publications. In total, I examined approximately 215 studies, reports, books, and articles, and approximately 160 were cited in this study.

To identify studies for inclusion in this study, I searched CCSU library major databases (Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), WilsonWeb, Education: A SAGE Full-Text Collection, ProQuest: Dissertation and Theses, and Educator's Reference Complete, JSTOR) and conducted web searches of Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruitment (MTR) Alliance, Connecticut Education Data and Research (CEDaR), and Google Scholar for reviews of research, articles, books, government documents, and reports for results related to minority teacher recruitment and retention.

A preliminary search began January 2011. The major search took place from June through August 2011. I used the term *African American teacher* in my initial search in combination with *recruitment* and/or *retention*. It yielded a few results. To broaden my search I used multiple descriptors to denote African American teacher (e.g., *diverse, minority, black, teacher of color*). Next, I linked *African American* or *minority* to various related descriptors such as *teacher shortage, teacher retention, teacher induction, teacher*

pedagogy, and *teacher attrition.* Using a snowball sampling strategy, I used the references of seminal studies and research reviews to identify other useful studies. This strategy produced many useful publications. Much of the literature on teacher recruitment focuses on the general teaching workforce. The few studies that focus on minority teacher recruitment and retention generally do not disaggregate by teacher race and ethnicity.

Effective minority teacher recruitment and retention are challenging issues facing many schools and districts throughout the country. I emphasized studies conducted in the United States from 1985 through the present. In the mid 1980s America became aware of the shifting student demographics. In 1986 the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy released a report stimulating attention to the changing demographics in public schools' student enrollment and predicting critical minority teacher shortages and the need for more racially and ethnically diverse teachers (Carnegie Forum, 1986).

Critical Race Theory

This study examines the recruitment and retention of Black teachers in the United States with a specific focus on Connecticut public school teachers. This section is an overview of White dominance in the U.S. and how CRT informs the issue of the declining number of Black teachers in the U.S.

W. E .B. DuBois, an early thinker of critical racial issues foreshadowed race as a central construct in the ensuing poor national race relations between Blacks and Whites. Over a century ago, DuBois (1903) stated that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line" (p. 1). DuBois's early sentiments were important in advancing the centrality of race and its impact on social relations between Blacks and

Whites. Blacks have been adversely affected by racism and the effect of racism continues to pervade our institutions and society.

CRT was used in this study to explore the professional experiences of Black teachers regarding recruiting and retaining Black educators in the U.S. CRT exposes and analyzes race, racism, discrimination, White dominance, and power in U.S. institutions, and U.S. society. CRT is one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks to examine racism in education and to understand the inequities that occur in schools (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Critical race theorists use CRT to illustrate, expose, and give voice to inequalities in educational structures, theories, policies, and practices (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado, 2000; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Using race to examine schools has not been "systematically employed in the analysis of educational inequality" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p.50).

CRT is comprised of several foundational tenets: (a) racism is an ordinary and normal phenomenon; (b) race is a social construct; (c) interest convergence promotes self-interest; and (d) narratives and storytelling expose and challenge Eurocentric ideologies (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Taylor, 2009).

Tenet one states that racism is an ordinary and normal occurrence in everyday society in which racial bias is the norm not the exception (Witherspoon & Mitchell, 2009). This common philosophy is entrenched in all sectors of our society; Whites, the beneficiaries of the privilege do not recognize it as a privilege (Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995; Taylor, 2009). Marable (1992) defines racism as "a system of ignorance, exploitation, and power used to oppress Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Americans, American Indians and other people on the basis of ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and

color" (p.5). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) define racism as any program or practice of discrimination, segregation, persecution, or mistreatment based on membership in a race or ethnic group. Solorzano and Yosso (2009) posit that racism is about institutional power; they assert that minority people have never possessed these forms of power. Often, European American teachers are not aware of the educational benefits rewarded to them by virtue of their sociopolitical privilege. Gay (2000) contends many European American teachers are probably *cultural hegemonists*. According to this theory, European American teachers expect conformity to the dominant group's social, intellectual, behavioral values, and standards in school. The assumption that all students will conform to Eurocentric standards is problematic, particularly in educational institutions where White hegemony in the curriculum, instruction, curriculum standards, testing, policies, and procedures often marginalizes minority students. Taylor (2009) asserts that these policies and practices are, in fact, intentional. Despite incremental improvement in race relations, discrimination still exists; however, it is more covertly masked among institutional practices (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). From the perspectives of Blacks, this study seeks to explore the ordinary and normal institutional practices that Blacks experience that may impede Black academic success.

A second tenet of CRT is that race is a social construction. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) define social construction of race as "a process of endowing a group or concept with a delineation, name, or reality" (p. 155). Delgado and Stefancic assert that members of society often choose to ignore scientific facts such as personality, intelligence, and moral behavior. Instead individuals construct races, then endow them with spurious characteristics. Lynn and Parker (2006) suggest that the constant deconstruction and

reconstruction of race demonstrates that race is a socially constructed phenomenon shaped by sociopolitical forces, social thought, and relations. Minority groups are defined by the dominant group (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Kohli (2009) believes that our society prioritizes Eurocentric perspectives, culture, histories, and contributions which affirm racial hierarchy. America's public schools are a prime example of institutions in which race is a social construction because race and student achievement are closely linked.

A third tenet of CRT is interest convergence which means that the dominant group tolerates advances for racial justice and equality only when it promotes the dominant group's self-interest, and thus, it perpetuates injustice for minority groups (Bell, 1992; Taylor, 2009). Taylor (2009) and Witherspoon and Mitchell (2009) argue that racial equality is accommodated insomuch as it does not detract from the interests of the dominant power structure. For example, Taylor (2009) contends that the landmark 1954 Brown decision that desegregated public schools was a tactical decision based on America's need to demonstrate an ideal democracy to promote foreign relations. Hence, White America benefited from a law that was intended to advance the Black community. Arizona's refusal to endorse Martin Luther King's birthday until tourism revenues were threatened is another example of interest convergence (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

A fourth tenet of CRT is the notion of storytelling or narratives. Storytelling is characterized as how children and youth in the U.S. learn about American history and heroes. However, storytelling is usually told from the dominant group's perspective; consequently, it privileges the dominant group and minimizes or does not acknowledge the accomplishments of minority groups in the U.S. (Delgado, 2000). Storytelling from a

CRT framework focuses on the theory or practice of exposing and replacing underlying social structures of the current social order that unfairly disenfranchise groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2009). The stories told in schools undergird educational organizational practices and policies, curricular choices, and pedagogical practices that favor youth from the dominant group over youth from minority groups. Hence, minority youth do not receive the same educational opportunities as majority youth. Ladson-Billings (1998) argues that the dominant group rationalizes and justifies their oppressive actions, stories, explanations, and constructs their realities by asserting that stories allow individuals to share experiences and express their realities. Counterstorytelling is a powerful way for the minority groups in the U.S. to expose discrimination and racism; minority groups share their stories, histories, and perspectives (Delgado, 2000). Counterstorytelling provides a context for understanding, feeling, and interpreting the experiences of the oppressed and marginalized groups in the U.S. Giving voice to the realities of the oppressed is vital to "understanding the complexities of racism" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p .24).

Yosso (2005) defines CRT as "a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the traditional ways race and racism impact educational structures, practices, and discourses" (p.74). In the United States discourse on race is often superficial or mostly avoided altogether. Critical race theorists seek to broaden the dialogue and highlight the unspoken and subtle ways in which race and racism shape the educational outcome for many people of color (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lynn & Parker, 2006). Taylor (2009) asserts that the analysis of race challenges the standardization of the White paradigm and counters traditional White

dominance in the U.S. CRT provides a vehicle with which to begin to reassess the dominant value system and legitimize the voices of minority groups.

Summary

CRT frames this study's examination of the recruitment and retention of Blacks to the teaching profession. The principles of CRT are marked by racism as ordinary and normal, race as a social construct, the tolerance of racial advances when it promotes the self-interest of the majority group, and the notion of storytelling and narratives to challenge and expose the false presuppositions of social order. CRT was used to explore the causes and consequences of Black teachers' underrepresentation in Connecticut's public schools.

The Need for Black Teachers in U.S. Schools

This section of the literature review focuses on the need for Black teachers in U.S. public schools. Despite the efforts to increase teacher diversity, the United States is still experiencing a considerable shortage of minority teacher representation in public schools. In 2008-2009 there were approximately 3 million public school teachers in the U.S and fewer than 8% were Black. During the same school year, Black students represented approximately 8.0 million of the nearly 49.3 million students enrolled in American public schools. By the year 2019-2020, minority students will comprise about half the children in our nation's public schools (NCES, 2010b). Clearly, as our nation's schools become increasingly more ethnically and racially diverse, there is a heightened need to employ more minority teachers (Gordon, 2000; King, 1993a; Kohli, 2009; Milner & Howard, 2004).

There is general consensus among policymakers, school leaders, educational researchers, teachers, and community leaders that the teaching workforce needs more diversification. Almost 25 years ago the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1987) declared that exposure to a variety of cultural perspectives through a multiethnic teaching workforce improves racial parity, and more importantly, provides a quality education for all students. Society must begin to support and accept the value of student and teacher diversity in education.

American public schools need Black teachers because they (a) advocate high expectations for Black students; (b) have first-hand cultural knowledge and experiences similar to Black students; (c) bring Afrocentric perspectives and pedagogical practices into the often Eurocentric environment; (d) serve as role models to Black students that benefit all students (King, 1993a, 1993b; Villegas & Davis, 2008).

Teacher Expectations

Researchers have found that minority teachers have high expectations for minority students in America's public schools (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b; Milner, 2006; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Ferguson (2003) reported that many White teachers' expectations, perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and biases negatively affect Black and poor children's academic performance. Low expectations perpetuate the cycle of low academic performance which influences Black students' educational careers (e.g., dropout rates or college-bound rates) (Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 1990). In her study with Black teachers, Gordon (2000) found that Black teachers embraced a philosophy of empowerment, motivation, and nurturing toward Black students.

Villegas and Davis (2008) analyzed a large body of empirical studies regarding the effect of teacher race/ethnicity on student learning, test scores, absenteeism, second-generation segregation, course enrollment, teacher perception, expectations, and treatment of students. Two empirical studies measuring test scores found that when paired with Black teachers, the test scores of Black students consistently increased. An important finding was that White teachers were less successful than Black teachers at increasing Black student achievement (Dee, 2004; Evans, 1992).

Dee (2004) reanalyzed the data in Tennessee's Project Star four year study of 11,600 kindergarten through Grade 3 students. She examined the effect of having a same-race teacher on student learning. Dee's findings revealed that Black students' reading scores increased by approximately three to six percentile points and mathematics approximately four to five percentile points when they had a Black teacher. Moreover, there was a cumulative effect on student learning of two to three percentile points in reading and mathematics for each year the students were taught by a same-race teacher (Dee, 2004).

Similarly, using data from the 1987 Joint Council on Economic Education National Assessment of Economics Education (NAEE) survey, Evans (1992) analyzed the NAEE survey results for 2,440 high school students enrolled in economic courses to determine the relationship between same-race teacher-student interaction (role model effect) on student achievement. He found that Black students taught by Black teachers scored 2.25 point higher on the Test of Economic Literacy (TEL) than Black students who were taught by a teacher of another race or ethnicity.

In nonacademic studies, it was found that having a same-race teacher lowered absenteeism, significantly decreased incidences of second-generation segregation, significantly increased enrollment in advanced courses, decreased dropout rates, and increased college attendance rates. Farkas, Grobe, Sheehan, and Shuan (1990) investigated the connection between same-race teacher-student interaction and absenteeism. Four hundred eighty-six seventh and eighth grade students from 22 middle schools were included in the study (Villegas & Davis, 2008). Farkas et al. found that when paired with the same-race teachers, Black students exhibited a markedly lower rate of absenteeism. Absenteeism limits instructional time and opportunities to engage in learning.

Klopfenstein (2005) analyzed the impact of Black math teachers on Black student enrollment in advanced math courses. Data from the Texas Schools Microdata Panel for approximately 21,000 ninth through eleventh grade students were used. She found the percentage of Black students completing geometry courses and subsequently enrolling in Algebra II courses increased significantly as the percentage of Black math teachers increased.

In a comprehensive synthesis of literature focusing on teacher-student interactions (teacher expectations, perception, and treatment of students), Irvine (1990) found White teachers' perceptions of Black students tended to be less favorable than their perceptions of European American students. White teachers tended to expect lower academic achievement of Black students than Black teachers; and they used negative labels to describe Black students.

Irvine (1990) argues that cultural synchronization was critical in teaching. Cultural synchronization means that Black students benefit from being taught by Black teachers because they have an insiders' perspective, suggesting that they have a cultural connection and cultural understanding (Milner, 2006). These attributes are important because research studies have shown a correlation between teachers' attitudes and expectations, positive or negative, and student achievement (Bong & Shaalvik, 2003; Campbell-Whatley & Comer, 2000). In addition, the findings highlight the importance of high expectations as related to educational attainment for Black students and substantiate the critical need for more minority teachers in the profession (Irvine, 1990). These scholars concluded that it is important to understand these predictors in order to attract, recruit, and retain an increased number of Black teachers (Bong & Shaalvik, 2003; Campbell-Whatley & Comer, 2000; Farkas et al., 1990; Klopfenstein, 2005).

Gordon (2000) conducted interviews with Black teachers, who perceived White teachers to be lenient with Black students and allowed them to "get away with things… made excuses for them, felt sorry for them, [and] underestimated their abilities" (p. 70), and generally did not challenge the students academically. Negative self-concept adversely impacts student achievement. Negative teacher behaviors may instill perceived feelings of incompetence that may adversely impact students' academic self-concept leading to decrease motivation and performance in school (Bong & Shaalvik, 2003). Campbell-Whatley and Comer (2000) have reported that historically, Blacks have been perceived as academically inferior and that this "pervasive" and "deep-seated" belief is still present in our educational system. The authors found that negative treatment in school can stimulate negative student behaviors, contribute to low self-concept, and

impede academic achievement and performance. One study revealed that many teachers do not have positive attitudes toward, expectations of, and interactions with minority students (Villegas & Davis, 2008). Gay (2000) claims racial biases, ethnic stereotyping, cultural ethnocentrism, and personal rejections cause teachers who do not care to devalue, demean, and even fear some Blacks.

Cultural Knowledge and Sensitivity

Many scholars believe there is a critical need for more minority teachers because they are more aware of and sensitive to the needs, experiences, and challenges of minority students (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education [AACTE] 1989; Brown, M. S., 2009; Goodwin, 2004; King, 1993a, 1993b). Black teachers' first-hand knowledge about the cultural backgrounds and experiences of Black students is valuable to Black students attending White-dominated school systems (Brown, M. S., 2009; Klopfenstein, 2005; Kohli, 2009; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Nieto (2004) and M. S. Brown (2009) underscore the concept of cultural mismatch; that is, there may be a disconnect between European American teachers' personal and professional experiences with those of minority students that may adversely impact academic achievement.

Bakari (2003) conducted an investigation of 415 pre-service teachers' attitudes toward teaching Black students as compared to White students. The study found Black pre-service teachers were more willing than their White counterparts to teach Black students, and they embraced cultural sensitivity toward teaching Black students. Previously referenced literature suggests that minority teachers tend to be sensitive to the needs of minority students. An important footnote to consider is that the effective demonstration of culturally relevant teaching practices is incumbent upon an empathetic

disposition and an understanding of the significance of and need for diversity in public education (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

The notion of care has been identified as important in schools (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Goodwin, 2004; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Nieto, 2004; Nodding, 1992). Witherspoon and Mitchell (2009) assert that caring and social justice are inextricably linked; that is, Black teachers often instinctively engage in behaviors and practices that address racial inequities and inequalities. Genuine teacher caring is at the heart of the educational process and effects student achievement (Nodding, 1992). Educational researchers have noted that a disposition of care fosters positive school attitudes such as motivation and positive attitudes (Foster, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003). In fact, King (1993b) states that Black teachers often act as "surrogate parents, advocates, disciplinarians and counselors" (p. 121) to Black students. Gay (2000) asserts that caring attitudes and behaviors positively impact student outcomes. She further affirms that teachers should demonstrate ethics of caring through demonstrating concern for the "students' emotional, physical, economic, and interpersonal conditions" (p.47) in addition to subject matter. However, although caring is important, caring alone is not enough; it must be coupled with high expectations, cultural sensitivity, and culturally relevant pedagogical practices.

Black Teachers and Pedagogical Practices

Multicultural education aims to create equal education opportunities for diverse racial, ethnic, social, and cultural groups (Banks & Banks, 2004). Over the last three decades, research on culturally relevant pedagogy emerged from multicultural education. Ladson-Billings (1994) examined teachers' beliefs about knowledge, teaching, and

relationships through personal interviews and classroom observations. She identified "culturally relevant" pedagogical practices. She defines culturally relevant pedagogy as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p.17-18). Culturally relevant pedagogy is an effective way of enriching the curriculum, perspectives, and practices of all teachers (Morris, 2001), while seeking to help all students gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively function in a pluralistic society (Banks & Banks, 2004). Ladson-Billings (1995b) identifies three principles of culturally relevant pedagogy: academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. She asserts that integral to culturally relevant pedagogy is the belief in the academic success for all students, the development and maintenance of their cultural identity through building on students' prior knowledge and cultural experiences, and the development of a critical sociopolitical consciousness that allows students to question and analyze the dominant norms, values, and status quo.

A common finding among the literature on culturally relevant pedagogy is that Black teachers' ability to use multiple strategies to engage students and infuse alternative perspectives and pedagogical practices into the predominantly Eurocentric educational system help to eradicate inequities and promote social justice for all students (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; King, 1993a; Quiocho & Rios, 2000).

Foster (1995) asserts that Black teachers understand and use familiar cultural patterns and communication to build a strong sense of cultural solidarity and cultural connectedness. Black teachers utilize speech "repetition, call and response, variation in pace, high emotional involvement, creative analogies, figurative language, vowel

elongation, catch phrases, gestures, body movement, symbolism, aphorisms, and lively discussions" (p. 60) to engage Black students (Irvine, 1990).

A. L. Brown (2009) conducted a case study to explore urban elementary students' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical practices. He found that students preferred teachers who displayed caring attitudes, established a home-like atmosphere in the classroom, believed in students' ability to be academically successful, and engaged students in entertaining, stimulating interactive activities. M. S. Brown (2009) asserts that increasing the number of minority teachers is important because there needs to be a balance of instructional experiences for all students, particularly minority students. There is a notable need for diverse teachers who can demonstrate culturally relevant pedagogical practices (Banks & Banks, 2004; Brown-Jeffy- & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Role Models

Some educational scholars contend that Black teachers provide positive role models for Black students by sharing the same cultural backgrounds, challenging stereotypes and racism, and motivating minority students to succeed academically and pursue future careers as educators (Achinstein & Oqawa, 2011; Foster, 1995; King, 1993b; Learning Point Associates, undated; Mack, Smith, & VonMany, 2003; Su, 1997; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Gibson (2007) maintains that there is a critical need for quality minority teachers because teacher-role models are important because a "teacher's role is not only to teach, but also to inspire and serve as an example. After all, teachers are the first group of professionals with whom children interact" (p. 59). Students need to see individuals who look like them in professional leadership roles (King, 1993a). Expressing

similar sentiments, Milner (2006) states that students can "visualize the possibilities" (p. 97) for their lives when they see individuals who look like them in the teaching profession. This illustrates that success is possible amid the many challenges that minority students encounter. For all students, having minority teachers creates a more realistic representation of the society in which they live.

A number of programs have been developed to help Blacks enter the profession. In 1999, Dr. Parker founded the Call Me MISTER (Men Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) program. The Call Me MISTER program is a partnership between Clemson University and several historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in South Carolina. The aim of the program is to attract, recruit, certify, and retain Black males as well as other males into elementary education to serve as teachers and role models. This is significant in light of the fact that only approximately 1% of the South Carolina's 20,000 elementary teachers are Black (Chmelynski, 2006; Holsendolph, 2007).

King's (1993b) qualitative study of 41 Black prospective and beginning teachers sought to explore their perspectives on recruiting and retaining Black teachers. The author found that 69% of the teachers cited "lack of role models for youth" as the impetus for entering the profession.

Wilder's (2000) qualitative study presents the narrative of 12 Black students (six of whom have had Black teachers) to discuss the impact of having or not having a Black teacher. Students who had Black teachers remembered their Black teachers warmly and spoke of a connection with Black teachers who related learning to their history and cultural identity. Two students stated that their teachers inspired them to pursue teaching.

More importantly, Wilder (1999, 2000) asserts that Black teachers provide rich educational experiences and teaching styles to both minority and majority students.

Although there are many factors that contribute to the successful education of children, there is strong belief among education scholars that Black teachers positively contribute to educational process of all students (Banks, 2006; Irvine, 2003; King, 1993a; Wilder, 1999, 2000). Thus, there is a compelling need for more Black teachers in K-12 public education. Milem (2003) posits that diversity in educational institutions benefits all students in cognitive, affective, and interpersonal ways; benefits the school organization by increasing its effectiveness through diversity of perspectives and thoughts, benefits society through increasing cultural awareness and acceptance, and increases racial understanding that promote a better educated and involved citizenry. If the goal of public education is to prepare students to be active, productive participants in our ever-increasingly diverse society, it is imperative to provide a realistic representation of our pluralistic society and prepare students for a diverse workplace. Milem further asserts that White students who experience limited interactions with individuals from different backgrounds are least likely to have positive thoughts about multiculturalism. Through their cultural values and varied perspectives and practices, Black teachers enrich and expand the educational learning environment for all students.

Summary

A major concern facing public education is the low academic performance of minority students, specifically Black students. Central to each of the rationales for diversifying the teacher workforce is that all students, particularly Black students, will benefit from having more Black teachers. Black teachers are essential to socially and

culturally balancing the teaching profession and dominant perspectives. Research illuminates that Blacks have high academic and personal expectations for Black students, and when they are present in the classroom, Black student achievement increases. Some studies show that negative White teachers' perceptions may manifest in Black students receiving less attention, encouragement, and positive feedback (Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 1990; King 1993a), which adversely affect students' self-concept. Thus, a critical concern of the Black teacher shortage is that Black students will have fewer opportunities to interact with Black teachers who have been shown to positively impact their academic achievement (Wilder, 1999, 2000).

Black Teacher Shortage

The critical shortage of minority teachers is well-documented in educational literature (Achinstein et al., 2010; Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 2003; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; King, 1993a; Klopfenstein, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Torres et al., 2004; Villegas & Davis, 2008). This section of the literature review will discuss the barriers that contribute to the Black teacher shortage. The section begins with a discussion of the factors associated with teacher turnover and its impact on student learning. A discussion of Black students' academic unpreparedness, adverse effects of competency testing, and unsupportive working conditions follows. Collectively, these factors influence aspirants' entrance into and teacher departures out of the teaching profession.

Teacher Turnover

Under the umbrella of teacher turnover, attrition and migration operate together to contribute to the shortage dilemma. In 2000-2001 the national teacher turnover rate was 15.1%, 7.4% attributable to attrition and 7.7% attributable to migration. Of the

aforementioned statistics, Black teachers account for 7.4% of the attrition rates and 8.3%

migration rates (Johnson & Kardos, 2008). Ingersoll and May's (2011a, 2011b) analysis

of the 2004-2005 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) data found rising turnover rates for

minority and Black teachers. The data show that at the beginning of the 2003-2004

school year, 47,663 minority teachers entered teaching and 56,244 minority teachers left

at the end of the school year. The researchers reported higher turnover rates for minority

teachers (19.4%) and Black (20.7%) than for European American teachers (16.4%).

A greater concern is that turnover is highest in low-income, high-poverty, and

high minority schools (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson & Kardos,

2008; Torres et al., 2004). This turnover trend adversely impacts the quality of instruction

in already disadvantaged schools. Educational policymakers often consider the

investment loss of revolving teachers; however, Johnson and Kardos (2008) contend that

schools also absorb an attrition debt that the students ultimately pay, particularly urban

students. When teachers leave and are replaced with other novice teachers, it impacts the

instructional environment, further confounding the education milieu in these already

distressed districts (Johnson & Kardos, 2008).

Stayers, Movers, Leavers

Recent quantitative studies reveal higher attrition rates among Black teachers.

Research demonstrates that schools with an increase in minority enrollment saw an

increase in attrition (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008) and a

decrease in high-quality teachers (Harris & Ray, 2003). Using data from the 2000-2001

TFS to the 1999-2000 School and Staffing Survey (SASS), Luekens, Lyter and Fox

(2004) surveyed approximately 8,400 K-12 teachers to better understand teacher attrition

and mobility. They reported that 16.8% of teachers left schools enrolling more than 35%

minority students;14.7% of teachers left schools enrolling between 10% and 35%

minority students; and 13.5% of teachers left schools with a minority enrollment of less

than 10%. Similarly, using data from the national 2008-2009 TFS to the 2007-2008

SASS of 4,750 teachers, Keigher (2010) reported that of the 2,807,300 European

American teachers, 85% were stayers, 7% movers, and 8% leavers; and of the 257,800

Black teachers, 80.5% stayers, 10.4% movers, and 9.1% leavers. This research suggests

that teachers in schools in low-income areas with high concentrations of minority

students tend to leave for better performing schools leaving the high need-schools to hire

new teachers. Other related research reveals that high school teachers, male teachers,

inner city teachers, Black and Hispanics teachers, and math and science teachers showed

the greatest propensity to leave teaching (Barnes et al., 2007; Feistritzer, 2005, Ingersoll

& May 2011a, 2011b; King, 1993a). According to a recent report, approximately 60% of

Black teachers teach in inner city schools (Feistritzer, 2011). Teachers who leave most

often attribute their decision to leave to a combination of low salary, lack of status, and

unsatisfactory working conditions (Johnson & Kardos, 2008).

Obstacles Affecting Black Teacher Shortage

The research in this section highlights factors that impede Black students from

entering the teaching profession and factors that influence Black teachers to leave the

teaching profession. The research literature consistently cites attraction to other career

opportunities, low salary, status, perception (Guarino et al., 2006; Torres et al., 2004),

inadequate academic preparation (Gordon, 2000), competency testing (Hunter-Boykin,

1992), and unsupportive working conditions (Stotko, Ingram, & Beaty-O'Ferrall, 2007)

as salient reasons for the declining presence of Black teachers in America's public schools (Allen, 2005; King, 1993a; Wood, 2001).

Attraction to teaching. Attracting prospective Black candidates into the teaching profession has been a challenging task. Traditionally, in the Black community teaching was viewed as a respectable profession that was held in high esteem. Presently, the teaching profession is perceived by most Americans as a low salary, high stress, and low status profession (Haberman, 2005; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Wilder, 1999). Torres, Santos, Peck and Cortes (2004) reported that minority interest in teaching has drastically declined from 19.3% in 1970 to 6.2% in 1985. In the 1960s and 1970s in the midst of the civil rights movement, affirmative action, and the women's movement more occupational choices became available; consequently, many Blacks actively sought career opportunities that were previously restricted (Michael-Bandele, 1993; Webb, 1986). Thus, Black candidates are choosing more prestigious and lucrative career paths (Haberman, 2005) with upward mobility (Wilder, 2000).

In a research study of 41 Black students (14 prospective teachers) King (1993b) reported the participants cited the opportunity to work with young people, contribution to society, and ability to teach as the main reasons for choosing teaching. In addition, approximately 40% of the participants identified a previous teacher as influential in their choice to become a public school teacher. Also, King found that males cited salary (43%) and professional prestige (29%) as more important reasons for choosing teaching as a career; conversely, females cited salary (15%) and professional prestige (9%) as less important reasons for choosing teaching as a profession.

Salary considerations. Low teacher salaries contribute to the decreased interest in the profession. The research suggests that teachers' salaries are not commensurate with salaries of other professions that require comparable levels of education (AACTE, 1989; Gordon, 2000; Torres et al., 2004). Shipp (1999) examined the career choices of 263 Black college students (177 females and 86 males), which included 138 education and 125 noneducation majors. The two-part questionnaire asked participants to rate the degree of importance placed on the 10 career choice factors in determining career choice. She found that noneducation majors placed greater importance on extrinsic factors such as salary and advancement opportunities, while education majors were more intrinsically motivated placing significantly more importance on contribution to society. In the second part of the questionnaire, education and noneducation majors were asked to rank their perception of the attractiveness of each factor in a career in teaching. Both groups identified contribution to society, intellectual stimulation, and encouragement of others as the three leading factors that make teaching an attractive career choice. Both King (1993b) and Shipp's (1999) findings speak to the low numbers of males in the profession, particularly Black males. Addressing the critically low number of Black men in the teaching profession could impact the overall Black teacher shortage.

Gordon's (2000) ethnographic study of 114 minority teachers revealed strong economic reasons for not entering teaching. Participants felt that teaching required too much education for the return. Gordon argues:

> African Americans were particularly upset about the requirement of advanced study for teachers beyond the Bachelor's degree. They argued that most other professions were content with a B.A., whereas teaching required a fifth-year of schooling plus on-going training. They claimed that the extra year prohibits many people of color from entering the field of teaching. . . . Why should a Black

person go to school an extra year to end up with a job that pays less than those that only take four years? (p. 27)

Nearly all of the participants cited greater monetary incentives as important in attracting and retaining Black teachers. These sentiments speak clearly that salary and status impede entry into the profession for many Blacks, particularly males.

Perception. Over the years, society's perception of teaching has deteriorated. Guarino, Santibanez and Daley (2006) and King (1993b) assert that to increase the supply of teachers, systematic efforts are necessary to make the profession more attractive so society can alter its perception of teaching. Research aimed primarily at Black students' perception of teaching is limited. However, two studies were examined that address the issue. First, Wilder (1999) conducted in-depth interviews with 21 Black second semester freshman (8 males and 13 females) over a six month period to examine their schooling experiences and their perception of teaching and the teaching profession. The students expressed lack of student discipline, patience level, and low salaries as three primary factors dissuading them from entering the teaching profession.

Gordon's (1997) pilot study of 60 professional informants responded to "Why do you think students of color are not selecting teaching as a career?" identified students' negative pre-collegiate experiences as the most prominent reason students rejected teaching as a career option. To gain a deeper and broader perspective, Gordon conducted a follow-up study. Gordon (2000) interviewed 114 minority teachers concerning the respectability and changing image of public school teachers in three urban school districts in Ohio, Washington, and California. The findings revealed a strong consensus among

teacher participants that professional image was important and that the negative images of teaching was the primary reason teachers cited why teaching was not a viable option.

Academic preparedness. Low achievement of Black students is a longstanding concern. The literature reports that many Black students' career choices are often impeded by inadequate academic preparation during their elementary and secondary schooling (Gordon, 2000; King, 1993b). A large percentage of Black students reside in high poverty urban districts that are laden with organizational and structural problems. Research consistently reports that urban districts often have the least qualified teachers (Little & Bartlett, 2010; Reichardt, Arnold, & Hupfeld, 2006; Torres et al., 2004), least resources (King & Bey, 1995), a disproportionate distribution of unqualified and ineffective teachers assigned to high poverty, low socioeconomic schools (Little & Bartlett, 2010; Reichardt et al., 2006), dilapidated school buildings (Kozol, 1991; Hacker, 1992), most stressed teachers, higher teacher attrition (Haberman, 2005; Ingersoll & May, 2011b), and ability grouping where a disproportionate number of Black students are in special education and low level courses and few participate in gifted courses (Oakes & Lipton; Nieto, 2003). These copious factors have a cumulative, negative effect on student achievement and student schooling experiences and ultimately impact college success. Low college enrollment is directly related to academic unpreparedness. In large part, the teacher pipeline is dependent on successful completion of elementary, middle and high school, college, and certification requirements (Torres et al., 2004). King (1993b) suggests that inadequate educational preparation may contribute to why Blacks are not choosing teaching which directly influences the number of Black entering teaching.

Competency testing. The Black teacher shortage is intensified by national competency testing as Black teacher candidates are passing the National Teacher Examination (NTE) at significantly lower rates than White students generating questions concerning test accuracy (Hood & Parker, 1989; Hunter-Boykin, 1992). Testing results in 19 states excluded approximately 37,717 prospective candidates, 21,515 of which were Black, from certification (Michael-Bandele, 1993). Gifford (1985) reported that 58% of the 6,644 minority candidates who took the California basic skills test failed, 26% were Black.

Many critical education scholars attribute Black student failure to biased and culturally insensitive competency tests. King (1993a) recognizes the large gap between pass rates for Black teacher candidates compared to White teacher candidates and refers to testing as "a deterrent to the recruitment of Black teachers" (p. 139), and "the most severe threat to the survival of Black teachers" (p. 140). In recognition of the test bias controversy, Hood & Parker (1989) conducted case studies of Minority Review Panels of Pennsylvania and Illinois's approach to improve their attention to and inclusion of minority voices in testing issues. In Pennsylvania, minority participants played an advisory role in reviewing the state's test for language bias. In Illinois, minority participants were involved on a deeper level. The minority participants constructed test items, analyzed early trial tests for cultural bias, and recommended modifications and passing scores levels. These initial efforts warrant merit, but there is still a considerable way to go in achieving fairness in teacher competency testing. Webb (1986) furthers the argument contending:

> [t]he high rate of test failures for minorities reflect two critical conditions: a lack of interest in teaching by minority students who could easily pass the tests, and

the general failure of education to teach students to read with comprehension, write clearly, and perform routine mathematical computations. . . . Additionally, concerns are raised that the standardized tests are biased against minorities and low income students. (p. 3)

This highlights the deeper notion that minority students are routinely marginalized in the American educational system that customarily fails to serve their educational needs. Further, scholars argue that competency tests do not predict one's ability to teach; and there is no empirical data linking high test scores to effective teaching practices (King, 1993a; Torres et al., 2004).

Working conditions. Once teachers are hired, decisions to stay, move, or leave education correlates highly with working conditions (Little & Bartlett, 2010). Research studies regarding teacher shortages routinely attribute heightened turnover to increase retirement. However, Ingersoll (2001) contends that shortages are rooted in school characteristics and organizational conditions. School-level working conditions such as, inadequate supplies, overcrowded classes, large amounts of paperwork, and nonteaching responsibilities (King, 1993a), violence and discipline issues (Farber, 2010), isolation, alienation, and limited profession advancement (Torres et al., 2004), local/late hiring practices (Berry & Hirsch, 2005; Stotko et al., 2007), and teacher assignment practices are associated with teacher dissatisfaction. Urban school systems that employ large numbers of minority teachers are disproportionately exposed to poor working conditions.

Summary

With the growing minority student enrollment in America's public schools, the shortage of minority teachers is critical. Recent research suggests that Black teachers are leaving the profession in larger numbers than their White counterparts (Ingersoll & May,

2011a, 2011b). Given their already limited presence, it is important to find out why. Many Blacks do not consider teaching because of the low salary, low status, and poor perception of the teaching profession. Moreover, many Black high school graduates are not academically prepared for the challenges of college and many are failing the competency tests. Attention to successful progression through each academic juncture could address the high school and college dropout rates, and subsequent college completion (Torres et al., 2004). Those few who do enter the teaching profession are challenged by a myriad of unsupportive working conditions. This suggests the need for substantial interventions at the elementary and secondary levels and more culturally diverse teachers and teaching practices. My research study seeks to understand how these factors influence Black teachers in Connecticut.

Recruitment and Retention

Over the last few decades, a pressing concern in the United States has been recruitment of minority teachers (Achinstein et al., 2010; Dillard, 1994; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Torres et al., 2004). Although recruiting and retaining Black teachers in public schools is a desirable endeavor, achieving this endeavor continues to be a challenge. With the rising minority student population, serious consideration must be given to effectively increasing the number of qualified minority teachers. Traditional teacher education programs are not producing sufficient numbers of minority candidates. Ingersoll and May (2011b) advocate addressing recruitment and retention initiatives together theorizing that effective recruitment approaches improve retention rates. Other critical scholars advocate for establishing a social justice perspective for recruitment and retention programs that question mainstream institutional practices and deep-rooted assumptions that continue to

marginalize minority teachers and contribute to feelings of isolation and alienation (Dillard, 1994; Lee, 2003; Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Recruitment and retention efforts will continue to be challenging if schools systems and the larger communities do not attend to developing structures of social and cultural supports for minority teachers (Pesek, 1993).

Public School Pipeline

One way to expand recruitment efforts is to identify prospective teacher candidates early (AACTE, 1989; Villegas & Davis, 2007). Numerous scholars assert that awareness and preparation must begin as early as elementary school and continue through high school (Gissendaner-Kearney, 2010; Gitomer, Latham, & Ziomek, 1999; Torres et al., 2004). These scholars theorize that early grooming of students will increase the number of minority students becoming teachers. Studies purport that minority student attrition begins in high school as seen in the high dropout rates for minority students (Torres et al., 2004). Gifford (1986) asserts that the lack of minority teachers is directly related to the quality of the K-12 education and recruitment efforts should nurture the public school pipeline by providing a quality education and a positive school experience for minority students to encourage them to become teachers. Torres et al. (2004) reported the need to support minority teacher candidates from elementary through high school through their teaching careers.

The authors recommend building public awareness, providing financial assistance, mentoring, and ongoing professional development to encourage minorities to choose teaching as a profession. Partnerships with community organizations, two- and four- year colleges and universities, especially HBCUs, who enroll nearly half of all Black students in teacher education programs (Hunter-Boykin, 1992), and public schools

and districts is an investment in future minority teachers (Learning Point Associates, undated). Considering that 30% to 50% of minority students begin their higher education training in community colleges, a collaborative approach of partnering sources of prospective candidates with community colleges and universities is a viable recruitment tool (Torres et al., 2004; Villegas & Davis, 2007).

Early awareness, selection, and entry of minority students into teaching have been promoted through programs with the explicit goal of channeling minority candidates toward careers in education (Hunter-Boykin, 1992). Many school systems across the nation have established Grow Your Own recruitment models as a way of identifying minority students early on who are interested in becoming a teacher in the future (Fluckinger & Thompson, 2000; Gissendaner-Kearney, 2010; Hunter-Boykin, 1992). The premise of this recruitment approach is that minority teacher candidates who live in the community are well-suited to teach in the community (Villegas & Davis, 2007). Ohio offers a model example; it has over 135 Grow Your Own programs, working collaboratively with public schools, colleges and universities, and a number of community organizations. The general Grow Your Own model has four components that include the follow: (a) a strong service program for students in grades K-4; (b) a Future Educators of America (FEA) chapter is developed in grade 5 allowing students to participate in neighborhood activities; (c) in middle school the FEA chapter is augmented with service activities with colleges and universities; and (d) in high school students continue participation in FEA and service activities as well as work with younger students, and participate in career counseling and a state-wide program, Ohio Future Educators of America (OFEA), where they have the opportunity to engage in teacher

preparation projects (field work in home district) and licensure preparation programs. Students receive ongoing support through the FEA Professional chapter that assists them with professional develop, connections to grants and scholarships, and college preparation assistance to help students progress successfully through college.

Alternative Pathways to Teaching Careers

Although there are mixed reviews regarding the effectiveness of alternative routes to teaching, alternative pathways to teaching has been credited with increasing the numbers of minorities in the teaching profession (Achinstein et al., 2010; Feistritzer, 2005; Gordon, 2000). Feistritzer (2005) provided evidence supporting alternative routes to certification. Nearly 32% of prospective teachers entering teaching through alternative paths were minority compared to 11% in the overall teaching workforce. Moreover, 13% of the 32% minority teachers were Black teachers. Using survey results from the National Center for Education Information (NCEI), Feistritzer (2005) found that out of the 2,647 respondents surveyed, 47% reported that they would not have entered the teaching profession had it not been for the availability of an alternative route. Specifically, 48% of Whites, 43% of Black, and 53% of Hispanic who participated in the survey indicated they would not have become a teacher without an alternative route. Moreover, 62% of respondents expected to be teaching K-12 in 2010.

Many national, state, and local alternative programs engage in proactive strategies that successfully recruit minority and male candidates. Pathways to Teaching Careers program is one such program. It has created partnerships among 26 states and 66 colleges and universities targeting non-certified school employees (paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, and provisionally certified teachers) who already have classroom experience

working with children and are interested in working in high-need schools. Of the 2,600

prospective teachers enrolled, two-thirds are minority candidates and three-fourth are

paraprofessionals or non-certified teachers. A recent analysis of the program proffers

positive retention rates (81%; Lau, Dandy, & Hoffman, 2007).

Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education programs play an integral role in the effective recruitment

process. With the growing racial and ethnic population, it is imperative that schools of

education prepare teachers to teach students from diverse populations. Some critics

purport that schools of education are not adequately preparing teacher candidates to

understand, value, and teach racial, ethnic, and economically disadvantaged populations

(Bailey, 2009; Howey, 2006; Little & Bartlett, 2010; Su, 1997; Zeichner, 2003).

Researchers strongly recommend culturally relevant academic and social support services

(Dillard, 1994; King, 1991; Lee, 2003), as well as financial incentives such as grants,

scholarships, and loan forgiveness (Gifford, 1986; Villegas & Davis, 2007) for minority

students enrolled in teacher preparation programs (Torres et al., 2004). Howey (2006)

contends that policymakers underestimate what is needed to effectively prepare teachers

for urban settings; thus, the preparation of teachers is inadequate. Dillard (1994) purports

that minority voices have been muted for too long, she states that, "The realities for

people of color in education and society are too seldom stated, discussed, or even

acknowledged" (p. 9). The phenomenon of dysconsicous racism is perpetuated in teacher

education programs leading to the miseducation of teachers (King, 1991) and will remain

pervasive if minority candidates remain silent (Dillard, 1994). Bailey (2009) insists

improving teacher quality and thus academic achievement for all students, teacher

preparation programs must be changed. She believes preservice training must provide a multicultural curriculum to better prepare all teachers to teach in our pluralistic, democratic society (Learning Point Associates, undated). Dillard (1994) and Quiocho and Rios (2000) contend that recruitment efforts should focus on social justice in education. The social and cultural experiences of prospective Black teachers are critical indicators that influence their teaching practice.

Notably problematic but less frequently mentioned is that recruitment constraints include interstate licensure, local/late district hiring practices, and teacher education program admission criteria. Limited flexibility in interstate licensure and certification (Gissendaner-Kearney, 2010) and local districts late hiring practices (Berry & Hirsch, 2005) constrain recruitment efforts and contribute to minority teacher shortages. Case, Shive, Ingebretson and Spiegel (1988) reviewed and presented the results of a survey conducted by the Government Relations Committee of the Association of Colleges and Schools of Education that surveyed 108 member institutions related to minority recruitment and retention methods in college preservice education programs. The authors reported that 38% of the member institutions, believed their admission criteria as hindering minority acceptance to the college. The member institutions recommend earlier identification, sociocultural supports, embedding multicultural perspectives into curriculum, and personal recruitment efforts for prospective candidates as more effective recruitment practices. Successfully recruiting minority candidates into teacher education programs and subsequently the teaching profession is only a fraction of the challenge. Recruitment efforts are meaningless if they are not aligned with effective retention

strategies (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Gissendaner-Kearney, 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2011a, 2011b).

Retaining Minority Teachers

A continuing concern in the education field is the high rates of teachers leaving the profession. Some reports indicate that approximately a third of all beginning teachers leave the profession within their first three years and approximately half leave within their first five years (Howey, 2006; Torres et al., 2004). Moreover, recent research indicates that minority teachers are much more likely to leave the teaching profession than are majority teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011a, 2011b); consequently, establishing proactive retention strategies is important. Many beginning minority teachers often feel alienated and isolated (Milner & Hoy, 2003). These trends are cause for concern.

There is limited research on teacher retention that includes the ethical principles of social justice and culturally relevant pedagogy as tools that enhance preservice training and positively impact retention rates. Many scholars challenge the mainstream perspectives. These scholars advocate social justice initiatives to better prepare preservice teachers and support inservice teachers. Through socially sensitive professional development, traditionally silenced groups develop the confidence to vocalize their viewpoints, question the status quo, development cultural pedagogical practices, and share social and cultural experiences and knowledge (Dee, 2004; Dillard, 1994; Gordon, 2000; Lee, 2003).

Contributions of Induction and Mentoring Programs

Once minority teachers are recruited into the teaching profession they need structured, ongoing support systems and professional development that will enable them

to remain in teaching. Most minority teachers are employed in high-need urban schools where turnover is more pronounced suggesting that stabilizing minority teachers will positively impact retention rates (Achinstein et al., 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2011b). Proactive recruitment approaches coupled with strategic teacher induction and mentoring programs are vital to long-term sustainability of minority teachers. The high attrition patterns of new teachers and urban teachers underscore the need for tactical supports.

Over the past decade the number of beginning teachers participating in induction and mentoring programs has dramatically increased (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Ingersoll and Smith's (2004) analysis of SASS data for 1990-1991, 1993-1994, and 1999-2000 indicate an increase in beginning teachers' participation in induction programs, 40%, 50%, and 80% respectively; they found that effective induction programs decreased the likelihood of beginning teachers leaving the profession, especially in urban schools. The researchers further analyzed the 1990-2000 SASS data and noted the following effective induction components: mentoring with a teacher in the same subject area or grade level, common planning time with teachers in the same subject area, and regularly scheduled collaboration concerning issues of instruction. In addition, regular supportive communication with administrators increased the likelihood that new teachers would remain in the profession. Teachers who received no induction support left at a rate of 19.9% as compared to 11.8% for teachers who received induction support. The authors acknowledge the limitations in the study. Given the varied characteristics of induction and mentoring programs (content, duration, frequency, and intensity), it is difficult to ascertain the precise effect of induction and mentoring programs on attrition. Nevertheless, the authors found that teachers that received multiple supports, specifically

strong mentoring, were less likely to leave the profession. As supports increased, teacher job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention increased.

Wong (2004) presents a comprehensive approach to induction. He notes that effective induction should be a multiyear, collaborative, systematic district professional development plan. He notes several common components that support effective induction:

1. begin with an initial 4 or 5 days of induction before schools starts;

2. offer a continuum of professional development through systematic training over a period of two or three years;

3. provide study groups in which new teachers can network and build support, commitment, and leadership in a learning community;

4. incorporate a strong sense of administrative support;

5. integrate a mentoring component in the induction process;

6. present a structure for modeling effective teaching during in-service and mentoring; and

7. provide opportunities for inductees to visit demonstration classrooms (p.48).

Consistent in both accounts is that mentoring is a vital component to the induction process.

Research on induction and mentoring programs devoted specifically to advancing cultural diversity to address the high teacher attrition rates in urban school systems is limited. Kestner (1994) suggests that a lack of the communication on the part of researchers point to programs operating in isolation. He emphasized the need for unity of effort among government, schools, colleges, and the community to address the

complexities that new teachers face. Torres et al. (2004) determined that diversity

planning must be comprehensive, systematic, and supported by leaders. They opined that

districts may be able to retain more minority teachers if they embraced a multicultural

perspective. These findings may be particularly informative to urban school systems

(with high concentrations of minority teachers) that experience high turnover due to

organizational conditions.

Achinstein and Oqawa (2011) contend that a school's multicultural capital; that is,

the cultural knowledge used to determine legitimate school knowledge, curriculum and

practices (Achinstein et al., 2010), affects the retention of teachers. The authors

characterize the lack of multicultural capital as "low expectations, negative attitudes

about minority students, lack of support for culturally relevant or socially just teaching,

and limited dialogue about race and equity" (Achinstein et al., 2010, p. 96). The research

on new minority teachers' experiences in urban schools highlight conditions that limit

minority teachers' ability to engage in culturally relevant practices, serve as role models,

and agents of change. The authors contend that minority teachers experience the

culturally subtractive nature of schools where accountability pressures and social

structures of urban schools limit their ability to utilize cultural resources and enact

cultural and professional roles. Achinstein et al., (2010) further assert that minority

teachers experience a double bind. This view purports that teachers experience a clash

between professional, cultural, and personal commitments to teaching minority students

and the organizational demands of the school and district. This echoes Foster (1990)

description of how Black teachers' commitment to being change agents can be

undermined by the internal powers of schools. This contention may contribute to the

growing exodus of minority teachers from teaching. These limitations accentuate the
need for a more multicultural approach to induction and mentoring that takes into account
the impact school conditions have on the induction and mentoring of new minority
teachers.

Summary

Successful minority recruitment and retention approaches are founded on genuine
concern, commitment to the cause, collaboration among all parties, and creative efforts
(AACTE, 1989). Recruitment and retention programs that incorporate race, ethnicity, and
culturally relevant pedagogy into the minority teacher practices increase retention rates
(Torres et al., 2004). The recruitment of culturally diverse candidates adds a cultural
enrichment to the homogeneity of the nation's schools that benefits all students. Early
identification of prospective teachers, the infusion of cultural perspectives in the
alternative paths to teaching, and a social justice framework integrated into teacher
preparation programs are promising tools for recruiting minority teaching candidates.
Effective recruitment and retention strategies are integral to increasing and maintaining
adequate levels of Black teachers. Induction and mentoring programs support, guide, and
orient new teachers to the profession through mentoring, common planning time,
collaboration, and administrative support. In addition to those characteristics, culturally
sensitive approaches to induction and mentoring help teachers develop the skills,
dispositions, and habits of mind to promote high achievement for all students.

Although more research is required to determine which components are the most
effective on retention, the aforementioned approaches provide a starting point for
systematic change to preservice teacher preparation and inservice teacher support

programs. These changes have the potential to stabilize and transform the school environment.

Conclusion

Several major bodies of literature related to the need for more Black teachers in U.S. public schools were examined in Chapter 2. First, the literature surrounding critical race theory was examined (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 1998; Taylor, 2009). CRT seeks to expose the dominant perspectives that adversely impact educational settings. Next, the literature related to the importance of Black teachers was reviewed for this study (e.g., Gordon, 2000; King, 1993a). The literature demonstrated that Black teachers have high expectations for (e.g., Gay, 2000; Irvine, 1990; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Next, the literature exploring the cultural knowledge and sensitivity of Black teachers and their contributions and impact on Black student outcomes was explored (e.g., Kohli, 2009; Nieto, 2004). As the number of Black teachers increase so does the educational outcome of Black students. Then, the literature on Black teachers and their varied pedagogical practices was examined (e.g., Banks & Banks, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Multicultural curriculum and cultural responsive pedagogy enhances the educational experience for all students. Then, the literature related to minority teacher shortages (Achinstein et al., 2010) turnover (Ingersoll & May, 2011b; Johnson & Kardos, 2008) revealed that the minority teacher population is on the decline and minority teachers are more likely to leave the profession than majority teachers. Obstacles affecting Black teacher shortages included low, non-commensurate salary, low status, negative perception of the profession, inadequate academic preparation, competency testing, and unsupportive working conditions. Lastly, the literature related to minority recruitment

and retention was examined (e.g., Achinstein & Oqawa, 2011; Gissendaner-Kearney, 2010; Little & Barlett, 2010; Torres et al., 2004). The recruitment and retention literature focused on public school pipeline programs, teacher education programs, alternative pathway programs, and induction, and mentoring programs, with a particular focus on encouraging more culturally supportive practices.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes the research methodology, design, and procedures used for this study. Across the United States there is a critical shortage of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers. Minority teachers are needed to educate the growing population of minority students. This chapter includes the research methodology, design, and procedures used for this study. Much of the research literature focuses on subject area shortages and minority teacher-student demographic ratios and less on the presence of Black teachers in our nation's classrooms. King (1993a) contends that an expanded research base on the experiences of Black teachers could prove valuable to many areas of the teaching profession including recruitment efforts. Other researchers have focused on recruitment policies should target critical shortage populations and appropriate recruitment strategies should be developed for specific populations (Clewell & Villegas, 1998).

In an effort to shed light on the shortage of Black teachers, the purpose of this mixed methods study is to examine the perspectives of Black teachers in Connecticut regarding the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. The research questions included:

1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?

4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?

A survey was used to gather descriptive data about the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Two focus group interviews, an individual interview, and a written response questionnaire were conducted. Combining qualitative and quantitative data deepens our understanding of the existing shortage of Black teachers by linking numerical trends with qualitative data (Creswell, 2009).

Design of the Study

A mixed methods study with quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was used in this investigation; the unit of analysis is the Black teachers' perspectives of the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. This triangulated mixed methods design utilized both a survey to collect descriptive information and two focus group interviews, a related individual interview, and written response questionnaire to capture in-depth textual descriptions of teachers' experiences. Creswell (2009) describes a mixed methods approach as incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods to "better understand, explain, or build on the results from the other approach" (p. 205). Hunt (2007) affirms that a mixed methods design is effective in increasing the validity and accuracy of the information and strengthening the research by addressing the problem from multiple angles. In her review of teachers' qualifications on their teaching practices, Kennedy (2008) presents a compelling argument for utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. She found that without examining qualitative data, it was difficult to interpret the quantitative results with respect to the influence of specific teacher certification programs and educational background on teaching practices. Conger

(1998) concurs pointing out the inability of quantitative methods to capture the interpretive dimension of interactions.

For the quantitative data collection, the researcher administered an online survey of all Black teachers in Connecticut. Online surveys are a cost effective and efficient means of collecting data for a large sample size (Czaja & Blair, 2005). Conger (1998) contends that quantitative data alone are insufficient and provide only a partial understanding. The intersection of quantitative methods with qualitative methods will strengthen the findings.

The qualitative research method included an open-ended question on the online survey, two focus group interviews, a related individual interview, and a written response questionnaire. A sample population of full-time or part-time certified Black teachers in Connecticut for the 2011-2012 school year was used in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences regarding becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. Marshall and Rossman (2006) contend that qualitative research falls into three categories which focus on participants' lived experience, society and culture, and language and communication (p55). Qualitative research strives to understand participants from their point of view. The rich data helped to increase my understanding of the perspectives and experiences of Black teachers. Understanding the viewpoints of the participants is key to developing effective proactive strategies to attract, recruit, and retain teachers. Qualitative research is concerned with forming interpretations and making inferences based on individual and group perspectives (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Context, Population, and Sample

Context

This study was conducted in the state of Connecticut. Connecticut is situated in

the northeast corner of the United States. It is ranked 48th among 50 states in size with

5,018 square miles. According to the 2010 United States Census, Connecticut has a total

population of 3,518,288 people, 15.7% of which are nonwhite. There are 169 public

school districts with approximately 1,150 public schools facilities (CSDE, 2010b).

Connecticut's 169 school districts are grouped into nine District Reference

Groups (DRG) based on the following attributes:

> median income, percentages of families below the poverty level, percentages of
> families living in single parent families and non-family households, percentages
> of families with a non-English home language, percentages of families in which
> one or both parents have a bachelor's degree, and percentages of families in white
> collar or managerial occupations. (CSDE, 2008, p. 1)

According to the Condition of Education in Connecticut (CSDE, 2010b), in 2007-

2008, Connecticut's public student enrollment was 569,237, with 88.6% of students

enrolled in public schools. Minority students represented 35.5% of public school student

enrollment. The ethnic/racial breakdown was the following: 64.5% of the school children

were White, 17.1% were Hispanic, 13.9% were Black, 4.1% were Asian, and 0.4 were

American Indian; 30% of the students were eligible for free and/or reduced-priced meals;

and 11.6% of students required special education services. In the 2007-2008 school year,

Connecticut employed 53,328 certified staff: 92.1% were White, 3.7% were Black, 3.3%

were Hispanic, 0.8 were Asian, and 0.2% were Native American. Almost 99% of the

teachers were identified as "highly qualified" teachers, 79.7% of the teachers had

obtained a master's degree; and teachers' average years experience was 12.2 (CSDE, 2010b).

Population

Connecticut elementary, middle, and high school teachers in accredited public schools, public charter schools, magnet schools, and technical schools were considered for participation. Nonpublic and unified schools were not considered for inclusion in this study. Two-thirds of minority teachers are concentrated in the seven poorest districts with the largest number of poor and minority students (Lohman, 2000a). Table 3 represents districts with large percentages of minority professional staff for the 1999-2000 academic year (i.e., Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, New Britain, Norwalk, Stamford, Waterbury). Additionally, these seven districts are priority districts. That is, the CSDE is working closely with the districts to improve student achievement.

Table 3

Districts with Largest Percentages of Minority Professional Staff 1999-2000

District	Percentage of Minority Staff	Number of Minority Staff
Hartford	35.84	753
New Haven	32.74	553
Bridgeport	24.81	425
New Britain	14.76	121
Norwalk	11.16	102
Stamford	10.80	145
Waterbury	10.75	137

Important to note is that 25% of teachers that are deemed less than fully certified are teaching in the seven DRG I districts (CDSE, 2002). These seven districts (DRG I: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, and Windham) are the poorest districts in Connecticut (Lohman, 2000a). Conversely, 45 of

Connecticut's 169 school districts do not employ any certified minority staff (Lohman, 2000a). These demographics demonstrate the growing racial change in the student population, the teacher-student compositions and the need for minority teachers.

Population/sample for survey. Three criteria were used to identify participants for this study. Qualified participants in this study identified as Blacks, held a current valid teaching certificate, and actively worked as a full-time or part-time teacher in the State of Connecticut for the 2011-2012 school year. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) provided a database of all Black teachers in Connecticut. The database contained the names, addresses, emails, schools and districts, and years of experience for all certified and working Black teachers in Connecticut. As a Black teacher in Connecticut, my name is included in the CSDE Black teacher database. Therefore, I excluded my name from the total count of 1171 Black teachers; additionally 15 individuals included in the CSDE's Black teacher database informed me via email that they were either not Black, or were school administrators, school psychologists, social workers, school counselors, curriculum specialists, or speech and language pathologists rather than teachers. Ultimately, the population for the study consisted of 1,155 certified Black teachers who were teaching in Connecticut's public schools for the 2011-2012 school year (Appendix A). Quantitative data were collected from 357 respondents from the online survey. The response rate was 30.9%. Qualitative data were collected from 252 respondents and 21 focus group participants.

Focus group participants. The 357 survey respondents were asked to volunteer to participate in a focus group interview. At the end of the online survey, respondents were able to select *yes* or *no* indicating their willingness to participate in the focus group

interview. If they elected to participate, they provided their names and contact

information. Focus group interview participants were selected from the pool of

individuals who completed the online survey. Twenty-one Black teachers were

purposefully selected from the pool of online survey respondents to participate in the

focus group discussions. As much as possible, the focus groups were created based on

geographic location, gender, grade level, and subject area. A total of 146 respondents

agreed to participate in the focus group discussions. The focus group interviews were

held between April and June, 2012.

Soliciting participation of Black teachers in the focus group interviews facilitated

the examination of copious experiences and allowed the researcher to delve into the

depths of participants' professional backgrounds. Patton (2002) contends that purposeful

sampling allows the researcher to select "information-rich case" in order to conduct an

in-depth study of a central issue. Purposeful sampling strategy highlights specific

characteristics and captures variations of particular subgroups.

Because scheduling the focus group interviews was problematic, the focus group

questions were answered in a variety of ways: a total of eight teachers were interviewed

in two focus group discussions in Hartford. Another focus group interview for four

individuals was set up; however, only one teacher attended the interview. Consequently,

the teacher was interviewed individually. Due to the difficulty of scheduling a focus

group interview outside the Hartford area, a questionnaire was emailed to teachers in the

southern part of the state. A total of 12 teachers responded to the questionnaire. Because

all participants responded to the same focus group interview protocol (Appendix B), the

participants were treated as a group; the data were aggregated as a unit, and referred to in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 as focus group data.

All respondents who agreed to participate in the study were entered into a raffle to receive a $50 Amazon.com gift card. The researcher randomly selected one of the respondents to receive the $50 Amazon.com gift card and contacted the winner via email. In this dissertation, the Black teachers who participated in the online survey are referred to as respondents, and the Black teachers who participated in the focus group interviews are referred to as participants.

Data Sources and Instrumentation

Data were drawn from three data sources for this study. Table 4 shows the correlation of the research questions to the data sources.

Table 4

Correlation of Research Questions to Data Sources and Instrumentation

Research questions	Data sources	Instrumentation
1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?	Teachers	Focus Group Interviews Questionnaire Survey
2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?	Teachers	Focus Group Interviews Questionnaire Survey
3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?	Teachers	Focus Group Interviews Questionnaire Survey
4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?	Teachers	Focus Group Interviews Questionnaire Survey

The Survey

The survey instrument, *Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey* (Appendix A) was developed based on themes from the empirical research in the literature review; these include *Critical Race Theory, Need for Black Teachers in U.S. Public Schools, Black Teacher Shortage, Obstacles Affecting Black Teaching Shortage, and Recruitment and Retention of Black Teachers*. A survey method was chosen for the following reasons: (a) surveys are easy to administer to a wide population; (b) surveys reduce implementation time; (c) surveys allow for efficient statistical analysis of results; and (d) the sample population could answer the questions with assurance of anonymity. The survey was emailed to Black teachers in Connecticut on February 6, 2011 and closed on April 6, 2012.

The survey instrument was designed to collect descriptive data about why Black teachers enter the teaching profession, why they stay, and why they leave. The survey instrument contains 31 items. The survey consisted of 16 Likert-type questions with 4-point scales (e.g., 1 = *Unimportant*, 2 = *Important*, 3 = *Very Important, 4 = Not Sure;* 1 = *Dissatisfied*, 2 = *Satisfied*, 3 = *Very Satisfied*, 4 = *Not Sure*; and two categorical scales (e.g., *yes/no*); two checklists (e.g., *check all that apply*); 10 multiple choice, and an open-ended question. Three items have sub-questions. Two items have 24 sub-questions; another item has 11 sub-questions; there were 30 closed-ended items and one open-ended item. The first section of the survey was designed to collect information on the demographics of the participants, including race/ethnicity, gender, age, years of teaching experience, level of educational attainment, how participants obtained their teaching certification, grade level, subject area, the number of Black teachers respondents had

during their K-12 schooling experience, and when respondent first considered becoming a teacher. The second section of the survey instrument focused on the obstacles and catalysts for choosing teaching as a profession.

The third section of the survey instrument consisted of questions related to factors associated with recruitment and retention of Black teachers, level of satisfaction with induction and mentoring, perception of obstacles to becoming a teacher, with an open-ended question which asked respondents to elaborate on how recruitment and retention can be improved for Black teachers. The fourth section focused on diversity, race, and culture in education.

Pilot testing is important in determining content validity (Creswell, 2009) to detect, identify, and change any areas of improvement in questions, format, and scales of the survey (Czaja & Blair, 2005). As educational researchers, we aim to create instruments that provide results that are valid and reliable. To this end, an instrument pilot test was conducted. A group of five Black Connecticut administrators were asked to pilot test the survey instrument and focus group interview protocol. The pilot survey instrument and focus group interview questions were emailed to each Black administrator in October 2011 with the request that they critique each item of the survey instrument and each focus group interview question to check for content validity. They were asked to indicate weak items and questions and suggest relevant information that was not included in the initial instruments. All five administrators returned the surveys; there were few suggestions for modifying or changing the survey.

Additionally, I wanted Black teachers outside of Connecticut to take the survey and provide feedback on the survey. Consequently, I attempted several time to conduct

cognitive pretesting to determine reliability of the survey instrument. First, on November 1, 2011, I emailed the New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts liaisons of the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) to request the volunteer participation of 30 Black teachers in a cognitive pretest of the survey instrument. However, no responses were received from the liaisons from any of the states. Second, on January 2, 2012 the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was contacted requesting the database containing all Black elementary and secondary public school teachers in the state. On February 2, 2012 I was informed that Massachusetts has information about the racial composition of the staff at school districts and individual schools, but the Commonwealth has no public records that compile the specific names of teachers according to their race. Third, on January 10, 2012 the Program Director of Los Angeles Urban Teacher Residency Center for Collaborative Education was contacted requesting the participation of 150-200 teachers. This email yielded six responses from non Connecticut Black teachers. After these attempts were unsuccessful and due to the time schedule of the study, a decision was made not to contact other organizations.

Subsequently, the survey instrument was launched on February 6, 2012 using Survey Monkey, a web-based survey tool. Respondents entered responses directly into Survey Monkey. The survey was emailed to 1,170 teachers identified of the CSDE's database. In all, 357 surveys were completed for a response rate of 30.9%. The results from each item were tabulated through standard descriptive statistic procedures. The descriptive data collected from the respondents' responses to the survey instrument were used to determine Black teachers' perception of the obstacles and catalysts to becoming a teacher in Connecticut, how Black teachers value diversity in the teaching force, and

what policy recommendations Black teachers believe would support recruitment and retention of Black teachers. The survey instrument complements the qualitative data sources.

Focus Group Interviews

Marshall and Rossman (2006) explain that focus groups are advantageous when seeking to delve into participants' tacit beliefs and deeply held values; this is accomplished through encouraging teacher discussion and expression of differing opinions and points of view. Onwuegbuzie, Leech, Dickinson and Zoran (2010), contend that three to six mini focus groups that contain three or four participants, when the group members are of a target population or have shared knowledge and/or experiences, is sufficient. The focus group interview protocol was used to gain information on the participants' point of view on initiatives used to attract, recruit, and retain Black teachers in Connecticut. The focus group approach is an appropriate vehicle in which to gain insight into the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of Black teachers in Connecticut regarding obstacles and catalysts to recruiting and retaining Blacks in the teaching profession.

The focus groups were held between April 28, 2012 and June 8, 2012. There were two focus groups. Fifteen individuals were invited in each focus group interview; four individuals participated in each of the two focus group discussions. The first focus group was comprised of four teachers, three females and one male. The second focus group was comprised of four teachers, two females and two males. As much as possible, the focus groups were created based on geographic location, gender, grade level, and subject area. The focus group interviews lasted approximately two to four hours. The focus group

interviews took place at a convenient time and location for the participants. The focus group interviews were moderated, tape recorded, transcribed, and coded by the researcher. The researcher also took copious handwritten notes, which were used to supplement the tape recordings. The focus group interview protocol included four research questions that the researcher emailed to the interviewees five days prior to the scheduled focus group interview. The four open-ended research questions were designed to allow teachers to freely express themselves (Krueger, 2003).

A third focus group interview was set up; however, only one teacher attended the interview. Consequently, the teacher was interviewed individually. The researcher had difficulty scheduling focus groups for teachers in the southern part of the state. Therefore, in lieu of a fourth focus group interview, the researcher's doctoral advisor suggested asking participants to respond in writing to the four research questions. The written response questions were emailed to participants on two separate occasions. On May 22, 2012, the researcher emailed the four open-ended research questions to 26 Black teachers. Then on May 31, 2012 the researcher emailed 30 additional Black teachers. In total, both emails produced a total of 12 completed questionnaires. The researcher also offered to interview any teacher who did not want to participate in a focus group. An assistant helped with the operation of equipment, took additional notes, and debriefed with the researcher (Krueger, 2003). The assistant signed a confidentiality letter (Appendix C).

Artifacts

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) documents (various issues of Data Bulletins, OLR Research Reports, Commissioner's News Reports, and Board

Reports), databases, reports, and websites such as Capitol Region Education Council

(CREC), Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruitment

(MTR) Alliance, and Connecticut Education Data and Research (CEDaR) were reviewed.

The artifacts were reviewed for information purposes only; no data were taken from any

of these documents.

Data Collection Procedures

This section includes data collection procedures for the quantitative and

qualitative data.

Survey Data Collection

In October 2011 instrument pilot trials were conducted. A group of five Black

administrators were asked to pilot test the survey instrument and focus group interview

protocol. All administrators were volunteers. The pilot survey instrument and focus group

interview protocol were emailed to each Black administrator with the request that they

critique each item of the survey instrument and each question of focus group interview

protocol for content validity. Administrators were asked to indicate weak items and

questions and suggest relevant information that may not have been included in the initial

instruments. The purpose of the pilot test is to evaluate the content validity of each survey

item prior to disseminating the survey to the intended sample.

The survey was administered on February 6, 2012 and closed on April 6, 2012.

The consent letter was included as part of the online survey to all Black teachers in

Connecticut. The consent letter outlined the purpose, procedures, and parameters of the

study and provided written assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Informed consent

was determined if respondents elected to participate in the survey. By completing the

survey, respondents acknowledged that they read and agreed to participate in the research, with the understanding that they were free to withdraw participation at any time without penalty. To ensure a high response rate, the researcher sent seven additional emails to non-respondents. The Survey Monkey website was embedded in all emails. To reduce typing errors of potential respondents' emails, a CCSU computer technician merged the CSDE database with the Survey Monkey email list. Once the email addresses were merged, Survey Monkey identified incorrect email addresses, and the correct email addresses were added. Finally, the goal was to have a 25-30% return rate for the survey. This goal was achieved; the return rate was 30.9%.

Focus Group Data Collection

The focus groups were held between April 28, 2012 and June 8, 2012. There were two focus groups. Fifteen individuals were invited in each focus group interview; four individuals participated in each of the two focus group discussions. The first focus group was comprised of four teachers, three females and one male. The second focus group was comprised of four teachers, two females and two males. As much as possible, the focus groups were created based on geographic location, gender, grade level, and subject area. The focus group interviews lasted approximately two to four hours. The focus group interviews took place at a convenient time and location for the participants. The focus group interviews were moderated, tape recorded, transcribed, and coded by the researcher. The researcher also took copious handwritten notes, which were used to supplement the tape recordings. The focus group interview protocol included four research questions that the researcher emailed to the interviewees five days prior to the

scheduled focus group interview. The four open-ended research questions were designed to allow teachers to freely express themselves (Krueger, 2003).

A third focus group interview was set up; however, only one teacher attended the interview. Consequently, the teacher was interviewed individually. The researcher had difficulty scheduling focus groups for teachers in the southern part of the state. Therefore, in lieu of a fourth focus group interview, the researcher's doctoral advisor suggested asking participants to respond in writing to the four research questions. The written response questions were emailed to participants on two separate occasions. On May 22, 2012, the researcher emailed the four open-ended research questions to 26 Black teachers. Then on May 31, 2012 the researcher emailed 30 additional Black teachers. In total, both emails produced a total of 12 completed questionnaires. The researcher also offered to interview any teacher who did not want to participate in a focus group. An assistant helped with the operation of equipment, took additional notes, and debriefed with the researcher (Krueger, 2003). The assistant signed a confidentiality letter (Appendix C).

Quantitative Data Analysis

During phase 1 of the data analysis process, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Survey responses were collected, tabulated, and analyzed through Survey Monkey and then the raw data were merged into a statistical software database, SPSS.

The descriptive analysis included measuring, analyzing, and reporting of the frequency distribution (e.g., frequency and percentages). SPSS was used to calculate

cross-tabulations. A matrix cross-referencing each research question with survey items is presented. Table 5 shows the correlation of the research questions to each survey item.

Table 5

Correlation of *Research Questions to Survey Items and Focus Group Interviews*

Research questions	Survey items
1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?	Item 11, Item 12, Item 13, Item 14, Item 15, Item 16, Item 17, Item 18
2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?	Item 11, Item 12, Item 13, Item 14, Item 15, Item 16, Item 17 Item 18
3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?	Item 19 through Item 31
4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?	Focus Group Interviews

Qualitative Data Analysis

Phase 2 of the data analysis process included two focus groups composed of eight participants in total, an individual interview, and written response questionnaire from 12 participants. Focus group discussions were semi-structured and consisted of the four central research questions (Appendix B). Focus group participants were asked to share their perceptions, opinions, and experiences of the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher, diversity in the teaching profession, and recruitment and retention policy recommendations.

The qualitative data analysis included an inductive approach to collecting, organizing, preparing, analyzing, and interpreting data (Anfara, Brown & Mangione,

2002; Creswell, 2009). Initial coding consisted of a start list of preset codes based on emerging themes from the literature review and which are reflected in the interview questions. The data reduction process consisted of assigning word codes to the preset themes and descriptions as a way of initially organizing the data. Using open coding, the focus group data were transcribed, coded, and categorized to develop, refine, and establish meaningful themes. The themes were summarized and assigned a code. Using axial coding, patterns, and connections were identified within and between themes in order to draw meaningful conclusions and interpretations about the findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). During the first level of content analysis, the responses for the online survey and transcribed responses were thoroughly read and common baseline information noted in the margins, core concepts were grouped into categories, and then condensed into definitive themes. In addition, during the focus groups and individual interview, the researcher took careful notes, asked for clarification to particular responses, and provided a themed summary after each question. All focus group and related interview transcripts were transcribed by the researcher and emailed to participants giving them the opportunity to review the transcript and clarify their responses. All qualitative findings are presented graphically supported by a detailed narrative discussion (Appendix F and Appendix G. The identified themes may assist educational leaders in targeting focus areas for improvement in the recruitment and retention process.

Integrity of Research

Research integrity questions whether a research study is "conducted carefully, thoughtfully, and correctly in terms of some reasonable set of standards" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 294) seek to provide quality control over the transparency of

methodological disclosure and reporting. To that end, the researcher made every attempt to be explicit, open, and clear about the process of the research in the dissertation and with all participants and respondents. The researcher reported and justified decisions and choices in sampling selection, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Quantitative Research: Generalizability, Validity, Reliability

Generalizability, reliability, and validity are important aspects of sound quantitative research methodology. The quality of quantitative research rests on the extent to which the data generalizes to another setting and the strength of the reliability and validity of the instruments. The intent of this research study is to present findings that represent the perspectives and the teaching experiences of Black teachers who teach in Connecticut. The findings may be generalizable to other Black teachers in other states with similar demographics and characteristics to the teachers in this population. Reliability relates to the consistency of measurements and information (Creswell, 2009; Fink, 2009). Reliability tests were not conducted on the survey instrument because the survey was a descriptive survey that did not include individual constructs with several items; thus measures of internal consistency were not evaluated. Validity relates to the accuracy of measurements and information (Fink, 2009). That is, the survey measured what it was supposed to measure. Content validity of the survey instrument was established through pilot testing the survey instrument with five Black administrators. The administrators took the survey and provided minimal suggestions for modifying or changing the survey.

Qualitative Research: Trustworthiness

Creswell (2009) recommends incorporating multiple strategies to enhance the accuracy of the qualitative findings (e.g., triangulation, member checking, rich thick description of findings, and clarify researcher bias). Trustworthiness is important in establishing value of the research study. Criteria for increasing the trustworthiness of qualitative research studies include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Credibility seeks to determine if the research findings make sense to the reader (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To establish credibility, the study was triangulated through the collection of multiple data sources such as survey data, focus group interviews, and written responses. Corbin and Strauss (2008) define triangulation as a variety of methods that allows researchers to use different methods and different sources to achieve broader and stronger research results. Second, the researcher utilized member checking (Creswell, 2009). Member checking is a technique that allows the participants to review the researcher's data, analytic themes, interpretations, and conclusions (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2010). To verify the meaning of focus group participants' responses, at the end of reach questions, the researcher clarified and summarized each participant's comments and asked them to confirm researcher's accuracy. In addition, each participant received a transcribed copy of the focus group or individual interviews and was given the opportunity to review the transcript, clarify their responses, and provide feedback to the researcher regarding their true meaning behind each response. At the completion of the study, a copy of the results will be available upon request. Third, the researcher sought the help of a peer debriefer (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My dissertation advisor served as my peer debriefer. During the

course of the research study, she met with me periodically to review, discuss, and refine

my study during and after data collection and data analysis. Fourth, the role of the

researcher was presented to clarify any researcher bias. Transferability is the extent to

which research findings are useful and can transfer to similar contexts (Marshall &

Rossman, 2006). To ensure transferability, the researcher provided a "rich-thick

description" of the research findings to allow readers to make judgments about the

applicability of the research to other contexts (Mertens, 2010). Dependability assesses the

stability and consistency of the methodological process. Confirmability measures how

well the research findings can be confirmed or replicated through a detailed "audit trail"

of methods and procedures (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In essence, judging how well the

researcher's logical inferences and interpretations make sense to others (Marshall &

Rossman, 2006). Mertens (2010) contends that dependability and confirmability audits

can document changes in research and supporting data for interpretation and conclusions

that add rigor to the study. To establish dependability and confirmability, the researcher

included all data collection instruments and data analysis procedures to provide a paper

trail for replication of the procedures utilized in this research study.

<div style="text-align:center">Human Studies Council Approval/Ethical Issues</div>

Creswell (2009) believes that ethical considerations and practices should occur at

all stages in the research process. Mertens (2010) identifies procedures such as obtaining

informed consent of subjects and assuring confidentiality and anonymity of subjects as

ways to protect participants. To this Creswell (2009) asserts the need to assess the risk to

participants against the benefit of the research. Protecting participants necessitates that

the research study be sacrificed if it poses danger, risk, or harm to the participants.

The study was approved by the Human Studies Council (HSC) on October 20, 2011. A copy of the HSC Approval Letter is in Appendix D. Data were collected beginning on February 6, 2012 and ending on June 8, 2012. A consent letter explaining the purpose, procedures, and parameters of the research study was included in the email and sent to all Black teachers in Connecticut. The researcher satisfied HSC requirements by requiring that all participants consent to participate with the option to decline participation or withdraw at any time. The survey instrument is completely confidential. Focus group participants had the opportunity to openly speak and express their experiences and viewpoints in a safe environment. Prior to beginning the focus group meetings, courtesy guidelines were shared by the moderator. In addition, all participants were asked to assume pseudonyms. Each of the eight focus group participants and the interviewee elected to use their own names. However, participants' real names were not used in this dissertation. Participants were identified as Participant 1 through Participant 21. Participants were informed that the meeting would be audio-taped and transcribed. The transcription was sent to all participants for feedback and accuracy. All respondents who agreed to participate in the study were entered into a raffle to receive a $50 Amazon.com gift card. The researcher randomly selected one of the respondents to receive the $50 Amazon.com gift card and contacted the winner via email.

Also, the State of Connecticut teacher database file, Survey Monkey results, emails, and interview transcripts will be kept in a file cabinet in the researcher's home. The CSDE database file, all interview transcripts, and survey results shall be destroyed in 2014.

Role of Researcher

The researcher attended elementary, middle, and high school in Connecticut

public schools and received her teaching credentials from the University of Connecticut.

The researcher is a Black female educator in Connecticut with 14 years of experience

teaching in an urban elementary public school where the student population is

approximately 91.6% minority (38.2% Black). Of the nearly 500 professional staff in the

school district, 10.3% are minority. The teacher demographic data is not disaggregated by

race or position (CSDE, 2009). For the past 14 years, the researcher has been the sole

Black general education teacher at the school. During two separate periods, there were

two Black female special education teachers, one who served for approximately five

years and one who has served for the past three years. Table 6 provides the racial/ethnic

breakdown of students at the researcher's school.

Table 6

Student Demographics in Researcher's School 2008-2009

Student Race / Ethnicity	Percentage
American Indian	0.0
Asian American	5.6
Black	38.2
Hispanic	47.2
White	8.4
Total Minority	91.6

As an elementary teacher in Connecticut, the researcher is concerned that the

number of qualified Black teachers continues to be severely disproportionate to the

population of Black students in Connecticut public schools. Connecticut public schools

must strive to ensure a more balanced Black student-teacher ratio. The research discussed

in this dissertation emphasizes the need for more Black teachers and their importance in serving our growing diverse student population.

Limitations of the Study

This study may add to the literature and provide understanding about factors associated with barriers to effective recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Thus, the study is limited to data acquired over the course of few months during one academic school year. Another potential limitation of this study is teachers' ability to be objective, open, and honest during the survey process, but particularly during the open forum of the focus group interviews, which could potentially limit the ability of the survey and interviews to reveal the subtle biases that participants may hold regarding specific groups and how those biases may potentially influence their responses. A third limitation of the study that may present itself is the researcher's ability as the sole researcher to be consistently objective toward responses during the interview process. Lastly, the findings of the study do not include the perceptions of policymakers or other individuals or groups who have attempted to recruit more minority teachers into teaching. The limitation does not include Black individuals who may have been enrolled in a teacher education program, but did not become teachers, nor does it include teachers who may have resigned from teaching during the school years. In an effort to eliminate any researcher bias, the researcher employed member checks by sharing and discussing findings, interpretations, and conclusions with a peer debriefer. As a Black woman educator, the researcher is interested in the subject examined in this dissertation. The researcher acknowledges that her personal and professional experiences suggest that the presence of

Black teachers in school makes a difference in the learning of all students, but particularly Black students.

Summary

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to afford Black teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives on the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. The researcher used a triangulated mixed methods approach. The quantitative data used in this study were obtained from a survey instrument. The qualitative data were obtained through focus group interviews, and written responses.

Chapter 4 provides the findings from the survey instrument and focus group interviews from Black teachers in Connecticut. The results from the descriptive statistical analyses and the qualitative analyses for the research questions are presented in order to analyze the data and draw conclusions.

Chapter 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

This mixed methods study examined the factors that influence Black teachers to enter and remain in the teaching profession in Connecticut. The study focused on four central research questions:

1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?

4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the research design and methodology. Next, the analysis of the quantitative findings of the study is presented followed by a summary of the quantitative findings. Then, the analyses of the qualitative findings of the study are presented followed by a summary of the qualitative findings.

Overview of Research Design and Methodology

This is a mixed methods study with both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to examine the factors that influence Black teachers to enter and remain in the teaching profession in Connecticut. Qualified participants in this research study were Black, held a current valid Connecticut teaching certificate, and actively worked as a full-time or part-time teacher in the state of Connecticut for the 2011-2012 school year. The Connecticut State Department of

Education (CSDE) provided a database of all Black teachers in Connecticut. Quantitative data were collected during the first phase of the study; qualitative data were collected during the second phase of the study.

Phase 1 of the data collection process included survey results. The survey, *Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey* (Appendix A) consisted of 31 items. The survey consisted of 16 Likert-type questions that utilized 4-point scales (e.g., 1 = *Unimportant*, 2 = *Important*, 3 = *Very Important,* 4 = *Not Sure*; 1 = *Dissatisfied*, 2 = *Satisfied*, 3 = *Very Satisfied*, 4 = *Not Sure*; and two categorical scales (e.g., *yes/no*); two checklists (e.g., *check all that apply*); 10 multiple choice; and an open-ended question. Three items have sub-questions. Two of the three items have 24 sub-questions; the third one has 11 sub-questions. There are 30 closed-ended items and one open-ended question. The open-ended question, which will be reported in the qualitative findings section, focused on how recruitment and retention of Black teachers could be improved. The survey was launched on February 6, 2012. For those Black teachers who did not respond initially, the survey was emailed seven additional times until March 13, 2012. The survey was closed on April 6, 2012. The target population was 1,155 teachers; 357 surveys were completed for a response rate of 30.9% (see Chapter 3 for detailed information).

Phase 2 of the data collection process was qualitative, and these data were collected in several different ways, including an online survey open-ended question of 252 respondents, two focus group interviews composed of eight participants, an individual interview, and written responses from 12 participants. Focus group participants were selected from survey respondents who elected to participate in a focus group. As much as possible, the focus groups were created based on geographic location, gender,

grade level, and subject area. Survey respondents provided their contact information on the survey. Focus group interviews were semi-structured and consisted of the four central research questions (Appendix B). In total, there were 252 qualitative responses from the survey respondents and 21 participants. Participants for the focus groups were sent an email letter requesting their participation in the focus group discussion.

Phase 1: Quantitative Findings

The *Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey* was used to collect the quantitative data. The respondents were invited to participate in the study to better understand why Blacks enter or do not enter the profession and why they choose to leave or stay. Descriptive statistics are presented for each of the survey items. The survey was emailed to 1,155 Black teachers in Connecticut. There were a total of 357 usable surveys; however, specific items were omitted by respondents. Thus, the number of respondents varied for each item. Therefore, Appendix E indicates the number of respondents for each item. The section ends with a summary of the major quantitative findings.

Demographic Characteristics

Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 provide demographic information for the 357 survey respondents including ethnicity, gender, age range, academic level, certification route, years of experience, grade level, current teaching assignment, number of Black teachers they had in elementary and secondary school, and the time in which respondents expressed initial interest in teaching. Calculations of Chi Square analyses were performed to compare teacher certification with gender, age, years of experience, and level of education. Each variable was found to have no statistical significance.

Table 7 presents descriptive statistics for demographic data from the survey. Items 1, 2, and 3 focused on ethnicity, gender, and age of Black teachers. The findings reveal that 73% of the respondents identified themselves as African American, 21% of the respondents identified themselves as of Caribbean American, and 5% of the respondents identified themselves as other which represents respondents who identify as mixed race. In addition, the findings show that 23% of the respondents were male. Thirty-six percent of teachers participating in the survey were in the 31 to 40 age range. Fourteen percent of the respondents were teachers between the ages of 22 to 30.

Table 7

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
1. Heritage/race ethnicity		
African American	262	73.3
Caribbean American	75	21.0
Other	17	4.7
Non- Respondents/No Response	3	0.8
Total	357	
2. Gender		
Female	268	75.1
Male	82	23.0
Non- Respondents/No Response	7	2.0
Total	357	
3. Age		
22 to 30	50	14.0
31 to 40	129	36.1
41 to 50	73	20.4
51 or older	100	28.0
Non- Respondents/No Response	5	1.4
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Table 8 includes the respondents' level of education and certification.

Table 8

Education and Certification of Respondents

Education and Certification	Frequency	Percent
5. Degree Level		
Bachelors	40	11.2
Masters	162	45.3
Master level program	46	12.9
6th Year	91	25.5
Doctoral degree	11	3.1
Non- Respondents/No Response	7	2.0
Total	357	
6. Teaching Certification Routes		
Community college and four-year college	40	11.2
Traditional 4 year	240	67.2
Alternate Route to Certification	52	14.6
Non- Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=357)

Fifty-eight percent of the Black teachers surveyed have a masters' level degree and 29% of teachers have degrees above the masters' level. Approximately 93% of the respondents indicated how they obtained their teaching certificate. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers completed a traditional four year college; and 15% entered through an alternate route. Eleven percent started their higher education studies at a community college. Female respondents (74%) were more likely than male respondents (65%) to have entered teaching through a traditional four year college. Conversely, female teachers were less likely to enter teaching through first attending a community college (10.5%) as compare to male teachers (18%). Female teachers were less likely to enter teaching through an alternative route (15%) than male teachers (17%). In addition, fewer female teachers (58%) had master's level degrees and doctorate degrees (3%) than male teachers

who had master's level degrees (64%) and doctorate degrees (5%). A higher percentage of female teachers (29%) had a sixth year degree than male teachers (18%) had.

Table 9 includes survey Item 4 (years experience), Item 7 (grade level), and Item 8 (current teaching assignment). Because some teachers may teach different grade levels and subject areas, the respondents were asked to check all appropriate choices for grade level taught and current teaching assignment.

Table 9

Professional Characteristics of Respondents

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
4. Years of Experience		
1 – 5	68	19.0
6 – 10	82	23.0
11 – 15	88	24.6
16 – 20	44	12.3
21 or more	71	19.9
Non-Respondents/No Response	4	1.1
Total	357	
7. Grade Level(s) Taught in Current Year		
K-5	384	107.3
6-8	257	71.8
9-12	143	39.9
Non-Respondents/No Response	13	3.9
8. Subject Area(s) Taught in Current Year		
Math	116	32.4
English/Language Arts	126	35.2
Science	93	26.0
Social Studies	101	28.2
Foreign Language	8	2.2
Band/orchestra/music/chorus	12	3.4
Business courses	5	1.4
Computer/Technology	26	7.3
Physical Education	17	4.8
Art	13	3.6
Special Education	48	13.4
Vocational	15	4.2
Other	74	20.7
Non-Respondents/No Response	55	15.6

Note. (n=*357)*

Approximately one-third (32%) of the teachers had 16 or more years of teaching experience. Approximately one-fourth (24%) of the teachers had between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience, and 23% of the teachers reported between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience. Fifty-six percent of the teachers reported 11 or more years of teaching experience.

Item 7 focused on the grade level teachers are currently teaching. More respondents reported that they teach grades K-5 (384) as compared to grades 6-8 (257) and 9-12 (143). The data reveal that many teachers teach multiple grade levels. The fact that physical education, art, music, and special education teachers usually instruct all grade levels in a school could account for the large grade level frequency and percentage reported.

Item 8 focused on respondents' current teaching assignments. The four most common subject areas were English/language arts (35%), math (32%), social studies (28%), and science (26%). The two least common subject areas taught were foreign language (2%) and business courses (1%). Respondents who responded to the option *Other* reported that they were either health teachers, remedial reading teachers, English Language Learner teachers (ELL), English as a Second Language teachers (ESL), teachers of Gifted and Talented, reading specialists, curriculum specialists, school counselors, psychologists, or pathologists.

Table 10 includes Item 9 which focused on the number of Black teacher(s) respondents had during their K-12 schooling experience.

Table 10

Number of Black Teachers Respondents had in their K-12 Schooling Experience

Black Teachers	Frequency	Percentage
9. Number of Black Teachers		
0	74	20.7
1	54	15.1
2	46	12.9
3	32	9.0
4	28	7.8
5	17	4.8
6 or more	102	28.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	4	1.1
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Twenty-one percent of the teachers surveyed indicated that they had no Black teachers during their K-12 schooling. The data further revealed that 37% (15% represents one Black teacher, 13% represents two Black teachers, 9% represents three Black teachers) of the respondents reported that they had between one and three Black teachers in their K-12 schooling. Approximately 29% of the respondents reported that they had 6 or more Black teachers during their K-12 school. One respondent noted that it was "awful" that her daughter did not have any Black teachers prior to attending a Black college.

Item 10 findings, which reports when respondents expressed interest in teaching as a career choice, are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Interest in Becoming a Teacher

10. When did you first consider becoming a teacher?	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary School	76	21.3
Secondary School	69	19.3
College	99	27.7
Post-college	108	30.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	5	1.4
Total	357	

*Note. (*n=*357)*

The results reveal that 30% of the respondents considered teaching as a career choice after college. Furthermore, almost 60% of the respondents had not considered teaching until college or after.

Career Choice Factors Associated with Becoming and Remaining a Teacher

Item 11 consisted of 24 career factors associated with respondents' decisions to become and remain a teacher. These factors are divided into six subgroups: (1) financial factors, (2) incentives and rewards factors, (3) intrinsic career choice factors, (4) personal influences, (5) school-based factors, and (6) other. The aforementioned subgroups are not listed in order of importance. Respondents rated the degree of importance of each of the 24 career choice factors on a 4-point scale. The scales were coded as follows: 1 = *Unimportant*, 2 = *Important*, 3 = *Very Important,* 4 = *Not Sure*. The descriptive statistics for Important (2) and Very Important (3) were combined. The results are presented in Table 12 through Table 17.

Table 12 presents the salary and benefits associated with becoming a teacher.

Table 12

Salary and Benefits Associated with Becoming a Teacher

Financial Factors	Frequency	Percent
Salary		
Very Important/Important	245	68.7
Unimportant	92	25.8
Not Sure	6	1.7
Non-Respondents/No Response	14	3.9
Total	357	
Benefits		
Very Important/Important	280	78.4
Unimportant	61	17.1
Not Sure	2	0.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	14	3.9
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The results reveal that 78% of the respondents cited benefits and 69% of the

respondents cited salary as important contributory factors in their decision to become a

teacher. Male respondents (84%) were more likely to cite salary as an important factor

than female respondents (69%). In addition, both male (85%) and female (81%)

respondents considered benefits important.

Table 13 presents incentives and rewards factors associated with becoming a

teacher.

Table 13

Incentive and Reward Factors Associated with Becoming a Teacher

Incentives and Rewards	Frequency	Percent
Signing bonus		
Very Important/Important	19	5.3
Unimportant	295	82.6
Not Sure	23	6.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	20	5.6
Total	357	

Housing accommodations		
Very Important/Important	27	7.6
Unimportant	295	82.6
Not Sure	15	4.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	20	5.6
Total	357	
Lower mortgage rate		
Very Important/Important	31	8.7
Unimportant	290	81.2
Not Sure	15	4.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	21	5.9
Total	357	
Financial assistance (i.e. loans, grants, scholarships)		
Very Important/Important	99	27.7
Unimportant	224	62.7
Not Sure	13	3.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	21	5.9
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The results reveal that respondents indicated that extrinsic incentives such as

signing bonuses (83%), housing accommodations (83%), lower mortgage rates (81%),

and financial assistance (63%) were *unimportant* in their decision to become a teacher.

Table 14 presents intrinsic factors associated with becoming a teacher.

Table 14

Intrinsic Career Choice Factors Associated with Becoming a Teacher

Intrinsic Career Factors	Frequency	Percent
Desire to work children/youth		
Very Important/Important	339	95.0
Unimportant	7	2.0
Not Sure	4	1.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	7	2.0
Total	357	
Desire to contribute to my race		
Very Important/Important	291	81.5
Unimportant	41	11.5
Not Sure	11	3.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	14	3.9
Total	357	

Public respect for teachers
    Very Important/Important   210   58.8

	Count	Percent
Public respect for teachers		
Very Important/Important	210	58.8
Unimportant	120	33.6
Not Sure	9	2.5
Non-Respondents/No Response	18	5.0
Total	357	
Demand for Black teachers		
Very Important/Important	227	63.5
Unimportant	105	29.4
Not Sure	9	2.5
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	
Opportunity for career advancement		
Very Important/Important	220	61.6
Unimportant	114	31.9
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	13	3.6
Total	357	
Love of subject area		
Very Important/Important	303	84.9
Unimportant	28	7.8
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	

*Note. (*n=*357)*

The survey findings demonstrate strong intrinsic motivational factors for selecting teaching as a profession. Most respondents ranked desire to work with children (95%) and desire to contribute to my race (82%) as important factors in their decision to become a teacher. These findings support those found in Shipp's (1999) study of non-education and education students. She found education majors were more intrinsically motivated; that is, they placed significantly more importance on contribution to society than extrinsic factors such as salary and career advancement opportunities.

Table 15 presents personal influences associated with becoming a teacher.

Table 15

Personal Influences Associated with Becoming a Teacher

Personal Influences	Frequency	Percent
Influence of family member(s)		
Very Important/Important	185	51.8
Unimportant	154	43.1
Not Sure	2	0.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	
Influence of a teacher(s)		
Very Important/Important	229	64.1
Unimportant	104	29.1
Not Sure	5	1.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	19	5.3
Total	357	
Influence of a role model(s)		
Very Important/Important	262	73.4
Unimportant	71	19.9
Not Sure	8	2.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The findings demonstrate that teachers consider the influence of a role model (73%) and the influence of a teacher (64%) to be important in their decision to enter the teaching profession. This finding is congruent with several scholars who contend that Black teachers provide positive role models for students to become teachers (King, 1993a, 1993b; Villegas & Davis, 2008). In particular, King's (1993b) study found that approximately 40% of the participants identified a previous teacher as influential in their decision to become a teacher. The lack of diverse role models works against increasing a diverse working environment. Further, "Students from underrepresented cultural and lifestyle backgrounds are less attracted to education and teaching as a profession due to the lack of desirable role models in those particular fields" (Learning Point Associates, undated, p. 10).

Table 16 presents school-based factors associated with remaining a teacher.

Table 16

School-based Factors Associated with Remaining a Teacher

School-based Factors	Frequency	Percent
Student motivation to learn		
Very Important/Important	301	84.3
Unimportant	32	9.0
Not Sure	8	2.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	
Student population in school		
Very Important/Important	247	69.2
Unimportant	91	25.5
Not Sure	4	1.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	15	4.2
Total	357	
Principal of school		
Very Important/Important	154	43.1
Unimportant	174	48.7
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	19	5.3
Total	357	
School learning environment		
Very Important/Important	302	84.6
Unimportant	38	10.6
Not Sure	5	1.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	12	3.4
Total	357	

*Note. (*n=357)

In Table 16, 84% of the respondents cited their perception of students' motivation to learn as contributing to their decision to remain a teacher. Similarly, 85% of the respondents reported the school learning environment as a contributing factor to their decision to remain in the profession.

Table 17 presents other influences associated with becoming a teacher.

Table 17

Other Influences Associated with Becoming a Teacher

Other	Frequency	Percentage
Need a job		
Very Important/Important	201	56.3
Unimportant	135	37.8
Not Sure	4	1.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	17	4.8
Total	357	
Location of job		
Very Important/Important	211	59.1
Unimportant	120	33.6
Not Sure	7	2.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	19	5.3
Total	357	
Location of spouse/significant other		
Very Important/Important	81	22.6
Unimportant	242	67.8
Not Sure	17	4.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	17	4.8
Total	357	
Job Security		
Very Important/Important	294	82.3
Unimportant	45	12.6
Not Sure	3	0.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	15	4.2
Total	357	
Work Schedule (Sep/Jun)		
Very Important/Important	260	72.8
Unimportant	79	22.1
Not Sure	1	0.3
Non-Respondents/No Response	17	4.8
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Recruitment and Retention Factors

Item 12 consisted of 24 sub-items associated with recruiting and retaining Black teachers. These factors are divided into five subgroups: (1) extrinsic factors, (2) professional practices, (3) school-based factors, (4) student related factors, and (5) support in school. The aforementioned subgroups are not listed in order of importance. Table 18 through Table 22 report factors associated with Black teachers' perception of extrinsic factors that impact, positively or negatively, the recruitment and retention of Black teachers in Connecticut. Respondents rated the degree of importance of each of the 24 recruitment and retention factors on a 4-point scale. The scales were coded as follows: 1 = *Unimportant*, 2 = *Important*, 3 = *Very Important,* 4 = *Not Sure*. The descriptive statistics for the scale items 2 (Important) and 3 (Very Important) were combined.

Table 18 presents the extrinsic factors associated with recruitment and retention.

Table 18

Extrinsic Factors Associated with Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and Retention Factors	Frequency	Percent
Salary		
Very Important/Important	309	86.5
Unimportant	12	3.4
Not Sure	8	2.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	
Benefits		
Very Important/Important	318	89.1
Unimportant	7	2.0
Not Sure	7	2.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
Job Security		
Very Important/Important	318	89.1
Unimportant	9	2.5
Not Sure	5	1.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

An analysis of gender with recruitment and retention factors shows that

approximately 94% of male respondents and 86% of female respondents cited salary as

an important factor. Additionally, three studies cite low teacher salary as a salient reason

for the declining number of Black teachers in the profession (AACTE, 1989; Gordon,

2000, Torres et al., 2004).

Table 19 presents professional practices associated with recruitment and retention.

Table 19

Professional Practices Associated with Recruitment and Retention

Professional Practices	Frequency	Percent
Opportunity for career advancement		
Very Important/Important	305	85.4
Unimportant	14	3.9
Not Sure	11	3.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	27	7.6
Total	357	
Ongoing professional development		
Very Important/Important	309	86.6
Unimportant	14	3.9
Not Sure	9	2.5
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
Participating in school wide decision making		
Very Important/Important	309	86.6
Unimportant	11	3.1
Not Sure	11	3.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	26	7.3
Total	357	
Teacher evaluation process		
Very Important/Important	294	82.3
Unimportant	27	7.6
Not Sure	8	2.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	

Professional Practices	Frequency	Percent
Planning time		
Very Important/Important	295	82.6
Unimportant	24	6.7
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	
Administrative paperwork		
Very Important/Important	204	57.1
Unimportant	94	26.3
Not Sure	25	7.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	34	9.5
Total	357	
Committee work		
Very Important/Important	235	65.9
Unimportant	70	19.6
Not Sure	20	5.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	32	9.0
Total	357	
Working relations with non-Black teacher		
Very Important/Important	289	80.9
Unimportant	33	9.2
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
Public respect for teachers		
Very Important/Important	279	78.1
Unimportant	32	9.0
Not Sure	14	3.9
Non-Respondents/No Response	32	9.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The respondents ranked the following seven professional practices as important and very important: ongoing professional development (87%), participation in schoolwide decision making (87%), opportunity for career advancement (85%), planning time (83%), teacher evaluation process (82%), working relations with non-Black teachers (81%), and public respect for teachers (78%).

Table 20 presents school-based factors associated with recruitment and retention.

Table 20

School-based Factors Associated with Recruitment and Retention

School-based Factors	Frequency	Percent
Class size		
Very Important/Important	283	79.3
Unimportant	36	10.1
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	
School climate		
Very Important/Important	313	87.8
Unimportant	9	2.5
Not Sure	7	2.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	
Safety of school environment		
Very Important/Important	310	86.8
Unimportant	10	2.8
Not Sure	8	2.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	29	8.1
Total	357	
School learning environment		
Very Important/Important	312	87.4
Unimportant	7	2.0
Not Sure	7	2.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	31	8.7
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

      The results reveal that nearly 88% of the respondents cited school climate, safety, and school learning environment as factors that would influence recruitment and retention of Black teachers.

      Table 21 presents student factors associated with recruitment and retention.

Table 21

Student Factors Associated with Recruitment and Retention

Student Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Student behavior		
Very Important/Important	298	83.5
Unimportant	20	5.6
Not Sure	11	3.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	
Student motivation to learn		
Very Important/Important	295	82.6
Unimportant	20	5.6
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	32	9.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The results reveal that student behavior (84%) and student motivation (83%) were both ranked high as factors associated with recruiting and retaining of Black teachers.

Table 22 presents support factors associated with recruitment and retention.

Table 22

Support Factors in School Associated with Recruitment and Retention

Support Factors in Schools	Frequency	Percent
School administrative support		
Very Important/Important	318	89.1
Unimportant	7	2.0
Not Sure	7	2.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
Adequate resources provided		
Very Important/Important	317	88.8
Unimportant	9	2.5
Not Sure	6	1.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	

Parental support

Very Important/Important	299	83.8
Unimportant	16	4.5
Not Sure	15	4.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	27	7.6
Total	357	

Community support

Very Important/Important	302	84.6
Unimportant	14	3.9
Not Sure	13	3.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	28	7.8
Total	357	

Collegial support

Very Important/Important	306	85.7
Unimportant	15	4.2
Not Sure	10	2.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	26	7.3
Total	357	

Collaboration

Very Important/Important	306	85.7
Unimportant	13	3.6
Not Sure	6	1.7
Non-Respondents/No Response	32	9.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357*)

The results reveal that respondents cited school administrative support (89%),

resource support (89%), collegial support (86%), and collaboration (86%) as the four

most significant support factors associated with recruiting and retaining Black teachers.

Since 1986 all beginning teachers in Connecticut have been required to participate

in a mandatory two-year induction and mentoring program formerly Beginning Educators

Support Training (BEST) now known as Teacher Education and Mentor (TEAM)

program. Table 23 includes respondents' participation in induction and mentoring

programs when they began their teaching careers.

Table 23

Participation in New Teacher Induction and Mentoring Programs

Participation Rates	Frequency	Percent
13. Participation in District New Teacher Induction		
Yes	218	61.1
No	127	35.5
Non-Respondents/No Response	12	3.4
Total	357	
15. Participation in District New Teacher Mentoring		
Yes	197	55.2
No	147	41.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	13	3.6
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Table 24 includes respondents' level of satisfaction with induction and mentoring

programs. The 4-point scales were coded as follows: 1 = *Dissatisfied*, 2 = *Satisfied*, 3 =

Very Satisfied, 4 = *Not Sure.* When analyzing the descriptive statistics for the scale items,

scale 2 (Satisfied) and scale 3 (Very Satisfied) were combined.

Table 24

Satisfaction Level with New Teacher Induction and Mentoring Programs

Satisfaction Levels	Frequency	Percent
14. Satisfaction with District Induction Program		
Very Satisfied/Satisfied	171	47.9
Dissatisfied	68	19.0
Not Sure	83	23.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	35	9.8
Total	357	
16. Satisfaction with District Mentoring Program		
Very Satisfied/Satisfied	144	40.3
Dissatisfied	88	24.6
Not Sure	84	23.5
Non-Respondents/No Response	41	11.5
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Several scholars reported that induction and mentoring programs impact teachers' retention (Ingersoll & May, 2011b; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Achinstein et al. (2010) asserts that embedding a multicultural component into induction and mentoring programs positively affects minority teacher retention. Once minority teachers are recruited into the teaching profession they need structured, ongoing support systems and professional development that will enable them to remain in teaching. Despite this need, only 61% of the respondents reported participation in induction programs and 55% of the respondents reported participation in district mentoring programs. As shown in Table 24, some teachers reported dissatisfaction with both induction (19%) and mentoring (25%) programs. In addition, almost one-quarter of respondents indicated that they were *not sure* about induction (23%) and mentoring (24%). Forty-eight percent of the respondents reported satisfaction with their district's induction program and 40% of the respondents reported satisfaction with their district's mentoring program.

Item 17 consists of 11 factors that focused on respondents' views on the obstacles to becoming a teaching in Connecticut. These factors are separated into three subgroups: financial obstacles (5), general obstacles (4), and academic obstacles (2). The results for the 11 factors are reported in Table 25 through Table 27.

Table 25 presents the financial obstacles to becoming a teacher.

Table 25

Financial Obstacles to Becoming a Teacher

Financial Obstacles	Frequency	Percent
Salary		
Very Important/Important	285	79.8
Unimportant	30	8.4
Not Sure	23	6.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	19	5.3
Total	357	
Lack of financial aid		
Very Important/Important	272	76.2
Unimportant	31	8.7
Not Sure	31	8.7
Non-Respondents/No Response	23	6.4
Total	357	
Lack of scholarships		
Very Important/Important	275	77.1
Unimportant	28	7.8
Not Sure	32	9.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	22	6.2
Total	357	
Financial considerations		
Very Important/Important	289	80.9
Unimportant	19	5.3
Not Sure	24	6.7
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
More lucrative career options		
Very Important/Important	277	77.6
Unimportant	29	8.1
Not Sure	28	7.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	23	6.4
Total	357	

Note. (n=357)

The respondents identified financial factors as significant obstacles to becoming a

teacher in Connecticut. Slightly more than 75% of the teachers perceive salary (80%),

lack of financial aid (76%), lack of scholarships (77%), financial considerations (81%),

and more lucrative career options (78%) as financial obstacles to becoming a teacher.

Financial consideration (81%) and salary (80%) were the two most prominent financial

obstacles. Low teacher salaries contribute to the decreased interest in the profession for

minority teachers (Torres et al., 2004).

Table 26 presents general obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher.

Table 26

General Obstacles to Becoming and Remaining a Teacher

General Obstacles	Frequency	Percent
Working conditions		
Very Important/Important	310	86.8
Unimportant	16	4.5
Not Sure	15	4.2
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	
Negative perceptions of the teaching profession		
Very Important/Important	237	66.4
Unimportant	70	19.6
Not Sure	28	7.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	22	6.2
Total	357	
More prestigious career option		
Very Important/Important	264	74.0
Unimportant	38	10.6
Not Sure	31	8.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	24	6.7
Total	357	
Status of teachers		
Very Important/Important	270	75.6
Unimportant	39	10.9
Not Sure	28	7.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	20	5.6
Total	357	

*Note. (*n=*357)*

Black teachers perceive working conditions (87%) and status of teachers (76%) as the two obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut.

Table 27 presents academic obstacles to becoming a teacher.

Table 27

Academic Obstacles to Becoming a Teacher

Academic Obstacles	Frequency	Percent
Academically unprepared for college		
Very Important/Important	239	66.9
Unimportant	50	14.0
Not Sure	43	12.0
Non-Respondents/No Response	25	7.0
Total	357	
Competency testing		
Very Important/Important	255	71.4
Unimportant	43	12.0
Not Sure	36	10.1
Non-Respondents/No Response	23	6.4
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357*)

According to the survey results, 71% of the respondents cited pressures of competency testing and 67% of the respondents cited being academically unprepared for college as obstacles to becoming a teacher. Researchers found competency testing and inadequate academic preparation as salient reasons for the declining presence of Black teachers in America's public schools (Torres et al., 2004; Webb, 1986). In addition, researchers indicate that Black students are passing the National Teacher Examination (NTE) at significantly lower rates than White students (Hood & Parker, 1989; Hunter-Boykin, 1992). According to King (1993a) competency testing is a deterrent to attracting more Blacks to the profession and argues that competency tests do no predict one's ability to effectively teach.

Table 28 includes Item 19 (importance of multicultural education), Item 20 (discussions of race), and Item 21 (equity and social justice topics) in teacher education programs.

Table 28

Diversity, Race, and Equity Considerations in Teacher Education Programs

Teacher Education Programs	Frequency	Percent
19. Multicultural education		
Very Important/Important	339	94.7
Unimportant	4	1.1
Not Sure	1	0.3
Non-Respondents/No Response	13	3.9
Total	357	
20. Discussions about race		
Very Important/Important	325	91.0
Unimportant	9	2.5
Not Sure	2	0.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	21	5.8
Total	357	
21. Equity/social justice topics		
Very Important/Important	330	92.4
Unimportant	4	1.1
Not Sure	3	0.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	20	5.6
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

According to the survey results, 95% of the respondents identified multicultural education, 91% identified discussions of race, and 92% identified equity and social justice as important considerations for teacher education programs. Some scholars support the adoption of multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 2004; Gay, 1994; Sleeter, 2002). Advocates of multicultural education purport that a multicultural curriculum enhances the educational experience for all students. Additionally, they assert

that the goal of multicultural education is to reform educational institutions in order to

provide educational equality for students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social class

(Bank, 2006; Grant & Sleeter, 2002). CRT is used to illustrate, expose, and give voice to

inequalities in educational structures, theories, policies, and practices (Crenshaw et al.,

1995; Delgado, 2000; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Thus, CRT promotes diversity in

teaching and learning.

Table 29 includes Item 22 (importance of Black teachers teaching other race

children) and Item 23 (importance of Black teachers teaching Black children).

Table 29

Degree of Importance of Having a Black Teacher

Importance of Having a Black Teacher	Frequency	Percent
22. Other race children		
Very Important/Important	332	93.0
Unimportant	4	1.1
Not Sure	5	1.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	4.5
Total	357	
23. Black children		
Very Important/Important	331	92.7
Unimportant	6	1.7
Not Sure	2	0.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	18	5.0
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

The survey results show that 93% of the respondents believe that it is important to

have Black teachers teach all students. This is congruent with the findings of King

(1993a) and Milem (2003) who contend that diversity in the teaching workforce benefits

all students, schools, and society.

The findings for Items 24, 25, and 26 are reported in Table 30. These include

discussions of culture with students, teachers, and principals. In addition, Items 27, 28,

and 29 examined how important it is to discuss racism with students, teachers, and

principals.

Table 30

Degree of Importance of Having Ethnic, Cultural, and Race Discussions with Students,

Teachers, and Principals

Discussions	Frequency			Percent		
	Student	Teacher	Principal	Student	Teacher	Principal
Ethnic groups/Culture discussion						
Very Important/Important	328	315	300	91.9	88.2	84.0
Unimportant	4	10	21	1.1	2.8	5.9
Not Sure	4	15	20	1.1	4.2	5.6
Non-Respondents/No Response	21	17	16	5.9	4.8	4.5
Total	357	357	357			
Racism discussions						
Very Important/Important	325	293	276	91.0	82.1	77.3
Unimportant	10	24	37	2.8	6.7	10.3
Not Sure	6	18	26	1.8	5.0	7.3
Non-Respondents/No Response	16	22	18	4.5	6.2	5.0
Total	357	357	357			

Note. (n=*357)*

The survey results indicate that respondents are strongly in favor of discussions of

culture with students (92%), teachers (88%), and principals (84%). In addition,

respondents perceive discussions of racism with students (91%), teachers (82%), and

principals (77%) to be important. These results indicate that most respondents consider

discussions of culture and race as important in education.

Table 31 reports the results of survey Items 30 (importance of having multicultural content in the curriculum) and Item 31 (importance of utilizing culturally relevant teaching practices).

Table 31

Importance of Having Multicultural Curricula and Culturally Relevant Teaching

Practices

Curriculum and Teaching Practices	Frequency	Percent
30. Embedded multicultural curriculum		
Very Important/Important	343	96.1
Unimportant	3	0.8
Not Sure	5	1.4
Non-Respondents/No Response	6	2.0
Total	357	
31. Culturally relevant teaching practices		
Very Important/Important	334	93.6
Unimportant	3	0.8
Not Sure	3	0.8
Non-Respondents/No Response	17	4.8
Total	357	

Note. (n=*357)*

Almost all of the respondents perceive embedding multicultural education into the curriculum (96%) and teachers' use of culturally relevant teaching practices in the classroom (94%) as important factors.

Summary of Quantitative Findings

The quantitative data from the online survey taken by 357 Black teachers were analyzed. The descriptive statistics were reported in frequency and percentages and disaggregated by gender. The results produced the following key findings:

1. In summary, 77% of the 357 respondents were female, 56% have more than

    11 years experience, and 87% have a masters level education or above. Nearly

60% of the 357 respondents had three or less Black teachers in their K-12 schooling experiences, with 21% of Black teacher respondents having never had a Black teacher.

2. Almost all of the respondents (95%) identified desire to work with children/youth as the primary catalyst for selecting teaching as a profession. In addition, love of subject area (85%) and desire to help race (82%) were cited as key catalysts.

3. The respondents perceived financial considerations (81%) and salary (80%) as the two main obstacles to becoming a teacher in Connecticut.

4. Collectively, lack of support systems significantly affects teacher retention rates. The respondents expressed administrative support (89%), resource support (89%), collegial support (86%), and collaboration (86%) as the four primary factors associated with teacher recruitment and retention.

5. Although induction and mentoring supports are touted as having positive effects on teacher quality and retention, only a little more than one-half of the respondents participated in both induction (61%) and mentoring (55%) programs with less than half of them satisfied with the induction (48%) or mentoring (40%) program. These results show that induction and mentoring supports may be viewed as inconsistent, inadequate, and insufficient. It is important to note that approximately one-fifth of the teachers may have begun teaching before the BEST or TEAM induction programs existed.

6. There is strong consensus among respondents that diversity is vital in education. Specifically, respondents noted that diversity in teacher education

programs, teaching practices, curriculum, and educational discussions are
each very important factors.

Phase 2: Qualitative Findings

The original plan for this study was to conduct three mini focus group interviews in three different locations (Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech, & Zoran, 2010). However, there were difficulties scheduling the focus groups (see detailed explanation in Chapter 3). Consequently, two focus group interviews, an individual interview, and written response questionnaires were conducted. In all, 21 teachers responded to the focus group interview questions. The focus group questions followed a semi-structured interview consisting of the four central research questions (Appendix B). All participants were asked to share their perceptions, opinions, and experiences regarding what they perceived to be the key obstacles and key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut, to explain how they value diversity in the teaching force, and to describe policy recommendations that could support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers in Connecticut. Participants were not asked probing questions, however, questions were asked in order to clarify the meaning of particular responses.

Additionally, the findings from Item 18, the open-ended survey question, will be presented in this section. Two hundred fifty-two teachers responded to the open-ended question. See Appendix F for the Open-ended Survey Question Code Map. The qualitative data were analyzed and coded using a multi-stage, iterative process which was fully described in Chapter 3. See Appendix G for the Focus Group Data Code Map. First, the findings from the open-ended survey question will be presented. Subsequently, focus

group data will be reported for the focus group interviews, related individual interview, and the questionnaires. The section ends with a summary.

Online Survey Question

Item 18 is an open-ended survey question in which respondents expressed their opinions regarding how to improve the recruitment and retention of Black teachers in Connecticut. Specifically, 252 of the 357 Black teachers responded to, "How can recruitment and retention of Black teachers be improved?" In all 521 responses were coded from the 252 respondents. The themes that emerged were: teacher support (116 responses), proactive recruitment (115 responses), perception of the teaching profession (63 responses), salary (46 responses), racism (44 responses), incentives (42 responses), college preparation (34 responses), importance of Black teachers (22 responses), and testing (10 responses). The two themes, teacher support and proactive teacher recruitment account for 40.4% of the responses to Item 18. The themes highlight areas necessary for serious consideration. Additional themes include racism, perception, salary, incentives, college preparation, importance of Black teachers, testing, and other emerged as minor themes. These themes account for almost 60% of the comments.

Teacher Support

Teacher support was the most frequently mentioned theme associated with improving recruitment and retention of Black teachers. One hundred sixteen responses referred to ongoing support for all teachers as critical to retaining teachers. Teacher support includes administrative support (59 responses), mentoring (31 responses), minority teacher support groups (17 responses), and effective professional development (9 responses).

Administrative support. The general consensus among the 59 responses was that all teachers need administrative support to aid them in becoming successful teachers and to influence them to stay in the profession. In addition, some respondents indicated the need for administrative support with student behavior, peer collaboration, resources and materials, career advancement, teachers moving to Connecticut, and parents and community. In order to become effective teachers, Respondent 24's statement characterized the general sentiment of this group of teachers. He or she noted that teachers, "need to be give[n] as much support in every way possible." According to Respondent 47, "support from administration, community, and colleagues" is essential in equipping teachers with the skill sets necessary to meet the challenges of the profession and the unique needs of the students. The key point is that ample and effective administrative support impacts teacher success and influences teacher retention.

Mentoring. Thirty-one responses referenced mentoring as critical in recruiting and retaining teachers. For the most part, responses regarding mentoring were nondescript, bulleted notations that indicated the need for mentoring. According to the few elaborated responses, direct, one-to-one mentoring is important in aiding teachers in managing and mastering: curriculum, instructional practices, classroom management, and administrative tasks. Respondents identified the need for new teacher induction programs and coaching/mentoring programs citing that they may positively impact retention. Some respondents suggested a particular type of mentoring. For example, Respondent 130 proposed that teachers need "in-class teacher mentors" to grow and develop. In addition, Respondent 130 suggested that mentoring will more successful if "an effort to match teachers based on demographics and…race" is made.

Minority teacher support groups. Seventeen responses cited the need for minority teacher support groups. The respondents perceive Black teachers mentoring other Black teachers as beneficial because it would reinforce teachers' sense of self-efficacy and provide a "forum to voice racial issues," as Respondent 95 has indicated. Because of the racial and ideological disparity between minority teachers and majority teachers, especially educational leaders, minority voices, opinions, and experiences are often overlooked. Respondent 128 suggested that school leaders' lack of cultural awareness may be due to their "limited exposure to people outside the Eurocentric culture." Consequently, minority teacher support groups are needed to help Black teachers acclimate to a profession that is predominantly White and governed by a Eurocentric ideology. Respondent 24 expressed that she considers minority teacher support groups vital to Black teacher retention and success. She noted that if it were not for the support that she received from a "core group of…caring, committed Black teachers" she does not believe that she would have been able to remain in the profession." Similarly, Respondent 210 suggested the need for a cohort because Black teachers need to "meet and share/discuss effective methods used to reach their students, as well as discuss the unique challenges being of color poses in our profession." In addition, Respondent 133 expressed sentiments about Black teachers having a voice in the profession. Respondent 133 explained:

> Support for staff of color and staff in general regarding the issues of race in CT [is needed]. Race is an issue in our schools for students as well as staff. We need support to talk about and work on race issues in our schools/districts. Without a school climate that encourages voices to be heard, then our greatest issue in CT is ignored.

The views, opinions, and feelings of Black teachers send a strong message that multiple forms of support are important to retaining all teachers. In particular, Black teachers want and need administrative and collegial support, as well as support from Black mentors to address the challenges of race and culture in the profession. Researchers have reported that cultural supports provide traditionally silenced groups the confidence to vocalize their viewpoints, question the status quo, develop cultural pedagogical practices, and share social and cultural experiences and knowledge (Dee, 2004; Dillard, 1994; Gordon, 2000; Lee, 2003). The findings in this study have confirmed findings in an earlier study. Recruitment and retention efforts will continue to be challenging if school systems do not attend to developing structures of social and cultural supports for minority teachers (Pesek, 1993).

Proactive Teacher Recruitment

Proactive teacher recruitment was the second theme associated with improving recruitment and retention of Black teachers. One hundred fifteen responses referred to proactive teacher recruitment. Proactive teacher recruitment includes commitment to recruiting and hiring minority candidates (51 responses), college recruitment (30 responses), minority teacher programs (29 responses), Black churches and organizations (four responses), and substitute/paraprofessional transitional programs (one response).

Commitment to recruiting and hiring minority candidates. Fifty-one responses referenced commitment to recruiting and hiring minority candidates. Respondents expressed discontent with current hiring practices. Forty-four of the responses indicated that the hiring process for Black teachers is inherently not aggressive, unfair, racist, and/or insincere. Respondent 44 and Respondent 112 stated that district

leaders "need to see the need" and be "more committed" to diversifying the teaching force. Typical remarks such as these showed that respondents believe that educators need to acknowledge that minority students need to have minority teachers. This, in their view, would impact recruitment and retention strategies. School and district recruiters need to understand and consider racial and cultural diversity to be important issues. Respondent 173 recommended diversity training. Respondent 40 and Respondent 173 agreed that training could help to improve "school districts commitment to hiring African American teachers" and help recruiters recognize that "[t]here are qualified Black teachers out there." Respondent 41 expressed that recruitment and retention could improve if opportunities are made available to Black teachers. Respondent 41 stated, "First there has to be the opportunity. …Most Black teachers do not make it to the interview, and I'm not sure of the reason." Respondent 137 stated, "I think that districts should recognize that their minority student population needs to have adults in the classroom that look like them." In addition, Respondent 154 noted that school and district leaders must "invest more time and money" in minority teacher recruitment programs. Thus, if district leaders do not see the importance of having Black teachers, they may not actively recruit Black teachers.

Respondents believe there are ample qualified Black candidates for teaching positions, and they believe school leaders often claim that they are unable to find qualified Black teachers to fill teaching positions. Respondents disagree with this claim and suggest that one factor that is often not addressed, but that is associated with the limited number of Black teachers, is the inherent unfairness in hiring Black teachers. Respondent 17 mentioned district leaders need to demonstrate fairness in the hiring

process and actually "include more Black applicants in the interview process."

Respondent 29 shared that the two Black leaders in the district where he or she works are

"the only two individuals in the district that have stuck their necks out to diversify the

teaching population." Respondent 31 stated that there is racial discrimination in her

district in which only "5 out of 500 teachers are Black teachers." Respondent 31 asserted

that much more can be done to recruit and retain Black teachers. Districts must do more

than claim the need for more Black teachers; they must intentionally and genuinely seek,

interview, hire, and support Black teachers. For example, in the explanation of minority

teacher recruitment efforts, Respondent 81 noted that district leaders must make sincere

efforts to recruit minority candidates, particularly Black candidates. Respondent 81

stated:

> I have learned that even when many districts say that they are in need of minority, especially, African American educators, they aren't as willing to go the distance to ensure that they are brought in and retained.…More of a presence from districts can be put forth within the high schools to further attract African Americans into the profession. How will many young people know how rewarding the profession is if no one can give them firsthand accounts…. If our schools are as diverse as they are in many districts, why not be sure to do everything that one can to get a community of adults working in the schools that resemble what the students actually look like so that they will not only say that they have a teacher but will also be able to say that teacher/principal looks like me, grew up like me, and still made it.

Thus, district leaders need to recognize the need, provide the opportunity, and make a

concerted commitment to diversifying the district.

Perhaps not recognizing the value in having more Black teachers contributes to

Black teachers not being aggressively sought after or hired. Respondent 93 complained

that the interview process is a sham stating that she and other Black teachers that she

knows have gone on "countless interviews that claimed the need for Black teachers, but

they do not hire the qualified minority teachers." Respondents 11 agreed sharing,

"Districts are not hiring Black teachers. Generally, Black teachers have a difficult time

getting hired." Respondent 93 reduced the problem to a simple solution stating, "hire

Black teachers." Respondent 17's sentiments demonstrated the growing frustration with

the hiring practices. Respondent 17 stated, "Get rid of racist attitudes and include more

Black applicants in the interview process. Treat Black teachers fairly."

Respondent 187 shared a personal experience that demonstrates why Black

teachers consider district hiring practices to be unfair. Respondent 187 stated:

> From my experience, the rules need to be the same across the board. I wasn't considered eligible to go on and interview for a position because the district did not have my final official transcripts. But, when I went to new teacher orientation in August, there were some white teachers who had just graduated in May and did not have official transcripts yet, but they were sent on interviews and hired.

College recruitment. Thirty responses to proactive teacher recruitment

referenced college recruitment efforts. Respondents identified establishing relationships

and building partnerships with two- and four- year colleges and universities as strategic

approaches that may increase the number of Black teachers in the profession. Fifteen of

the 30 respondents suggested actively recruiting from HBCUs. They recalled that

Connecticut used to recruit from HBCUs and wondered to what extent, if any, this

practice is still active. Considering that HBCUs enroll nearly half of all Black students in

teacher education programs (Hunter-Boykin, 1992), it may provide a large pool of

qualified candidates. Respondent 10 mentioned knowing several teachers who were

recruited from HBCUs to work in New Haven who have remained in teaching. In

addition, some of these teachers became principals and a superintendent. Respondent

10's statement transmits the general sentiment of this group. He or she stated, "Many

years ago, New Haven actively pursued teachers from the Black colleges of the South. Many of them remained in New Haven. Our current Superintendent was one of those." Respondents agree that recruitment from HBCUs may be a productive vehicle for increasing the number of Black teachers; however, some respondents question the attractiveness of Connecticut as a place to live. This suggests recruitment planning must include a way to encourage and sway individuals into wanting to live and teach in Connecticut. Respondent 246 noted that "Connecticut must create a pipeline for teachers of color. Historically Black Colleges and Universities still graduate the most Black educators year after year; however, Connecticut does not have a way to lure those teachers to come to CT." Respondent 137 stated, "I think districts need to have relationships with historically Black colleges which will allow districts to have access to a larger number of scholars."

Minority teacher programs. Twenty-nine responses noted the importance of creating a teacher career pipeline for minority students. Creating student awareness and interest early in K-12 schooling resonated with many of the respondents. Minority teacher recruitment programs such as grow your own programs that engage students in elementary, middle, and high school were identified as a good way to increase awareness about the minority teacher shortage and pinpoint early identification of interested students. Respondent 154 stated, "Recruiting and retaining minority teachers should start early while students are in middle and high school, and provide high school students interested in teaching with the academic support they need to be successful in college." For example, Respondent 218 suggested that districts could regularly "advertise teaching career opportunities" and Respondent 37 suggested that district "hold workshops" to

encourage and motivate Black students to become educators. In addition to the school

level minority teacher programs, Respondent 154 stated that a high school to college

pipeline is necessary to ensure that once students go through the school level minority

teacher education programs, there is a dynamic conduit to help them throughout college.

Respondent 7 suggested that districts provide "college scholarship…for Black students

who want to teach."

Perception

Perception was the third theme associated with improving the recruitment and

retention of Black teachers. Sixty-three responses referred to the negative perception of

the teaching profession. Perception of teaching includes the negative image of the

teaching profession (35 responses) and the lack of appreciation, value, and respect for

teachers (28 responses), particularly minority teachers.

Image of the profession. Nationally, teaching is viewed as a high stress, low

paying job. It is important to improve the professional image of teaching before any

reasonable recruitment and retention efforts will be effective. On one hand, respondents

believe that part of the responsibility for changing the public perception of teaching rests

with teachers. Respondent 34, Respondent 55, and Respondent 59's statements suggested

that teacher recruitment and retention can be improved if educators "speak positively

about the profession… glorify teachers…stop accentuating the negatives…do not

minimize the importance of students seeing people who represent them" in teaching.

These statements typify the overall sentiments of the respondents. Additionally,

respondents believe that part of the change effort rests with public discourse about

teaching. Respondent 164 commented, "In this country, teachers aren't as highly

respected as they are in other countries. I'm from another country and so I see this firsthand. Most Blacks want a job that pays more and gives them a better status in society." Respondent 71's answer to improving the professional image is to employ "public relations" efforts to help boost the image of public school education. In support, Gordon (2000) found a strong consensus among teacher participants that the negative images of the teaching profession were the main reasons why teaching was not a career choice.

Appreciation, value, and respect. Black teachers complained about not being appreciated, valued, or respected not only by society, but also by their colleagues, school leaders, students, and parents. Respondent 193 stated, "It would be nice to have an administrator speak to you in a professional manner. The bottom line is that Black teachers are not treated with respect from administrator, fellow white co-workers, and parents." Similarly, Respondent 224 recalled being openly disrespected in a suburban district stating, "Teachers looked at me as if I was not smart enough to join their team of math teachers. But I surprised them with outstanding hands-on teaching that the students enjoyed." The notion of having to overachieve to prove that you are competent and equal to your White colleagues is an insult. Respondent 244 suggested that "efforts need to be employed to have Black teachers feel comfortable in majority settings and an emphasis on school climate in majority and non-majority schools should be addressed among the students and teachers alike." The primary view is that society must take steps to appreciate, value, and respect minority teachers, if we are to attract more qualified, interested, and willing minority individuals into the profession. Respondent 71 referred to the treatment of Black teachers by students, parents, and administrators as "inexcusable."

To retain Black teachers, Respondent143 noted, "Black teacher need to feel welcomed and accepted in education. This field is dominated by Whites, who often are treated better than Blacks in the field. Many of them, in my opinion, especially in the school where I am teaching now, are very biased."

Salary

Salary was the fourth theme associated with improving the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Forty-six responses referred to teacher salary. Specifically, most respondents' comments about salary noted that teacher salaries were too low, non-competitive, and not commensurate with the level of education that is required. Low teacher salary was highly regarded as a contributor to the decisions not to enter the teaching profession. Respondent 227 wondered why, with all the career options available, talented Black college graduates would want "to enter a profession where they are required to work twice as hard for less pay than other professionals." Respondent 89 explained that teacher salaries must "increase in order to attract more college students to become teachers." In addition, Respondent 94 highlighted that salaries must be sufficient enough so that teachers can "afford an apartment, monthly bills, and … student loans." Several respondents mentioned that teacher salary should be much more aligned to the business sector and other professions that require similar advanced degrees. Respondent 85 shared, "we need financial compensation relative to the degree and value of the work." Respondents viewed the non-competitive salary as a major barrier to the recruitment and retention of qualified Black teachers. In particular, they noted that there are more "lucrative" career options now available to Black college graduates. In some cases, respondents discussed having to work additional jobs in order to augment their salary.

They alluded to the low teacher salary making it difficult to remain in the profession. Respondent 126's remark summarized the general opinion of the group. Respondent 126 stated, "Salary is a big factor. Talented and gifted college graduates will flock to the more prestigious jobs with higher salaries." This supports the findings of Gordon (2000) who reported that low teacher salary impedes entry into the profession, and Johnson and Kardos (2008) who reported that decisions to leave teaching are influenced by low teacher salary.

Racism

Racism was the fifth theme associated with improving recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Forty-four responses referred to racism. Racism includes unequal opportunities (27 responses), lack of cultural sensitivity (nine responses), and being the only one (eight responses).

Unequal opportunities. Twenty-seven of the responses centered on unequal opportunities for both Black students and teachers. Respondent 143 suggested a review of the opportunity afforded to minority teachers and students. Respondent 193 considered education to be highly political stating that "administrators …are not concerned about the students. They are only concerned about the appearance of the school." As a group, respondents typically couched the notion of equal opportunities in the extent to which minority teachers and students have equal access to positive learning environments, to educational resources, or having their views and opinions included and respected. Respondent 157 noted Connecticut teachers, regardless of race, must obtain the same level of educational and credentialing requirements. Accordingly, Respondent 157 believes Black teachers should be afforded the same career advancement opportunities as

their colleagues. Moreover, Respondent 182 is frustrated with Black teachers being overlooked for promotions stating that in his or her district, **"**one person has made the decisions about whose application deserved a chance, who should be brought in for an interview, and who should be sent to specific schools. Absolute power always corrupts and excludes." The respondents perceive racism, whether unconscious or conscious, to be a factor in recruiting and retaining Black teachers. The comments demonstrate that respondents firmly believe that contrary to what mainstream America would have you believe, racism exists in education, and that it impacts the opportunities afforded to Black students and teachers.

Cultural sensitivity. Nine responses highlighted that more emphasis must be placed on improving cultural sensitivity, tolerance, and acceptance in school settings. Respondent 77 remarked, "Black teachers need to be included and recognized in all aspects of their professional contributions and not be kept in the background." In fact, Respondent 122 stated that moving from tolerance to acceptance requires majority colleagues and leaders "valuing…respecting…and recognizing the hard work and achievements" of Black teachers within schools. Respondent 161 recommended that, "School administrators …undergo compulsory sensitivity training to become aware of 'Black issues' and to maximize the possibility of success for Black teachers." Respondents 208 and 213 recommended engaging in dialogue about race with students, staff, and administration to encourage sincere "cultural appreciation" and create a sense of belonging. Goodwin's (2004) ethnographic study of seven minority teachers found that minority teachers held a deep commitment to the demographic imperative; exhibited a

strong authentic and empathic understanding of students lived experiences; and genuinely understood the power of expressions of caring.

The only one. Eight responses referred to the problems teachers associated with being the only Black teacher in a school or district. Being the only Black teacher in a school or district is challenging. In fact, Respondent 45, Respondent 98, and Respondent 212 explained that they felt "discomfort" and "frustration" and "insecure" being the only Black teacher. In their view, this is problematic because often their opinions are not appreciated or considered.

Incentives

Incentives was the sixth theme associated with improving the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Forty-two responses referred to incentives. Incentives includes financial incentives (16 responses), general incentive included various isolated incentives (seven responses), housing assistance (six responses), loan forgiveness (six responses), and scholarship (six responses), and signing bonuses (one response). Most of the respondents' comments related to financial aid for prospective teacher candidates. Financial aid was not available to some respondents, which made entering the profession difficult. For example, Respondent 127 noted that "financial considerations, grants vs. loans did not exist for me; but could have made a tremendous difference in my status of living conditions! The lack of those programs…are literally chasing students to other professions." Housing, loan forgiveness, and scholarships specifically aligned with education were noted as a way to increase recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Respondent 112 suggested that districts should connect district level teacher education

programs to financial aid programs. Respondent 145 suggested connecting loan forgiveness to years of service.

Academic Preparation

Academic preparation was the seventh theme associated with improving the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Thirty-four responses referred to the quality of academic preparation. Academic preparation includes teacher preparation programs (18 responses) and K-12 schooling experience (16 responses). Several respondents advocated for more rigorous teacher preparation programs, programs that depict a more accurate representation of teaching. Respondent 222 supported this claim stating:

> I think prospective teachers need to be told the realities of the job without sugar coating it. I never heard the words classroom management, bus duty, a.m. duty, permanent records, parent/teacher conference, PPT, IEP, etc. when I was in college. I felt like there were so many parts to the job I hadn't signed up for!

Respondent 175 recommended that teacher preparation programs make the content and student teacher practicum experiences "more relevant" to the growing cultural pluralism of our country. For these changes to occur, the standard must become for colleges and universities to include these significant, but often discounted, teacher responsibilities and multicultural curriculum content in the course expectations of the programs. Respondent 246 noted, "Our state universities must play an active role in preparing our young people for the rigors of teaching." In support, Howey (2006) contends that the preparation of teachers is inadequate because policymakers underestimate what is needed to effectively prepare teachers, particularly for urban settings.

Also, inadequate elementary and secondary schooling impacts students' academic capacity. The respondents perceive there to be a general lack of concern for educating Black students. Often Black students experience the snowball effect in education. The

typical feeling shared by respondents is that the inadequate elementary and seconding

schooling of many Black students may render them ill-prepared for the challenges of

college. Respondent 25 referred to the education of Black students in America as a

"substandard education." There is a direct cause and effect relationship between poor

education and entry into college. An inadequate elementary and secondary education

leads to fewer Black students entering college and by extension, becoming teachers.

Also, this impacts Black students ability to access scholarships and other college

resources. Respondent 25 suggested providing Black students with "resources to prepare

educationally for college… scholarships…[and] begin recruiting and training youth"

early. Despite the many educational reform efforts, this sentiment suggests that Black

students continue to receive inequitable educational opportunities. Respondent 231's

statement illuminates the need for better K-12 academic preparation as an indicator of

college success:

> What's interesting is that a better educational system would help Black students that are academically unprepared. At which point, more Black students would be going to college and creating the possibility for more Black teachers. Having more Black teachers would most likely influence Black students to become teachers as well.

Gifford (1986) asserts that the limited number of minority teachers is directly related to

the quality of their elementary and secondary schooling experience.

Importance of Black Teachers

The importance of Black teachers was the eighth theme associated with

improving the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. The typical message included

in the twenty-two responses was that it is important for all students to see and experience

more Black teachers and leaders. Respondent 229's statement illustrated the general

feeling of the responses. Respondent 229 stated, "It is important that non-Black students learn from minority teachers so they better understand that different does not mean inferior." Respondent 36 explained that a negative message is transmitted when Blacks are primarily staffed in "cafeteria" and "custodial" jobs, rather than in "teacher" and "leadership" positions. Respondent 48 supported this citing the need for all students regardless of race to see "professional Black" images, rather than subservient stereotypes. Respondent 163 noted that the dominant "perception is that Black teachers can only teach Black children." Respondent 48 considered this a specious illusion created and promulgated by White teachers who notice that Black teachers tend to work well with Black students and parents.

Competency Testing

Competency testing was the ninth theme associated with improving the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Ten responses referred to competency testing as a barrier to recruitment. Respondent 61 referred to competency testing as a "deterrent to entering teaching" and felt that recruitment could be improved "by helping college students prepare for the Praxis exams." In previous research, competency testing was reported as a major hindrance for Black individuals seeking to enter the profession (Hood & Parker, 1989; Hunter-Boykin, 1992; King, 1993a).

In Connecticut, in 2006-2007 the Pre-Professional Skills Test of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics revealed that only 45% of Black students passed the state requirements for all three tests on the first administration compared to 60% for Hispanic students, and 85% for White students (RESC MTR, 2008). Respondent 121 suggested that Connecticut provide "free assistance" with all testing required for state certification.

Since 2007, the RESC MTR Alliance has provided tutoring support in Praxis I Reading, Writing, and Mathematics for minority teacher candidates. In addition, qualified first time minority teacher candidates receive textbooks and fee waivers (Connecticut RESC, 2010).

Summary of the Open-ended Survey Question Findings

In summary, teacher support efforts and proactive teacher recruitment efforts were the two most frequently mentioned themes. Teacher support includes administrative support, mentoring, minority teacher support groups, and professional development. Responses for teacher support represent 22% of the 521 responses to Item 18. Proactive teacher recruitment includes commitment to hiring minority candidates, college recruitment, especially HBCUs, minority teacher programs, recruitment from Black churches and organizations, and substitute and paraprofessional transitional programs. Also, responses for proactive teacher recruitment represent 22 % of the 521 responses to Item 18.

In addition, perception of the teaching profession, salary, racism, incentives, academic preparation, importance of Black teachers, and competency testing were themes that respondents cited in response to how to improve recruitment and retention of Black teachers be improved.

<div align="center">

Focus Group Interview Data

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The focus group data includes the eight focus group participants, an individual interviewee, and 12 questionnaire participants. Because each participant responded to the same interview question protocol (see Appendix B), the data were analyzed together and will be reported together. Additionally, reporting the data together will ensure

confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The findings will be referred to as focus group data throughout Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

The first focus group was comprised of four teachers, three females and one male. All participants introduced themselves prior to the start of the interview. Participant 1 is a female, ninth grade English teacher in an urban school district. She has six years of teaching experience in both middle school and high school. Participant 2 is a female, K-8 art teacher in a rural school district. She has 20 years of teaching experience. Also, she is a second generation teacher. Participant 3 is a male, middle school math teacher in a suburban school district. He has 17 years of teaching experience in three different districts in Connecticut. Participant 4 is a female, high school reading teacher in an urban school district. She has 15 years of teaching experience in Connecticut.

The second focus group was comprised of four teacher, two females and two males. All participants introduced themselves prior to the start of the interview. Participant 5 is a female, high school literacy teacher in an urban school district. She has 22 years of teaching experience in both middle and high school. Also, she is a third generation teacher. Participant 6 is a male, K-8 special education teacher in an urban school district. He has five years of teaching experience in Connecticut and four years in another state. He is a second generation teacher. Participant 7 is a male, K-8 visual arts teacher in an urban school district. He has 11 years of teaching experience in Connecticut. Participant 8 is a female, high school social studies teacher in an urban school district. She has 10 years of teaching experience in Connecticut and five years in another state.

Initially, there was supposed to be a third focus group interview. However, only one teacher attended the interview. Consequently, the teacher was interviewed individually. This interviewee is referred to as Participant 9. She is a female, high school science teacher in an urban school district with 15 years of experience.

In addition, I had difficulty scheduling focus groups for teachers outside of the Hartford area. Therefore, in lieu of a fourth focus group interview, my doctoral advisor suggested asking participants to respond in writing to the four research questions. The written response questionnaire was emailed to participants on two separate occasions. The twelve teachers who responded to the questionnaire are referred to as Participant 10 through Participant 21. Two of the 12 teachers who participated in the questionnaire were male; 10 were female.

In total there are 21 individuals (five male teachers and 16 female teachers) from whom focus group data were collected. To ensure that no single participant's comments dominated the discussions and explanations, if a participant referred to the same factor several times, that factor was taken into account once. However, if a participant referred to related factors, all factors were counted as individual responses for that particular participant. Quotations drawn from the focus group participants are used throughout the reporting of the data. These quotations represent the multiple voices from the transcribed and written responses of the 21 participants.

It is important to note that while responding to a particular question, participants often made comments about one of the other questions. Thus, the responses were aligned and coded to the appropriate questions. Question 1 and Question 2 are two part questions requiring respondents to comment on factors associated with becoming a teacher and

factors associated with remaining a teacher. Therefore, the results were disaggregated based on obstacles and catalysts to becoming a teacher and obstacles and catalysts to remaining a teacher. For each question, I first report results related to becoming a teacher and then results related to remaining a teacher. The focus group data findings are presented in the following sections by the individual research questions.

<div align="center">**Research Question 1 – Obstacles to Becoming a Teacher**</div>

The first research question asked teachers, "What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?" Participants provided a total of 64 responses associated with key obstacles to becoming a teacher. In coding the first research question nine themes emerged: financial considerations (20 responses), human resource practices (18 responses), perception of teaching (10 responses), competency testing (eight responses), role models (three responses), ineffective teacher education programs (two responses), access to higher education, limited incentives, and college readiness were each referred to once. The three themes, financial considerations, human resource practices, and perception account for three-fourths (75%) of the obstacles cited for becoming a teacher. The findings are reported under the headings below.

Financial Considerations

Financial considerations emerged as the most frequently referred to theme that resonated with Black teachers and was regarded as a major contributor to the decision not to enter the teaching profession. Financial considerations include salary, cost of living, and student loans. Twelve of the 21 participants directly cited low teacher salaries as a barrier. The responses to teacher salary were generally brief and direct. Participants

simply noted that teacher salaries were too low, non-competitive, and not commensurate with the level of education that is required. In addition to salary, Participant 5, Participant 7, and Participant 8 explained that a good benefits package is equally as important as salary. Participant 13 stated, "I think the biggest obstacle is the pay. It's a job that many know and feel requires a person to give so much time and energy, but that time and energy isn't reciprocated equally when it comes to compensation." Participant 16 shared a typical comment that encompasses the general comments reported by the group:

> The issue that many of us have with becoming an educator is that the salary is not attractive. During and after college, our awareness of the many high-paying career options that are available to college graduates often excuses any thought that we may have had about becoming an educator. For those of us, who attended college and became the first generation of college graduates in our families, we usually have taken out large amounts of financial aid. Upon graduation, we look for careers that will offer us the most financial security possible. Unfortunately, teaching does not do this. In my opinion, this is why this career field is often initially overlooked by many young minorities entering the work field.

Participant 3 concurred that low teacher salary is a roadblock to becoming a teacher and speculated why students are not interested in teaching. He stated:

> Teaching was not a profession that I looked to as a career….It's not very lucrative. You are not going to die rich. As we try to tell students that we want them to be the best they can be and earn the most they can, you don't think about teaching as one of those professions where you will earn a lot of money.

The low, non-competitive, non-commensurate teacher salary coupled with the high cost of living in Connecticut make working and living in Connecticut less attractive to prospective teacher candidates. Four of the participants viewed the high cost of living as a barrier. For example, Participant 4 remarked that Connecticut is an obstacle and emphatically stated, "Connecticut is for the rich." She quantifies the statement by explaining that the taxes and cost of living make it difficult to live comfortably in Connecticut on a teacher's salary. Participant 4 continued stating, "They [teachers] have

to find affordable housing which in Stamford is a problem. They need to be able to live in

Connecticut on the beginning salary." The unfavorable view of teacher salaries is

consistent with research findings that report that teacher salaries are not commensurate

with salaries of other professions that require comparable levels of education; and low

salaries contribute to the decreased interest in the teaching profession (AACTE, 1989;

Gordon, 2000; Torres et al., 2004).

Four teachers cited student loans as a barrier to becoming a teacher. Obtaining a

college degree is a costly endeavor. Most students obtained student loans to pay for their

college education. Participant 16 noted that financial security may be a reason why

teaching is "initially overlooked by many young minorities entering the workforce."

Human Resource Practices

The second theme associated with obstacles to becoming a teacher was human

resource practices. The participants perceive school district human resource hiring and

recruitment practices to be contradictory to increasing the number of minority teachers in

the profession, particularly Black teachers. Human resource practices include lack of

awareness about teaching, proactive recruitment and outreach, and unfair hiring practices.

In part, participants attributed the limited number of Black teachers in Connecticut to the

limited recruitment efforts on the part of state and district leaders.

Lack of awareness. Participant 3, Participant 6, Participant 9, and Participant 12

viewed awareness of the critical need for more minority teachers as a barrier and believe

early awareness could potentially build interest in the profession. Early awareness means

introducing the teaching profession to elementary, middle, and high school students and

building public interest in teaching. Participant 6 stated, "The biggest obstacle is that we

don't talk to kids about the teaching profession early enough." Participant 3 echoed this sentiment adding that districts should consider grow your own programs where districts intentionally recruit middle and high school students from the community and "nourish…encourage… develop" them to become teachers in their communities.

Similarly, Participant 9 remarked that the "lack of exposure to information" is a key obstacle to becoming a teacher. Also, building awareness is viewed as creating advertising and marketing opportunities to publicize information and educate individuals about the teaching profession. She stated, "There is a large population not being catered to. They [educational leaders] really need to step it up. So, I think an obstacle is information as to what is out there."

Proactive recruitment and outreach. Human resource departments are charged with attracting, recruiting, and hiring teachers. Proactive recruitment and outreach can potentially establish fruitful connections with targeted populations. Participant 3 noted that other professions actively recruit, but the field of education does not do a sufficient job of recruiting minority candidates, particularly Black candidates. In comparison, he noted the business world's aggressive recruitment practices compared to that of the recruitment practices of the educational field:

> Nobody's knocking on my door asking me to teach, but I am getting people from the pharmaceutical companies coming after me, being a power graduate in my class, especially a minority. The business world is dying to get me. They have people taking me everywhere, but when it comes to education, when it's going to affect more our my people, no one looks for me, no one's knocking at the door saying "look you could make a difference in the community….We want you to be part of us." Exxon is saying that; Pfizer is saying that; IBM is saying that; Apple is saying that.

It is important to note that Participant 3 acknowledged the costs associated with strategic

recruitment efforts, and suggested that state and district budgets include funding for

strategic recruitment efforts.

    HBCUs. HBCUs matriculate nearly half of all Black students in teacher education

programs (Hunter-Boykin, 1992). Consequently, HBCUs could be a substantial source of

qualified Black candidates to consider. Several participants wondered if Connecticut

school and district leaders were tapping into the pool of teachers graduating from

HBCUs. Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 8, and Participant 18 suggested

recruiting teachers from HBCUs. Each of the 21 participants communicated that the large

gap between the number of Black teachers and Black students in Connecticut can be

decreased with some strategic planning to galvanize recruitment efforts.

    Unfair practices. During the focus group discussions and subsequent data

analysis, the issue of race was a common denominator of the many experiences shared by

the participants. There is a disproportionately low number of Black teachers in the

teaching workforce. Five of the 21 participants believe this is due to unfair hiring

practices. "[L]ack of understanding…lack of awareness…and lack of interest" were

typically reported as unfair practices. Participants believe these dispositions perpetuate

actions and behaviors that lead districts to overlook qualified Black individuals for

positions. From the Eurocentric mainstream perspective it appears normal and ordinary

that the field of education is predominantly White. Participants perceive that perhaps

Eurocentric leaders do not relate to the need for a more culturally and racially diverse

workforce, and thus, it is "inconceivable" to them that their actions or inactions are

inherently forms of institutionalize racism. The typical view upheld by participants is that

it is impossible to increase the presence of minority teachers if those individuals who are doing the hiring are working, consciously or unconsciously, against hiring more minority teachers.

To this point, Participant 3 explained that when he decided to leave a district, he was not asked why he was leaving nor was he given an exit interview. He shared this view, "If you are looking to give a true representation of the education process to all of our students, shouldn't there be some desire to retain the teacher. I think it is a flawed policy."

In the same vein, Participant 2, Participant 4, and Participant 18 cited district leaders generic statement, "[W]e cannot find any qualified Black teachers" to be just an excuse. Participant 2 shared her experience of almost being passed over for a position in a predominantly White rural school district because administrators felt that there was no need for a minority teacher because the town had only a few minorities. She was offered the position only after the only Black teacher in the district, who happened to be one of the interviewers, advocated on her behalf. She stated that administrators used the term "colorblind" to defend their original decision not to hire her. Participant 2 critiqued colorblind as:

> …more harmful than good because they don't understand kids need to see a variety of races that are highly functional. Those people [minority teachers] become a huge eye opener for them [the dominant culture] because if the only African American person, or Latino, or the only Asian person you see is the Asian kid who is adopted and plays the violin well, or a Latino kid who is on TV, then that's your point of reference. So, unfortunately, it is still an obstacle to get people to realize that it is important to have a diverse workforce.

Colorblindness clouds one's ability to notice race as a factor. According to Participant 2 and Participant 3, White teachers and administrators who claim that they are colorblind,

may not have taken the time to consider the minority student's perspective. In addition, eleven participants alluded to White teachers and leaders being under the impression that "race does not matter." Participant 4 empathically asserted "race does matter!" Howard (2010) asserted that the colorblind perspective may contribute to internalized racism, development of the deficit model, racial hierarchies, and racial and cultural hegemony in school practices.

Participant 9 opined that district leaders do not truly believe in the capabilities of minority candidates. She recalled interviewing for a teaching position in which the superintendent met with her for about five minutes. Within that short span of time he decided that she would not make it in that district. Science is a shortage area, especially for women. Participant 9 had a degree in agriculture with a minor in biology and chemistry. When she was not hired, she turned to a career in the business world. By happenstance, years later she entered teaching through a partnership between her company and a school district. Consequently, a person that was not given a chance to teach turned out to be a successful teacher for over 15 years.

Perception of Teaching

Perception of teaching was the third theme associated with obstacles to becoming a teacher. Perception refers to the interpretation of the social and financial appeal of the teaching profession. Nationally, teaching is viewed as a high stress, low paying, female dominated profession (Haberman, 2005; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Wilder, 1999). Teaching is unattractive to many people because of the negative perceptions and the lack of respect and value that society has for teachers. Participant 2 stated that "teachers aren't heroes anymore." Participant 6 stated, "I wasn't going to become a teacher….I was

thinking accountant or business because it was kind of manly. There are not enough

Black males. Part of the reason is they grew up having this negative mindset about

teachers." Feelings such as these may contribute to the low (1%) numbers of Black male

teachers in Connecticut (CSDE, 2010b). This is in stark contrast to how teachers,

particularly Black teachers, were viewed 60 years ago. Black teachers were viewed as the

cornerstone of the Black community and were held in high esteem (Green, 2004; Hudson

& Holmes, 1994).

Additionally, elementary and secondary schooling experiences and negative

public discourse in the media contribute to the negative perception of teaching. In

addition, the school environment may discourage students from becoming teachers.

Participant 9 expressed the opinion that Black students are not choosing to become

teachers because of the negative experiences they had in school:

> Think about where the majority of our minority students are. They're in troubled
> schools, underperforming schools, schools where the only reason why this teacher
> is here…So if you're in an environment like that and statistically that's where the
> majority of our minority students are being educated, why would you want to be a
> teacher? This job does not look attractive at all. You have mostly discipline issues
> or you're dealing with a population that society thinks is supposed to be the dregs
> of society, so to speak. So, you would want to stay away, and I would do
> everything that I could do not to be in that environment.

Negative school climate and student discipline issues may contribute to students'

decisions not to enter the profession. To attract more students to become teachers, the

positives of the profession must be accentuated. Teachers in this study perceive the

positives of the profession as the ability to be creative, the potential to make a difference

in the lives of children, and the relationships established with students and parents. The

participants find professional and personal satisfaction in that, they "touch lives" and

"impact generations."

Research Question 1 – Obstacles to Remaining a Teacher

Participants provided a total of 35 responses associated with key obstacles to remaining a teacher. In coding the first research question seven themes emerged: lack of teacher support (14 responses), diversity (eight responses), school climate (five responses), human resource practices (three responses), relationships, (two responses) intrinsic motivators (two responses), and role models (one response). The three themes, lack of teacher support, diversity, and school climate account for slightly more than three-fourths (77%) of the obstacles cited for remaining a teacher. Human resource practices, relationships, intrinsic motivation, and role models account for about a quarter of the obstacles. The findings are reported under the headings below.

Lack of Support

Fourteen participants identified lack of support as a major contributor to deciding to remain in education. Lack of support includes administrative support, mentoring, evaluation feedback, and teacher workload. Focus group data revealed that participants were frustrated with the significant lack of teacher support. They felt that the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for teacher performance are defined without the proper support systems and meaningful evaluative feedback. Participant 4 stated that administrative support is not happening. Participant 1, Participant 3 and Participant 11 agreed and cited that teachers are continually given more work and responsibilities without the necessary time to effectively complete tasks. Participant 1 claimed that administrators' actions are often in opposition to best practices demonstrated in teacher professional development training. Participant 3 suggested that the large achievement gap is a byproduct of poor teacher support. The mounting frustrations from the increased

workload and added responsibilities contribute to teachers' dissatisfaction. Recognizing this, Participant 1 expressed that districts must provide specific support strategies focused on refueling teachers to stem burnout. This, in her view, is a positive investment in teachers. She stated that administrators need to make "a real investment on the teaching side that will result in better teaching on a consistent basis."

School Climate

Five participants identified school climate as an obstacle to remaining a teacher. According to the participants, school climate includes poor student behavior, working conditions, collegial relationships, inclusion in decision making, and acceptance of racial and cultural differences. Participant 1 recalled leaving a school because the school environment was not focused on student learning. She claimed her job entailed mostly managing behaviors and not teaching. Thus, the culture of the school was not conducive to student learning or professional growth. The greater issue was that administrators were not taking steps to change the climate. Participant 10 believes that school leaders have to be "dedicated to changing" negative school cultures if they desire to retain teachers. These findings are consistent with Farber (2010) who reported that issues of student discipline, behavior, and violence were associated with teacher dissatisfaction. In addition, several scholars link minority teacher turnover to unsupportive working conditions, particularly in urban school systems (Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; and Stotko et al., 2007).

Research Question 2 – Catalysts to Becoming a Teacher

The second research question asked teachers, "What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut?" Participants

provided a total of 64 responses associated with key catalysts to becoming a teacher. In coding the second research question 10 themes emerged: intrinsic motivation (31 responses), role models (15 responses), students' academic experiences (five responses), competency testing (three responses), love of education (three responses), benefits (two responses), shortage (two responses), salary, incentives, and work schedule were each referred to once. The three themes, intrinsic motivation, role models, and students' academic experiences account for approximately 80% of the catalysts to becoming a teacher cited by participants. The findings are reported under the headings below.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation, which emerged as a theme for becoming a teacher, includes giving back to the Black race and community and the desire to make a difference in children's lives. One reason for this response is that the low academic performance of Black children is common and acceptable in public schools. Teachers' comments demonstrated that they were strongly intrinsically motivated to a become teacher. Participant 10 represented other teachers by stating:

> The key catalyst for me for me becoming and remaining a teacher is my kids. As much as they frustrate me, I love them and I know they can benefit from my life experience as well as my subject area expertise. I think my role is even more acute in the suburban school setting that I am in. Sometimes I am the one with the strongest relationship with students of color and I "get" them. They need that voice and representation.

Nineteen of the 21 participants expressed a desire to "make a difference" and/or "give back" to their race, community, and children. Participants do not believe that enough is being done in schools to help minority children be successful academically, emotionally, socially, especially those students that are economically disenfranchised. Seven

participants expressed the need to encourage student to see their full potential. Participant

5 stated:

> I'm not saying that teachers who are not of colors don't do this, they don't do it
> enough. They don't have the sensitivity to do it. Some of them don't have the
> wherewithal to do it. They just say their mama sent them that way; so it's okay.
> It's not okay. We don't do enough to let our children know that they are valued—
> that we care about how you look. We care about what you think. We think you
> have great potential. They don't hear enough of that. So, they think they are not
> anybody, and they are not going to ever be anybody.

> Participant 3, Participant 7, and Participant 8 expressed concerns of the perceived

"institutionalized apathy" and "low expectations" that some White teachers have for

minority students. Participant 8 noted that in her experience "White teachers allow Black

students to behave poorly." In contrast, in their experiences Black teachers hold Black

students to high academic and behavior standards, and they tend to include life skills and

values in their teaching. Participant 3 expressed the desire to "help prepare students for

the future…teach core life values…and to hold them to high expectations." Having high

expectations for all students is important to their academic development. Teachers who

have low expectations of Black students, may adversely impact students' academic

performance. Participant 7 attended a suburban high school in Connecticut. He shared a

high school experience that was, in his view, a pretty normal occurrence for the "handful"

of minority students who attended the school. It was not until he became an adult that he

realized how the low academic expectations of his teachers adversely influenced his

initial academic decision. He recalled:

> The major way that they [White teachers and administrators] manipulate the
> expectations for Black students or any students of color is alarming….[W]hen I
> reached my growth spurt, and I enter ninth grade. I could get a D or an F or
> whatever it was, but could I play on the basketball team was what many White
> teachers and administrator asked me. None of them asked me what I got for
> grades!

This experience supports the research findings of Ferguson (2003) and Kohli (2009) who found that White teachers' expectations interact with their (conscious and/or unconscious) beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward minority students and influence minority student performance; and thus, contribute to the low academic performance.

Participant 17 referred to the desire to teach as a "sense of duty" that leads people to want to "give of themselves to benefit others." He explained that he became a teacher because he "wanted to give back to [his] own community by serving the most vulnerable and impressionable." Overall, the statement provided by Participant 16 represents the general sentiments of this group of teachers, she stated, "I think that when we do choose to become educators, we are doing so because we value our communities, see the importance of having minorities in education, and we want to be influential on the next generation." These sentiments support the claims of several scholars who believe Black teachers' cultural knowledge and sensitivity are beneficial to Black student success in White dominated school systems (Brown, M. S., 2009; Klopfenstein, 2005; Kohli, 2009; Villegas & Davis, 2008).

Role Models

Fifteen of the 21 participants cited the need for role models as a reason for becoming a teacher. They recalled being inspired to teach because of a teacher or family member, who were role models, had a positive impact on them. Participants perceive themselves to be role models who promote the values of education, set high standards and expectations for students, demonstrate cultural understanding, and combat negative stereotypes. Participants believe that Black students have to have "someone that looks

like them" emerged as a factor influencing the need for more Black teachers to serve as

role models. Participant stated that a good teacher-student relationship can inspire

students to become teachers. Participant 15 stated that many Black teachers were

influenced to become teachers because of the commitment of a previous teacher.

Participant 3 explained that he purposefully dresses professionally and conducts himself

professionally because he is aware that students, particularly Black students, have limited

exposure to positive images of Black men. He is combating the negative stereotypes of

Black men in the U.S. media. He stated, "They don't dream what they don't see." This

statement supports the views shared in King (1993a) and Milner's (2006) research. These

researchers assert that Black students need to see people that look like them in

professional leadership roles so that they can "visualize the possibilities" (p. 97) for their

lives. Additionally, participants discussed that Black students do not readily see the value

of education, and how it could improve their lives. Consequently, participants feel that as

role models, they can instill the value of education and demonstrate standards of

behaviors and academic success. Participant 7 explained that all students need to see

culturally and ethnically diverse individuals in positions of leadership and authority. The

three participants in the group each agreed, and Participant 2 added that "kids need to see

a variety of races that are highly functional."

Students' Personal Experiences

Five participants cited students' personal school experiences, whether positive or

negative, as influential in their decision to become a teacher. Participant 17's statement

conveys the general feeling of the participants. He stated:

> It comes down to their personal experience with education. Some people had a
> teacher that touched their lives in a positive way, so they want to pay it forward.

Others were upset about their own experiences in school, so they want to change it for others.

Participant 12 discussed having a positive schooling experience where she received good grades, encouragement, and positive support from her teachers. These factors "easily translated to a desire to want to become a teacher."

Research Question 2 – Catalysts to Remaining a Teacher

Focus group participants provided nine responses regarding catalysts associated with remaining a teacher. In coding the second research question four themes emerged: teacher-student relationships (three responses), human resource practices (three responses), culturally relevant teaching practices (two responses), and high standards (one response). The two themes, teacher-student relationship and human resource practices account for 67% of the catalysts for remaining a teacher. The findings are reported under the headings below.

Teacher-Student Relationship

Three participants viewed the relationship between teachers and students as a catalyst for remaining a teacher. It is important for teachers to create a positive relationship with students. Positive teacher-student relationships have been positively linked with increased student engagement and improved student achievement. The participants explained that making connections with students is a natural and integral part of who they are as teachers. The participants used cultural referents to communicate knowledge, attitudes, and values. The following three examples demonstrate participants' use of these techniques. First, Participant 3 discussed the importance of talking to students in their vernacular to relate to and show students that you "understand and can relate." Second, Participant 1 discussed taking the time to listen to students and having

"value laden conversations" that are purposefully built into her instruction. Third,

Participant 8 builds positive relationships with children, even children that are not

necessarily her students. She stated:

> I remember when I first started teaching, the teachers would just say, "What is it! They just love you." I had a kid he wasn't my student who was a very urban kid. He was the man that was cool, so to speak. I never had him in my class. He came to see me one year, and he said, "I never had you, but you always smiled and said hello to me."

The teachers cared about the students' well-being not just their academic outcomes. The

point here is that a kind face, a friendly smile, and/or brief discussions, help those

students who think no one cares. Caring is a principle of culturally relevant pedagogy that

positively affects student outcomes (Gay, 2000). These teachers envisioned the potential

in their Black students and made connections during classroom interactions. Milner

(2006) contends that "Black teachers can have a meaningful impact on Black students'

academic and social success because they often deeply understand Black students'

situations and their needs" (p. 93).

Human Resource Practices

Three participants referred to improving human resource practices as way to

retain Black teachers. Efforts should be made to retain Black teachers in districts. Exit

interviews are needed, particularly for minority teachers and shortage area teachers, to

gather data regarding why Black teachers are choosing to leave the district or the

profession.

Research Question 3 – Diversity in the Teaching Force

The third research question asked teachers, "How do Black teachers in

Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?" Participants provided a total of 50

responses associated with diversity. The follow themes were identified: importance of

Black teachers (24 responses), human resource practices (12 responses), the notion of

being the only one (eight responses), role models (five responses), and professional

relationships (one response). Throughout the focus group data analysis it was quite

apparent that each of the 21 participants affirmed that diversity is critical in the teacher

workforce. The two themes, importance of Black teachers and human resource practices

account for almost three-fourths (72%) of the responses. The findings are reported under

the headings below.

The Importance of Black Teachers

All the participants agreed that Black teachers are important and needed in the

profession because they: (a) support a diverse teaching force, and ensure respect for

cultural diversity; (b) embrace and teach a multicultural curriculum and use culturally

relevant instructional practices; and (c) have high academic expectations of students.

Staff diversity. Black teachers bring varied perspectives about teaching and

learning to the dominant mainstream perspective. The focus group discussions reveal that

philosophies held by the participants were ones of empowerment, caring, and motivation.

In fact, Participant 14 refers to diversity in education as an "imperative." Specifically, the

participants believe that Black teachers bring different perspectives to teaching, promote

the need for diversity in the curriculum and instructional practices, serve as positive role

models to all students, and have a cultural and intuitive understanding of Black students.

Participant 11 asserted that a diverse staff affords all students the opportunity to see and

learn from people who may not look like them. Participant 10 concurred:

> I really value diversity in the workforce. I think that it helps students to see others
> that look like themselves in the workforce. I come from a background where I

was always the only or one of the few faces of color in the crowd. It was difficult for me to relate to some of the teachers because they did not "get" some of the nuances that come with my culture and often times were not inclined to try either. If I had more teachers of color, I feel that perhaps I would have 'gotten' it a lot sooner. Today's diverse students I think need to see more people like them.

Participant 19 endorsed this opinion and asserted that Black teachers in the teaching force benefits all students. Participant 19 stated, "All students regardless of color or race should be learning about different cultures." This supports Milem (2003) who posits that diversity in educational settings benefit all students, the school organization, and society.

Racial and cultural diversity in the teaching workforce is essential because all students need to learn about the many diverse races and cultures that make up our nation. Not only does it teach students to get along with and appreciate other races, it also provides as more accurate representation of our nation. In addition, Participant 17 stated:

I personally feel that diversity is crucial. No teaching force should be all White or all Black or all Women or all seasoned veterans. Each child is different and therefore will connect with different teachers. They need exposure to all types of people. I believe it is important for students to have exposure to teachers that they can identify with so they have a positive role model to look up to.

In addition to racial and cultural diversity of staff, participants explained that diversity of curriculum, instruction, and teaching practices are equally significant.

Multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching. Fifteen of the 21 participants identified multicultural curriculum and culturally relevant teaching as important factors when considering diversity. Participant 8 referred to the curriculum in her district as "narrow…and not inclusive of all." Participant 7 noted that diversity of the curriculum is more than occasional celebrations and cited the need to embed diverse perspectives into the traditional mainstream curriculum. Participant 6 stated that districts

believe that they provide a multicultural curriculum if they have Black history month

celebrations. Participant 7 referred to celebrations as "tolerance" and viewed tolerance

"as the lowest level of acceptance." Participant 12 and Participant 20 stressed that

multiple "voices" and "perspectives" in curriculum and instruction are not just beneficial

for minority students, but they are also beneficial for majority students. Participant 3

agreed stating that "multiple perspectives challenge the dominant perspective." Banks

and Banks (2004) contend that multicultural curriculum aims to create equal education

opportunities for diverse racial and cultural groups and strives to enhance educational

experience for all students. Milem (2003) asserts that White students who experience

limited interactions with individuals from different backgrounds are less likely to have

positive thoughts about multiculturalism.

Participant 4, Participant 5, and Participant 12 discussed the importance of

cultural relevant teaching practices; they stated that their administrators and colleagues

need to accept and appreciate culturally relevant pedagogy. Discussions of instruction

generally focused on teachers' instructional style and practices in imparting knowledge.

Culturally relevant teaching challenges traditional notions of teaching and learning. In

particular, Participant 4 recalled a time when she used poetry so that her high school

students could vent their social, emotional, economical, and political frustrations in

written form. In this case, poetry was a culturally relevant teaching strategy. She recalled

that a colleague took the students' work to the principal and argued that the content of the

poems was inappropriate. Participant 4 felt that the administration did not understand that

poetry "is an intervention" that helps students vent their frustrations. In fact, the teacher

engaged students through self-expression and connected the lesson to poetry and

historical content. The fact that the teacher recognized students' experiences and feelings

and allowed the students to use their personal experiences to enhance their learning

demonstrates a key principle of cultural relevant pedagogy; that is, it empowers students

by allowing them to use their own social and cultural experiences as a gateway to

understanding the world. The point where poetry intersects with the social and emotional

needs of the student is a transformational point for students. Unfortunately, the

administration "just did not get that." Many participants believe that these types of

teachable moments transmit "life lessons" that help students develop a critical

consciousness about themselves and the broader community in which they live.

Participants felt that the problem is further exasperated because these teachable moments

that help many Black students overcome adversity are often missed or overlooked. The

administrator's lack of understanding of the use of poetry emphasizes the cultural divide

between Black teachers perspectives and mainstream leaders' perspectives.

Multiple perspectives in education challenges both teachers and students to think

about ideas and topics in new and different ways, thus broadening their perspectives and

understanding of a diverse world. Participants discussed "educating the educator."

Participant 5 recalled being questioned by colleagues for teaching about the voting

process through cultural relevant teaching pedagogy. She taught the election process

comprehensively which apparently offended the social studies teachers who felt that they

had taught the topic. Participant 5 instinctively knew that learning to vote was

"something that the students would need in their everyday lives." In fact, she referred to

voting as a "civic duty" and a "cultural norm" one that, in her view, previous generations

of Blacks had fought for the right, a right that this "generation is underutilizing." After

administering a pretest, she found that students did not understand the voting process, did

not know the history behind voting in the U.S., and more importantly, they did not

understand nor conceive how voting impacted their lives and their communities. She

believes students need experiences and connections to become "vested" and to

understand "where they came from and what they can do to fit in" to the larger society.

She shared the following with them:

> Your school is a voting site. Who do you see voting? Old, white people. They
> make the decisions for you when you opt not to vote. They are alive for another
> 15 to 20 years. Statistically speaking, you're probably alive another 50 to 60
> years.

Participant 5 had taken the time to prepare an interactive, cross-curriculum lesson in

history, math, graphics, and language arts that students could relate to and connect to

their lives. Prior to this, students did not understand the broader societal issues of

choosing not to vote. After the lesson, students were empowered by the realization that

their opinions count. However, Participant's 5 colleagues were upset with her lessons

because "they could not understand" the extent to which she needed to instill the message

to Black students that voting is "your right" and "your civic duty." Four participants

believe that for many mainstream teachers voting and equal rights are, and have been, a

longstanding customary and standard practice so perhaps they do not understand the

need. Participant 5 challenged the norm and infused a different point of view about what

is important for students to learn and be able to do. The use of culturally relevant

pedagogy principles is important because it validates, empowers, and transforms

students, which enhances student learning outcomes. Participant 5 took a social justice

stance and delivered a particular lesson that was designed to encourage and emancipate

students toward becoming active citizens; citizens who view themselves as equal members of our society.

Participant 8 discussed how Black teachers "naturally" embrace multicultural education and demonstrate culturally relevant teaching. Participant 8 noted that as a history teacher she values and teaches diversity. She affirms students' identities by integrating Black history discussions and core values, such as self-respect, hard work, resilience, appreciation for education, community and others, and inner-strength to overcome life's obstacles, into her teaching practices so students can learn to value themselves. She said:

> I teach it. I instill it and try to use it as a method of having them to see where they came from and so they can see where they can go. That concept that you got here on the backs of Giants….If you can see that just 50 years ago you weren't allowed to sit in these classrooms together Black, White, and everyone else. That's not a long time. Brown v. Board of Education….I can only pray that it awakens something in those kids that are allowing their circumstances to hold them back from the power and potential that they have. To show them that knowledge is power. If you have knowledge to see people got knocked upside their heads, hosed down, beat down, turned around, inside out so that they can get an education and you are sitting here. That's how I value it…seriously value it in that regard. Your race was a major contributor to the building of this country, physically brick by brick…. Don't shy away from it because it may not sound great. I have to teach that and maybe you'll value it for yourself.

Participant 12 recognizes curricular and instructional flaws and strives to "incorporate[e] as many voices and perspectives as possible into [her] instruction." The majority of these comments demonstrate that participants were acutely aware of the need to set high expectations, inspire excellence, and reinforce a sense of self-worth in students. In the three instructional examples shared, the teachers' actions transcended the traditional notion of teaching standards to impart knowledge and enhance student learning. They used culturally relevant teaching to make the learning experiences more

relevant to the lives of their students, and personally engaged the students in the learning process. These actions demonstrate a commitment to the success of their students. Nine participants make a point to not only teach the content, but to also show students that they care about their well-being. These participants are responsive, culturally sensitive, and caring not only to students' academic needs, but also to their social and emotional needs. This supports Gay's (2000) research that affirms that students benefit when teachers are sensitive and caring toward student "emotional, physical, economic, and interpersonal condition" in addition to teaching the subject matter. Imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help students become productive citizens who function effectively in society is an espoused value of public education.

Student expectations. Nine of the participants discussed the importance of having high expectations for all students, but particularly Black students. They acknowledged the large percentage of Black students underperforming in Connecticut schools and attributed that, in part, to Black students not being "valued equally." Participant 7 noted that the fact that Black students do not feel valued, may contribute to what majority teachers view as "lack of motivation." Participant 14 asserted that our "educational system…undermines the confidence and success of ethnic minority students." Thus, the typical comment centered on establishing connections with students and setting high expectations to help students navigate the challenges that they face. Black teachers expressed the need to believe in Black students, particularly because majority teachers generally do not believe in the intellectual capacity of Black students to succeed. Participant 5 expressed the opinion that, "Too often, we [society] let our [Black] students go. You hear people say, 'That's how they [Black students] are. That's what they

[Black students] do. That's what they do because they don't know any better." The participants questioned the quality of education that Black students receive from White teachers whose mentality is that Black students are intellectually deficient or inferior. These negative comments and beliefs about Black students manifest in concrete ways, such as low expectations, lack of caring, and deficit thinking, and thus, contribute to low academic outcomes. The findings support Ferguson (2003) who reported that many White teachers low expectations of Black students adversely impacts Black students' academic success.

Also, the participants expressed that White teachers, who have a true desire, can learn to be successful teachers of Black and minority students.

Human Resource Practices

Twelve of the 21 participants cited improvements to human resource hiring and recruitment practices as a means to enhance diversity in the teaching force and retain Black teachers. Participants reported that they intuitively have experienced subtle acts of institutionalized racism. It is those unexplainable "little nuances that add up to racism" that participants believe are inconceivable to their White counterparts. Participant 4 shared a recent 2012 quote from by Leonard Pitts, Jr., a writer for The Miami Herald:

> But racial bias is seldom so conveniently obvious. More often, it lurks behind smiles and handshakes, unknown sometimes even to its host. More often it is deduced, not declared, seen in excuses that don't add up, justifications that make no sense, logic that is not.

Racism is so powerful because it wears many disguises. Participant 4 shared this quote during the first focus group discussion to demonstrate her belief that although her "White counterparts can be very giving…folks don't realize what is racist and what isn't." Further, the participants believe that the minority teacher shortage is confounded because

human resource personnel, school and district administrators, and teachers are unaware of how their actions, behaviors, perspectives, and ideologies impact their decisions and convey unconscious, hidden beliefs. Participant 3 believes that these behaviors contribute the achievement gap in our state.

Only One

Participants discussed the challenges of being the only one (Black teacher) in the school. Eight participants announced that being the only one is frustrating for them, and many of the other participants agreed with this feeling by simple head nods or statements such as "that's true." Participant 4 felt marginalized as she struggled to figure out "how do I fit in." Participant 2 was frustrated with constantly being "judged by administrators, parents, and students." This led to feelings of being marginalized. For example, Participant 10 shared that as the only minority it "is difficult to be heard." In addition, some participants feel pressure being the "voice of the Black community." Participant 3 is a Black male middle school teacher who finds it "disturbing" that he is, and has been throughout most of his 17 years of teaching, the "only Black male" middle school teacher in each of the three districts that he has taught in. He disappointingly said, "It is not a true representation of what's going on in the world."

Interestingly, the Black male teachers expressed that they often feel that if they are not careful, they become the "warden of the school." They felt this way because they were constantly redirecting and correcting inappropriate student behaviors that were overlooked by administrators and their colleagues. Irvine (1989) and King (1993b) reported that Black teachers are often seen as disciplinarians.

Role Models

Five participants shared that they believe Black teachers are role models for all students, particularly Black students. The sentiments mirror those reported in response to catalysts to becoming a teacher. Participants felt that Black teacher role models are needed for racial and cultural parity, as well as to demonstrate Black individuals in roles of leadership and authority to combat the negative stereotypes.

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Research Question 4 – Policy Recommendations

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The fourth research question asked teachers, "What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the recruitment and retention of Black teachers?" Participants provided a total of 51 responses. In coding the fourth research question 12 themes emerged: comprehensive teacher support policy (16 responses), recruitment policy (seven responses), incentives policy (six responses), teacher evaluation policy (six responses), funding policy (three responses), bullying policy (three responses), salary policy (three responses), benefits policy (two responses), teacher education policy (two responses), standards, adult education, and teacher protection policies were each referred to once. The four policy recommendations, teacher support, recruitment, incentives, and teacher evaluation policies account for slightly more than two-thirds (69%) of the responses. The findings are reported under the headings below.

Comprehensive Teacher Support Policy

Sixteen of the 21 participants cited the need for an effective comprehensive teacher support policy for new and veteran teachers. Comprehensive teacher support includes administrative support, mentoring, minority teacher support groups, teacher collaboration, teacher enrichment, and mental, emotional, and cultural supports.

Administrative support. Effective teacher support structures increase the likelihood that teachers, particularly new teachers, will remain in the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). As a beginning teacher, Participant 1 recalled being assigned to the most difficult and "behaviorally challenged" students each year; and she never complained. However, when Participant 1finally asked administrators for assistance with student behavior, the administrators viewed her as "the problem or incompetent." She explained that the lack of administrative support left her feeling ineffective, defeated, and alone; consequently, she left that school. The fact that teachers leave schools in search of schools that will provide more assistance and support links lack of support to teacher turnover. In this case, assigning the most difficult and challenging students to a new teacher, particularly at a time when teachers must learn the curriculum, increase their instructional practices, and master classroom management is counterproductive to retaining teachers. The administrators expected the new teacher to assume all the responsibilities of a seasoned teacher without planned development and careful support that would enhance her performance and skill set. Unfortunately, as it appears, this is all too often the standard mode of operation. The research on new teachers clearly state that the first three years are very challenging and most teachers are in survival mode (Kestner, 1994; Wong, 2004).

Mentoring. Mentoring is a critical support structure for teachers. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) noted mentoring with a teacher in the same subject area and grade level as a beneficial component to effective induction and mentoring programs for teachers. Participant 9 emphatically stated that she received no administrative or mentoring support, "Nobody helped me at all. I didn't know anything about teaching…coming from

a nontraditional background, I had to figure it out." The lack of mentoring is problematic.

Additionally, a successful relationship depends on the level of compatibility and

competence between mentee and mentor. Participant 6 recalled being assigned to an

urban, inner-city school and being paired with an older White teacher who was a year

away from retirement. Not only was it problematic that she did not teach the same

subject, in his view, she did not connect with or relate to the minority student population.

He wondered "How is she going to help me?" Mentoring mismatches marginalize

minority teachers and contribute to feelings of isolation and alienation (Dillard, 1994;

Lee, 2003; Quicho & Rios, 2000). These similar experiences in which teachers would

like support but are provided no tactical support serve as evidence that often times

support planning is less important than perhaps other leadership tasks.

  Minority teacher support groups. Ten participants suggested that minority

teacher peer mentoring and support groups would enable Black teachers to share

experiences, discuss the challenges of teaching, and provide support for each other. Five

of the participants shared that minority teachers require supports to navigate the racial

isolation when they are the only one; the only minority teacher in a school or district.

Participant 12 recalled a positive experience of being a part of a Black organization:

> I was once a member of a local organization of Black teachers that was an
> invaluable asset to my development as a Black teacher. We met monthly as a
> support group. We share information with one another. We spent time together
> socializing. I wish that all Black teachers would have other Black teachers as
> mentors in addition to other teachers that are not Black. I believe the most
> important thing that Black teachers need is mentors to share and consult with as
> they encounter the daily challenges of teaching.

Participant 5 and Participant 8 suggested that retired minority teachers could mentor and

coach teachers and serve as support group leaders for minority teachers. Retired minority

teachers would be a source of cultural and instructional expertise that would benefit

teachers and, by extension, students. These experiences support Pesek's (1993) claim that

social and cultural supports for minority teachers enhance recruitment and retention

efforts. Participants discussed that the minority teacher support groups could be used as a

platform for discussions about improving Black students' educational outcomes. A less

stated, but very important policy recommendation was improving the K-12 educational

schooling experience for Black students. Black students need to be successful in schools.

Students who are unprepared are unable to attend college. The lack of Black students in

universities may impact the number of students enrolled in teacher education programs.

For example, Participant 13 stated:

> I think that policy reforms in general need to be made to support the recruitment
> and retention of teachers, period. School systems countrywide need to step it up
> when it comes to rigor, discipline, expectations, etc. If we were able to improve
> on our school systems prior to college and focused on improving performance, the
> interest in college amongst more Black youth would increase. This could then
> lead to more potential minority college students interested in the field of
> education.

Researchers have found that Black students inadequate academic preparation during K-12

schooling impedes their college success (Gordon, 2000; King, 1993b).

School leaders play an essential and active role in providing quality support

structures that promote teaching excellence. Participant 2 asserted that perhaps

administrators believe that teachers are regularly supporting each other. Participant 2

articulated that administrators need to support teachers because colleagues do not provide

planned, strategic support that is aligned to an area of need. She stated:

> I agree that a lot of administrators think that the conversations that we are all
> talking about the support that we are asking for it. I think they assume that we're
> doing it for each other. They assume that we're having these conversations. They
> assume that we are working out the kinks amongst each other. When we have the

> team meetings, or when we have the conversation in the hallway, they assume
> that that's happening. I have not had one single, in the 22 years of teaching, I've
> never had a faculty meeting were an administrator said, "I found this great tip that
> I think you would be interested in or this great website – like a TED conference
> where somebody is really doing something innovative – doing something that's
> state-of-the-art. I would just love for you to take a look at it and let me know what
> you think. I've never had that".

Multiple forms of support are important. As the support increases, teacher job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention increases (Achinstein et al.; 2010, Ingersoll & May, 2011b).

Recruitment Policy

Seven of the 21 participants recommended district and state policies that would promote diversity and partnership with two- and four- year colleges, particularly HBCUs. Participant 14 cited that minority teachers need to be a part of the conversation regarding recruitment of minority teachers. Many of the participants stated that although state and district leaders say they need more minority candidates in the teaching position, they underestimate what is needed to successfully attract and retain minority teachers. The participants do not believe that leaders strategically plan, implement, or monitor successful recruitment strategies. Therefore, they believe state and district leaders should report their success in hiring minority teachers. Participant 9 pointed out that school improvement plans often set goals to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation of students and suggested including staff in those goals and objectives. One participants suggested rewarding districts who have met their goals for hiring minority teachers.

Incentives Policy

In general, participants believe that in order to attract prospective teachers to Connecticut, the state must provide incentives in all districts, not just hard to staff

districts or urban districts. Six of the 21 participants recommended incentive policies such as loan forgiveness, tuition reimbursement, signing bonuses, and tax credits. Participant 15 believes that state level incentives are needed to "support districts where there is in need for a more diverse teaching population." Participant 16 acknowledged that some of these incentives may be in place, but stated that the "systems can be greatly improved." Also, Participant 16 stated that incentives such as loan forgiveness will improve the "quality of life" for teachers. Participant 21 discussed that the lack of money interferes with Black individuals attending college and noted that financial incentives would support them while in college. Gifford (1986) and more recently Villegas & Davis (2007) reported that grants, scholarships, and loan forgiveness are important to increasing the number of minority teachers.

Teacher Evaluation Policy

Research strongly supports teacher quality as an indicator of student success (Cavalluzzo, 2004; Reichardt et al., 2006). Six of the 21 participants recommended investing in meaningful teacher evaluation that support teachers enhancing their knowledge and skills, and thus improves teacher performance and quality. Improving teacher performance overall would directly benefit students. These participants believe that meaningful teacher evaluations are not taking place regularly for all teachers. Participant1, Participant 3, and Participant 9 strongly suggested improving the teacher evaluation process. However, Participant 4, Participant 7, and Participant 9 stated that teacher evaluations must be administered by knowledgeable, well-trained administrators who understand instruction.

Participant 1 suggested that administrators must, "Spend more time on evaluation!" Similarly, Participant 9 is frustrated with the evaluation process; she wants support to become a better teacher, but she realized that administrators were not reading the materials she submitted, nor were they providing feedback. She stated, "In 15 years, I have had one evaluation that was actually valuable." The leadership actions of administrators communicate what they deem important. Participant 9 goes on to explicitly detail the limitations of the teacher evaluation the process.

> The policy would have to be that evaluation process needs to be thorough and whoever is doing the evaluation needs to understand, truly understand the nuances of teaching. Especially in comparison to the five-minute walkthroughs where they are just checking if you have your objectives up. They're all types of things that I literally want to sit down and have you tell me what you thought about my teaching….But evaluate your teachers! Teacher evaluation, it's like every doctor or every other job on this planet has a thorough evaluation based on your performance. If you're not performing well, what documentation do you have? When you think of any of the other high achieving schools, those teachers are evaluated….But no one's doing it. And yet we go back to that evaluation process, what letter did you place in my file? What meeting have you had with me to say, excuse me this is what you should be doing and you are not. We need a strong evaluation process. I rather you evaluate me and tell me that I'm horrible, so that I know what I'm doing wrong so that I can fix it. If I cannot fix it, then by all means am sorry this may not be for you.

Meaningful and rewarding teacher evaluations take a considerable amount of an administrator's time. Participant 3 claimed that in his 17 years of teaching, excluding new teacher formal observations, he has not had a "true evaluation" and acknowledged the limited time that administrators are given to perform their jobs effectively. He stated:

> I have had four administrators in my classroom in 16 years. This is my 17th year, and I have had four administrators. If I combine the time they were in my class, and I am not joking, maybe 10 minutes…because they are not really interested in my instruction…. You don't have time to spend 20 minutes sitting in my classroom…scripting my lesson…evaluating me and then having another half hour to sit and talking about it…because I am just one….I believe they want to come in and give us true evaluations, but they don't have time…You got 60 to 70 that you need to see in addition to running the building. And when you run the

building, you are responsibility for the light bulb in the boys' room to boiler not working. It all falls on you. So when does the principal have time to give us that true evaluation?

Participant 4 recommended that Connecticut conduct research on teacher evaluation. Connecticut could then use the findings to educate the evaluators. It is her belief that part of the problem is that many administrators are either not doing their jobs or are unaware that they are instructional leaders. In her experience the administrators have not regularly evaluated the staff. Also, she stated that Participant 3 "is under the impression that principals are supposed to be evaluating teachers. I have never thought that because they never do it." These remarks clearly show that there is a desire to be evaluated, but teacher evaluation must be viewed as an important indicator of both student and teacher success. Over time, ineffective evaluations may contribute to teacher dissatisfaction.

Summary of Focus Group Data Findings

The major findings for the four research questions are:

1. For the first research question, participants cited financial considerations, human resource practices, and perception as the three main obstacles to becoming a teacher in Connecticut. In addition, participants cited lack of teacher support systems, the importance of a diverse workforce, and school climate as the three main obstacles to remaining a teacher in Connecticut.

2. For the second research question, participants cited intrinsic motivation, role models, and students' personal experiences, as the three main catalysts to becoming a teacher in Connecticut. In addition, participants cited teacher-student relationship as the main catalyst to remaining a teacher in Connecticut.

3. For the third research question, all participants affirmed diversity as important citing the need for a diverse faculty, multicultural education, culturally relevant teaching, and teacher-student relationships. Also, participants cited the importance of recruiting and hiring Black teachers and demonstrating fair human resource practices as the main ways to show value for diversity in the teaching force. In addition, feelings of being the only Black teacher and role models were cited as reasons for diversifying the teaching workforce.

4. For the fourth research question, participants cited comprehensive teacher support, recruitment, incentives, and teacher evaluation as the four main policy recommendations.

Summary

Chapter 4 reports quantitative and qualitative data collected from three data sources to examine the obstacles and catalysts why Black teachers enter the profession and why they leave the profession. Quantitative data from a survey and qualitative data from two focus groups, one individual interview and 12 written responses were examined.

Chapter 5: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the study and to present concluding recommendations. This chapter begins with a summary of the study and its major findings. Next, the interpretation of the findings is presented by major themes. Then, the implications of these findings for Black teachers, superintendents and principals, and educational policymakers are discussed. In addition, this chapter will address the overall contributions of these findings to the body of research on the obstacles and catalysts to becoming a teacher in Connecticut. Limitations in the research are identified and suggestions for future research are included. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Summary of the Study

The limited numbers of minority teachers in America's classrooms is cause for great concern for all students, but particularly for Black students. Nationally, it is projected that by 2019 the minority student population will be approximately half of the 52.3 million, with the Black student population representing 3.14 million (NCES, 2010b). The lack of parity between the minority student population and the minority teacher population has created a dilemma for state and district leaders. In Connecticut, Black teachers account for 3.7% of the teaching workforce and Black students account for 13.9% of the students enrolled in Connecticut public schools. This dilemma is magnified because minority student enrollment is expected to increase steadily (CSDE, 2010b).

The study examined Black teachers' perspectives, experiences, and opinions to gain insight into the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut; how Black teachers value diversity in the teaching force; and what policy

recommendations Black teachers suggested for the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. As the number of minority students increases, the number of minority teachers continues to decline (NCES, 2010b). There has been increase attention given to the recruitment and retention of minority teachers. Minority teacher retention rates have been shown to increase when race and culture are taken into account (Torres, et al., 2004). An ongoing goal in education is to have a diverse teaching force that is more reflective of the student population in our nation's schools.

There is a need for Black teachers in U.S. schools. A major concern facing public education is the low academic performance of minority students, specifically Black students. Central to each of the rationales for diversifying the teacher workforce is that all students, particularly Black students, will benefit from having more Black teachers. Black teachers are essential to socially and culturally balancing the teaching profession and dominant perspectives. Research illuminates that Black teachers have high academic and personal expectations for Black students, and when they are present in the classroom, Black student achievement increases. Some studies show that negative White teachers' perceptions may manifest in Black students receiving less attention, encouragement, and positive feedback (Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 1990; King 1993a), which adversely affect students' academic self-concept. Thus, a critical concern of the Black teacher shortage is that Black students will have fewer opportunities to interact with Black teachers who have been shown to positively impact their academic achievement (Dee, 2004; Evans, 1992; Wilder, 1999, 2000).

Unfortunately, the shortage of Black teachers is on the increase. Recent research suggests that Black teachers are leaving the profession in larger numbers than their White

counterparts (Ingersoll & May, 2011a, 2011b). Ingersoll and May's (2011b) research found rising turnover rates for minority and Black teachers. Specifically, in the 2003-2004 school year researchers reported higher turnover rates for Black teachers (20.7%) compared to White teachers (16.4%). This problem is exasperated because turnover rates have been found to be the highest in low-income, high poverty, high minority school district (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll & May, 2011a; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Torres et al., 2004). As stated previously, two-thirds of minority teachers in Connecticut are concentrated in the seven poorest districts with the largest number of poor and minority students (Lohman, 2000a). Furthermore, researchers reported a positive correlation between increased minority student enrollment and teacher attrition. They reported that 16.8% of teachers left schools enrolling more than 35% minority students (Luekens, et al., 2004).

Black teachers face many obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher. A review of the literature on the limited number of Black teachers reveal that many Black individuals do not consider teaching as a viable career choice because of the low salary, low status, and poor perception of the teaching profession (Guarino et al., 2006; Johnson & Kardos, 2008). Moreover, many Black students are not academically prepared for the academic rigor of college (Gordon, 2000) and many are failing the teacher competency testing (Hunter-Boykin, 1992). The few Black individuals who become teachers are often faced with numerous unsupportive administrative tasks (King, 1993a) and working conditions (Little & Bartlett, 2010; Stotko et al., 2007).

There is a crucial need for effective recruitment and retention strategies to help stem the critical shortage of minority teachers. Viable recruitment strategies are essential

to galvanize renewed interest in teaching, to identify prospective teachers early, to help crystalize factors associated with underrepresented minority groups, to determine support mechanisms that assist beginning and veteran teachers, especially teachers from targeted populations, and to advocate for the inclusion of cultural perspectives.

Recruitment and retention programs that incorporate race, ethnicity, and culturally relevant pedagogy into the minority teacher practices have been linked to increased teacher retention rates (Torres et al., 2004). The recruitment of culturally diverse candidates adds a cultural enrichment to the homogeneity of the nation's schools that benefits all students. Early identification of prospective teachers, the infusion of cultural perspectives in the alternative paths to teaching, and a social justice framework integrated into teacher preparation programs are promising tools for recruiting minority teaching candidates. Innovative recruitment and retention strategies are integral to increasing and maintaining adequate levels of Black teachers. Induction and mentoring programs support, guide, and orient new teachers to the profession through mentoring, common planning time, collaboration, and administrative support. In addition to those characteristics, culturally sensitive approaches to induction and mentoring help teachers develop the skills, dispositions, and habits of mind to promote high achievement for all students.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this study. The quantitative data were drawn from a 31 item online survey. A sample population of full-time or part-time certified Black teachers in Connecticut for the 2011-2012 school year was used in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences regarding minority teacher recruitment and retention. The population size was 1,155 Black teachers; 357

surveys were completed for a response rate of 30.9%. The qualitative data were drawn

from an open-ended survey question, two focus group interviews, an individual

interview, and a written response questionnaire. A total of 252 qualitative respondents

and 21 focus group participants participated in the qualitative phase of the study. The

themes are discussed below.

Interpretation of Major Themes Related to the Research Questions

To address the four research questions of this study, data were collected,

analyzed, and compared from the online survey, focus group data, and written

questionnaires. Several major themes were identified during data analysis. The discussion

of the findings that follows is organized according to the four major themes: salary,

teacher support, recruitment, and the importance of diversity.

Salary

There were several obstacles influencing Blacks to either become and/or remain a

teacher. However, salary appears to be the most prominent and consistent obstacle to

becoming a teacher reported by the Black teachers who participated in this study. Both

quantitative and qualitative data retrieved from teachers support this claim. Interestingly,

the quantitative findings from the online survey reported that 80% of the teachers view

salary as an obstacle to becoming a teacher. In addition, the quantitative findings reveal

that 69% of respondents cited benefits are important. Consistently, in one way or another,

both the online survey respondents and the focus group participants did not view

Connecticut teacher salaries favorably. In particular, the statements shared by participants

help to clarify our understanding of the teacher salary dilemma. Although Connecticut

has one of the highest starting teacher salaries, participants articulated that this deceptive

fact is diminished when aligned with the high cost of living in Connecticut. Giving credence to their claim, the cost of living in Connecticut is reported to be higher than the national average (Connecticut Cost of Living, undated). In a 2012 poll, Connecticut ranked 47th in terms of states with low cost of living (MERIC, 2012). In addition, Connecticut is ranked 3rd in both total tax burden and richest state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). In the 2010-2011 school year, Connecticut had the fourth highest average annual teacher salary ($65,571) in the nation, which is higher than the U.S. average annual teacher salary by $9,502. (NCES, 2011). Yet, teachers feel that the salary is too low to live comfortably in Connecticut.

Another concern is that the salary is not commensurate with the level of education that is required to be a teacher. Career advancement in the field of education requires more degrees and certification. To become educators in Connecticut individuals must have a bachelor's degree and obtain an initial teaching certificate (3 year duration). To remain teachers in Connecticut individuals must obtain a provisional certificate (8 year duration). To advance to the professional certification (5 year duration), educators must serve at least three years under the provisional certificate and complete a master's level degree (30 hours beyond the bachelor's degree) (CSDE Certification Department, personal communication, August, 13, 2012). Moreover, teacher certification requires ongoing professional learning activities to accumulate the required Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to maintain certification. Additionally, although Connecticut has one of the highest annual salaries in the nation, it also has one of the lowest salary percentage increases over a 10 year period (TeacherPortal, undated). Thus, high teacher salary coupled with the high cost of living may, in fact, not be viewed as an attractive package,

particularly for individuals seeking to move to the state. It would appear that while

teacher salary was viewed as a prominent obstacle, some individuals become teachers

regardless.

Intrinsic motivation. The most prominent reason Black teachers gave for

becoming a teacher was that they were intrinsically motivated to become teachers.

Survey respondents expressed a desire to work with youth (95%) and a desire to help

their race (82%). The interpretation can be made that although teacher salaries are low

and problematic for entry into the profession, the stronger force for Black teachers was a

deep desire to help children and their race. Black teachers in this study acknowledged the

need to be positive role models to all students, but particularly Black students. They

believe that Black students have very limited exposure to images of successful Black

individuals besides Blacks exploited in the media. In addition, Black teachers were most

keenly motivated to "touch lives" and "impact generations" as a way of giving back to

their communities. With the negative perception of teaching and the more prestigious

career options available, in the future many Black college graduates may be more

inclined to select more lucrative career options.

Teacher Support

Meaningful professional support is vital to retaining teachers. There is increasing

concern about the high rates of teacher attrition in the U.S. Approximately a third of

teachers leave the profession within their first three years and approximately half leave

within their first five years (Howey, 2006; Torres et al., 2004). Moreover, recent research

indicates that Black teachers are much more likely to leave the teaching profession than

White teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011a, 2011b). The attrition of teachers is detrimental

to the teaching profession and students. Poor teacher support has been connected to teachers' dissatisfaction and thus, contributes to their decisions to leave the profession (Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Stotko et al., 2007). It is important to acknowledge that the respondents ranked each of the support factors associated with minority teacher recruitment and retention 84% or above, underscoring the importance of support systems in the retention of teachers.

Minority teacher support groups. Strong consensus exists between the quantitative data and the qualitative data about the need for meaningful teacher support. Eighty-nine percent of the 357 survey respondents and all of the participants reported support, in one form or another, as essential and critical. Teacher support is a theme that emerged in response to each of the four research questions. However, it most notably appeared as a significant catalyst to remaining a teacher. Teacher support encompasses a broad range of support systems such as administrative support, mentoring, collegial support, and minority teacher support groups. As stated in the 2010 Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CSDE, 2010a), "In the 21st century, the increasingly complex needs of students require sophisticated teaching." To accomplish this, teachers need ongoing support to continuously grow and develop the knowledge, skills, and disposition needed to effectively prepare students for the 21st century workforce. Teacher quality is directly linked to student learning and student achievement (Cavalluzzo, 2004; Reichardt et al., 2006) which makes meaningful support of teachers so critical. Given this evidence, school leaders cannot afford to dismiss the importance of continually supporting all teachers, beginning and veteran teachers, minority and majority teachers alike.

The teachers in this study acknowledge that all teachers, regardless of race or culture, require structured, ongoing support. Black teachers believe, however, that they would benefit from an additional support mechanism in the form of minority teacher support groups to help them navigate the unique social, cultural, and racial issues that many minority teachers experience. Traditional retention strategies may not include minority teacher support groups. Black teachers believe that mainstream educational leaders cannot or do not relate to this need. Thus, inattention to this need may contribute to the higher attrition rates of Black teachers.

Black teacher support groups may prove beneficial in retaining teachers, but may also be beneficial in recruiting Black teachers. Open discussions of race and culture in education are extremely limited and the discussions that exist are generally highly guarded. Data findings revealed that the vast majority of the respondents believe that discussions of race and culture are important to have with students, teachers, and principals. Unfortunately, race discussions are rare. Establishing a forum to discuss racial and cultural concerns, teaching strategies and styles, day to day situations, and having a platform to converse about being a minority teacher in a sea of majority teachers and philosophies may ignite a renewed passion and interest in the profession. As mentioned in Chapter 4, most of the Black teachers cited the desire to work with youth and their race as catalysts to becoming a teacher. Thus, minority teacher support groups that produce more satisfied Black teachers could aid in building partnerships or informative liaisons with school districts to promote the development and recruitment of prospective Black candidates.

Teacher evaluation. Another important area in which Black teacher requested support is teacher evaluation. A little over 82% of teacher respondents rated the teacher evaluation process as an important professional practice. Black teacher participants expressed an earnest desire for support in their professional growth. More meaningful teacher evaluation would serve to provide timely feedback and foster improved teaching, thus positively affecting student learning. Clearly, Connecticut recognizes the need and has established an innovative teacher evaluation system to be piloted by 10 school districts in the 2012-2013 school year. Participants firmly articulated their grievances with the severe lack of attention to teacher evaluation by school administrators. Their interest in professional growth clearly demonstrates that they would like assistance and are committed to professional improvement. Under the new Connecticut teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, 40% of the principal evaluation is based on Connecticut Leadership Standards six performance expectations, teacher quality, and teacher evaluation. This focus on improving teacher quality may lead administrators to prioritize teacher evaluations as a significant and integral part of their daily administrative tasks. Thus, if administrators do not make evaluating teachers a prioritized task aimed at increasing teacher performance, then how can they expect teachers to remain committed to the process. Rather, as demonstrated by participants' responses, teachers will view evaluations as another purposeless administrative task rather than a tool for professional growth.

Recruitment Efforts

Proactive recruitment effort emerged as a major theme for this study. Black teachers suggested recruiting students in middle schools and high schools, recruiting from

HBCUs, and improving human resource hiring practices as a way to improve and increase minority teacher recruitment in the state. Minority teacher recruitment, like all other aspects of education, requires careful planning to be successful.

Early recruitment efforts. Almost 60% of the respondents had not considered teaching until college or after, underscoring the need to enhance awareness and interest to reach prospective teachers earlier in their elementary and secondary schooling. Focus group participants also support the theory of building student awareness for the profession earlier so that students can consider teaching as a career option as they start to consider prospective future careers. One aspect of successful recruitment of Black teachers should include efforts to build early awareness and interest in the profession in middle school and high school. This may help Black youth understand the benefits of teaching as well as provide the necessary steps they should take to become a teacher.

The limited number of Black teachers in Connecticut is a serious issue and should not be taken lightly. Grow your own minority teacher programs that engage elementary, middle, and high school students are a good way to build early interest and awareness as well as identify interested students early. Respondents acknowledge that the initial school level or district level program implementation may be costly and difficult, so they suggested starting on a small scale and believe that a small scale venture can also be beneficial. The assumption is that doing something to increase Black student interest in teaching is better than doing nothing at all. One way to ensure program inclusion is to explicitly allocate funding for minority recruitment efforts as a budgeted line item.

College recruitment. A significant obstacle reported to becoming a teacher was the lack of proactive recruitment strategies to recruit minority teachers. Building

partnerships with two- and four- year colleges and universities is an important recruitment strategy to consider.

HBCUs. One method of recruiting more Black teachers is to extend recruitment efforts beyond local Connecticut colleges and universities. Both respondents and participants agree that there is a lack of commitment to hiring minority candidates. They believe that much more could be done to attract minority individuals into the profession. To do this, districts must dismiss their passive approach and become more aggressive. Districts must begin to build relationships with and actively recruit from HBCUs because HBCUs enroll nearly half of all Black students in teacher education programs (Hunter-Boykin, 1992). This may provide a large pool of qualified candidates.

Community colleges. Another method of recruiting more Black teachers is to recruit from community colleges. Because slightly more than 11% of the respondents went to a community college before transferring to a four year college, community colleges are viable options for cultivating future Black teachers. Also, focusing marketing considerations toward Black students enrolled at community colleges may generate an additional pool of interested Black candidates. Torres et al. (2004) and Villegas and David (2007) report that 30% to 50% of minority students begin their higher education training in community colleges, a collaborative approach of partnering sources of prospective candidates with community colleges and universities is a viable recruitment tool.

Black organizations. In addition, in light of the unacceptably low number of Black teachers in Connecticut, more innovative methods may be helpful in increasing the number of Black teachers in Connecticut public schools. For example, participants

suggested that creating relationships with Black churches and organization could also increase the likelihood of successful recruitment of Black individuals.

Recruitment incentives. Black teacher participants favored financial incentives such as scholarships, grants, and loan forgiveness as recruitment tools. Conversely, a large percentage of Black teacher respondents (72%) considered financial assistance (scholarships, grants, loans) less important factors associated with becoming a teacher. However, consideration should be given to these incentives as they may address the cost of living dilemma. This opposing view suggests that recruitment incentives should appeal to Black students intrinsic motivation to become teachers. However, financial incentives remain an important gateway into the profession for those candidates (in this case almost 30% of respondents and 43% of the focus group participants) who need financial support. Financial incentives linking high school programs to college programs may ensure recruitment of individuals who have demonstrated interest, promise, and commitment. Gordon's (2000) research found that Black teachers reported financial incentives as important to attracting more Black teachers into the profession.

Human resource practices. Another significant finding is that Black teachers believe that school and district leaders are not sincerely committed to hiring Black and minority teachers. Race plays a significant role in our traditional educational practices and policies. The longstanding unconscious institutionalized practices are so engrained that majority leaders may be unaware of their discriminatory or racist actions. For example, the fact that Participant 2 was nearly overlooked by White school leaders who felt that the district did not need another minority teacher (they already had one) because the district was predominantly White demonstrates an innate belief system that majority

students do not need nor benefit from minority teachers. This belief influences leaders' hiring decisions. Jackson (1999) and King (1991) refer to majority leaders' unconscious implementation and perpetuation of institutional practices and policies that legitimize assumptions and stereotypes about minority groups as dysconscious racism. Based on their prior experiences, Black teachers believe that dysconscious racism is perpetuated in education by centuries of discriminatory institutionalized practices that lead to Black teachers not being hired for positions that they are qualified for among the host of many other negative outcomes. Thus, improving hiring practices is closely related to believing and accepting diversity as an asset. Black teachers consistently referenced the need for school and district leaders to see the importance of having Black teachers in education. Socialization of majority individuals legitimizes, in their minds, social systems, orders, practices, and norms that disregard an appreciation for and acceptance of minority individuals, culturally relevant and socially just teaching practices, and dialogue about race and equity (Achinstein et al., 2010). This suggests that the dominant culture lacks multicultural capital, and thus embraces deficit views of and assumptions about minority groups (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011). The teachers in the study pointed out that Black teacher recruitment may be compromised if those in charge of hiring Black and minority teachers do not view racial and cultural diversity of both students and staff to be important. The teachers believe that by mere virtue of their Eurocentric ideals and dominant perception of society, most majority school and district leaders often do not truly embrace diversity and often claim a colorblind perspective.

Minority students see and are fully aware of the White teachers and administrators who govern their schools. So, there must be considerable regard for race; it cannot be

ignored. Not only do Black students need to see individuals that look like them in leadership roles, all students and teachers need to see and experience a more racially and culturally diverse workforce, one that better depicts our pluralistic society. What school and district leaders and recruiters deem as important "quietly, unaware, unconsciously" influences the decisions that they make. District leaders and recruiters must begin to rethink their presupposition of race, culture, and the intersection with education. If we are to attract more minority children and instill in them the desire to teach, particularly in inner-city, urban schools, students need to see and experience the positives of the teaching profession.

The frustrating, albeit common, response to why there are so few Black teachers is some form of the generic response that they cannot find any qualified Black teachers. There is a biennial monitoring component to the Connecticut law under which school districts are required to have a written plan for minority teacher recruitment (Lohman, 2000b). Participants asked what exactly is being reported, who is collecting the data, and what is being done with the data? Black teachers wondered if perhaps rather than actually hiring Black teachers, principals merely have to document that they have interviewed qualified Black candidates. Investigating this would be an interesting study as well as it could assist Connecticut in determining how many Black teacher candidates submit applications to Connecticut school districts, are granted interviews, and are subsequently hired in a given year. In addition, the investigation could include the number of qualified Black teachers Connecticut school districts recruit from HBCUs annually, if any (which will demonstrate effort); and the number of Black teachers that are a product of in-state grow your own minority teacher programs. Race and culture matter in schools.

Unfortunately, the importance of race and culture are often misunderstood by White teachers, administrators, central office personnel, and policymakers. This blatant unconsciousness underscores the imperative to diversify the profession to ensure multiple perspectives not only in the classrooms, curriculum, and teaching practices, but also in human resource practices.

      Critical race theory. Participants believe that district leaders do not strive as aggressively as they could to increase the number of minority individuals in their districts. Nearly all the Black teachers who participated in this study have, in one way or another, expressed race and racism as a central issue in education. Therefore, it may be useful to explore more deeply CRT as a platform for diversifying education and its implication on minority students, teachers, schools, and districts in Connecticut.

      CRT was used as a lens to explore Black teachers' perspectives, opinions, and experiences regarding issues concerning the declining number of Black teachers in Connecticut. A number of educational scholars have applied CRT analyses to educational issues (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2009; Taylor, 2009). The principles of CRT are marked by racism as ordinary and normal, race as a social construct, the tolerance of racial advances when it promotes the self-interest of the majority group, and the notion of storytelling and narratives to challenge and expose the false presuppositions of social order and Eurocentric ideologies. CRT was used to help understand racism in education and to understand the inequities that pervade our schools (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT promotes diversity in teaching and learning while seeking to eliminate racial and cultural subordination. Diversifying the teacher workforce supports the tenets of CRT; it

challenges White perspectives and dominant ideology that affirm racial and cultural

hierarchy in educational settings. Black teachers sharing their stories and opinions

embody the CRT principle of counterstorytelling. Giving voice to the experiences of

Black teachers in Connecticut may help to expose oppressive and invisible patterns of

actions, behaviors, and habits of mind. This lens may clarify our understanding of the

complexities of racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998) and help to eradicate the existing

discriminatory social structures that marginalize minority groups (Delgado & Stefancic,

2009).

Importance of Diversity in Schools

Diversity is a major theme that emerged from this research study. Diversity

includes sensitivity to multiple perspectives, diversity of staff, acceptance and inclusion

of multicultural curriculum, and culturally relevant teaching. Diversity is a significant

factor in education, one that is often overlooked or minimized by the dominant culture.

Milem (2003) posits that diversity in educational institutions benefits all students in

cognitive, affective, and interpersonal ways; benefits the school organization by

increasing its effectiveness through diversity of perspectives and thoughts, benefits

society through increasing cultural awareness and acceptance, and increases racial

understanding that promote a better educated and involved citizenry.

Black teachers are needed as role models for all students. The rationale for why

we need more Black teachers is rooted in the argument that Black teachers serve as role

models for Black students. The notion of Black teachers serving primarily as role models

is wrought with limitations. The focus group participants agreed that Black teachers role

models are needed, but contend that Black perspectives are needed in educational

discourse, multicultural curriculum, culturally relevant pedagogical practices, and the inclusion of race and equity in teacher education programs.

Diversity of staff. Diversity among school staff benefits all students, parents, and staff as it provides a more accurate representation of our pluralistic society. It increases cultural awareness, acceptance, and understanding among majority students and staff and minority students and staff (Milem, 2003). Basically, diversity is an asset. Majority teachers, school and district leaders, central office personnel, and policymakers must understand the significance of and need for diversity in public education.

Diversity in school is imperative because the normal educational practices and policies currently utilized in America's public schools are saturated with Eurocentric perspectives, philosophies, and ideologies. Unfair and inequitable school practices and policies continue to marginalize some students, particularly those in poor, low income schools, in very concrete ways. Institutionalized racism is manifested in racially segregated schools, unjust teacher and resource distributions, Eurocentric curriculum content, low expectations, inequitable funding, ability tracking, testing, etc. The majority of Black students and teachers in Connecticut are in the poor, low income schools. These longstanding practices and policies are so customary that serious consideration is often not given to the intentional or unintentional ways these practices and policies impact minority students and teachers. Moreover, alternative perspectives, philosophies, and ideologies are often ignored when multiple voices are not represented. Unanimously, teacher participants recognized the importance of diversity in education. Similarly, there is strong consensus among the respondents that diversity is a significant factor in education. Discussions of race and culture in education were recognized as highly

valuable conversations to engage in with students, teachers, and principals, but they noted that these conversations generally are not happening. Race is a sensitive topic in the U.S. In particular, discussions of race in education are uncomfortable topics for most, and thus are avoided. However, it is important to recognize that the racial and ethnic population of the U.S. is steadily growing and changing, becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse each year. Therefore, it is vital that our nation's teaching force be more inclusive. Thus, we must begin to engage in courageous conversations about race and culture.

National demographic data reveal the upward trend in minority student population and a downward trend in minority teachers (NCES, 2010b). Empirical studies show that Black students perform better on a variety of academic outcomes when taught by Black teachers (Dee, 2004; Evans, 1992; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Almost 60% of the respondents reported having three or fewer teachers, with 21% having had no Black teachers in their K-12 schooling. When one considers that most students have approximately 30 teachers in their K-12 schooling, having only one to three Black teachers, as was shown with the survey data, represents only about 3% to 10% of their K-12 teachers. This suggests that many Black teachers had very limited exposure to Black teachers in their K-12 school experience. More troubling, Connecticut reports that upwards of 40% of students enrolled in Connecticut public school will not have had a minority teacher during their K-12 schooling experience (CREC, undated) and that percentage increases when you consider the percentage of students who will not have a Black teacher. Given these percentages, it is imperative to increase the number of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers.

Multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching. In *Teaching to Change the World* James Banks (2001) defines multicultural education as "an idea…an educational reform movement, and a process…that seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social class groups" (p. 104). Grant and Sleeter (2002) stress that the dominant group's knowledge and cultural habits continue to be the official knowledge of our democratic society by virtue of inherent educational biases. Similarly, Gay (1994) emphasizes that the predominance of Eurocentric mainstream cultural conceptions found in curricular and instructional materials shape our societal views and ideological patterns. Banks et al. (2001) found that the curricular content that students are taught influences student achievement. They contend that a diverse curriculum must make it clear that different topics have different meaning to different ethnic groups. Multicultural education also increases critical thinking skills and empathy for multiple perspectives.

In Connecticut, there have been countless attempts at providing equitable educational opportunities for minority students. However, today this attempt continues to evade educational leaders. As Connecticut becomes more culturally diverse, deliberate inclusion of multicultural content into the traditional curriculum becomes increasingly important and beneficial, not only to minority student populations but for all students. Multiple perspectives in education should not be viewed as a negative add on. Rather, diversity in education should be viewed as a positive contribution of all citizens that make up our pluralistic society. Advocates of multicultural education urge that instruction should be culturally relevant and multiple culturally sensitive techniques must be used to

assess diverse students (Banks, et al., 2001, Evans-Hampton & Skinner, 2006; Gay, 1994; Grant & Sleeter, 2002).

Culturally relevant pedagogy has been cited as means of enriching the curriculum, perspectives, and practices of teachers (Morris, 2001). Ladson-Billings (1994) defines culturally relevant pedagogy as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (pp.17-18). Ladson-Billings (1995b) identifies three principles of culturally relevant pedagogy: academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. Gay (2000) explains that cultural relevant pedagogy is validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. These characteristics are demonstrated through teachers' caring attitudes and high expectations, culturally informed classroom discussions, multicultural curriculum content, and culturally sensitive instructional practices. The three examples of cultural relevant teaching presented in Chapter 4 illustrate how attributes of culturally relevant and socially just teaching operate in practice. The focus group participants believed in their students' academic capacity to be successful, developed their students' cultural identity through connecting learning to personal experiences, and assisted their students in developing a critical sociopolitical consciousness. These teachers were culturally sensitive and responsive to the many needs of their students, and had the habit of mind to interrupt the mainstream paradigm and naturally demonstrate cultural relevant teaching, thus empowering their students. The Black teachers recognize the impact that high expectations and caring can have on student outcomes. Through their lived experiences they intimately understood the cultural frames of reference of their students. More

minority teachers are needed because of their instinctive pedagogical practices. Teachers pass on their mental models of the world through their teaching styles and pedagogical practices. Considering the steadily increasing enrollment trends for minority students, it is important to recognize and establish more diverse pedagogical practices to meet the needs of all children. Multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching challenges the cultural hegemony that is prominent in traditional curricular content and instructional practices. King (1993a) and Howard (2001) declared that Black teachers are more adept at using culturally relevant pedagogical strategies to meet the needs of individual learners. Ladson-Billings (1995b) and Gay (2000) agree that Black teachers often demonstrate an intercultural understanding; they both assert, however, that non-Black teachers can have a positive impact on minority student outcomes if they are trained to be culturally responsive.

Teacher education programs. Teacher education programs demonstrate the primary way that teachers are socialized into the profession (Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Teacher education programs play an integral role in the effective recruitment and retention process. With the growing racial and ethnic population, it is imperative that schools of education prepare teachers to teach students from diverse populations. Some critics purport that schools of education are not adequately preparing teacher candidates to understand, value, and teach racial, ethnic, and economically disadvantaged populations (Bailey, 2009; Howey, 2006; Little & Bartlett, 2010; Su, 1997; Zeichner, 2003).

The profession of education espouses a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Yet, the demographic and academic data continue to show that the teaching force in

Connecticut public schools remain predominantly White and female and the Black-White achievement gap remains persistent and sizable. Below are a few disconcerting facts that Connecticut educational leaders and policymakers should consider when making future educational decisions:

- Minority teachers account for a little less than 8% of the teacher workforce; of that Black teachers account for 3.7% (CSDE, 2010b).

- Minority student enrollment is increasing while the minority teacher workforce is decreasing (Connecticut RESC, 2010). In 2010, the minority student population was approximately 36%, with Black students accounting for 13.9% (CSDE, 2010b).

- Slightly more than 27% of Connecticut school districts have no certified minority staff (Lohman, 2000a).

- Approximately 40% of Connecticut public school students will not have a minority teacher during their K-12 school (CREC, undated).

- Two-thirds of minority teachers are concentrated in the seven poorest districts with the largest number of poor and minority students (Lohman, 2000a).

- Connecticut poorest districts generally have less-qualified staff, lower retention rates, and greater difficulty filling teaching positions (Reichardt et al., 2006).

- Connecticut's Black-White achievement gap is larger than the national gap in all areas except eighth-grade reading (NCES, 2009).

- Recent national studies reveal higher turnover rates for minority teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011b) and teachers in schools with high populations of minority students (Luekens, et al., 2004).

- Connecticut spends approximately $40 million annually to recruit, hire, and support new teachers (Reichardt et al., 2006).

There is a distinct lack of cultural competence among our White educators and leaders. Cultural competency is defined as:

> …the ability to successfully teach students who come from cultures other than our own. It entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, developing certain bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching. (NEA Policy Brief. undated)

Educational leaders have an ethical responsibility to demonstrate cultural competence. According to the Connecticut School Leadership Standards (2012), "Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students and advocate for their students, faculty and staff needs by influencing social, cultural, economic, legal, and political contexts affecting education" (p. 2). Educational leaders must support, advocate for, and participate in educational and training programs that help advance cultural competence within the educational profession. Cultural competence in education implies that the mainstream, dominant culture develop a critical consciousness of the differences among different minority groups. Thus, cultural competence requires deliberate demonstrations of efforts to attract, recruit, and retain diverse corps of qualified minority teachers. Building the capacity for cultural competence can be achieved through validating diversity, being culturally aware, understanding the dynamics of cultural

interactions, and institutionalizing cultural knowledge and adapting to diversity (NEA

Policy Brief, undated).

Table 32 includes the findings and sources for data triangulation.

Table 32

Matrix of Findings and Sources for Data Triangulation

Major themes	Source of data		
	I	Q	S
Theme 1: Salary			
1. Strive to increase teacher salary	X	X	X
2. Salary is not commensurate with level of education	X	X	X
3. Intrinsic Motivation	X	X	X
Theme 2: Teacher Support			
1. Administrative support for all teachers	X	X	X
2. Develop minority teacher support groups	X	X	X
3. Revamp teacher evaluation process	X	X	X
Theme 3: Recruitment			
1. Build early awareness and interest in the profession	X	X	X
2. Proactive recruitment from HBCUs and community colleges.	X	X	X
3. Grant more recruitment incentives	X	X	X
4. Improve human resource recruitment and hiring practices	X	X	X
Theme 4: Importance of Diversity in Schools			
1. Appreciation for diversity	X	X	X
2. Value and appreciate multicultural education	X	X	X
3. Value and appreciate culturally relevant pedagogy	X	X	

Note. I = Interview, Q = Questionnaire, S = Survey

Recommendations

Based on this study's findings, the researcher offers the following

recommendations for consideration regarding practice and policy for future research

regarding recruitment and retention of Black teachers.

Salary Recommendations

Salary is a salient obstacle to becoming a teacher. There is great variation in teacher salary among the 169 districts in Connecticut. Unfortunately, teacher salary is generally non-negotiable because districts operate by a predetermined salary scale. Although the salary scale is predetermined, districts may consider the option of hiring teachers on a higher step of the pay scale (perhaps Step 2 or Step 3) as an incentive to encourage more Black individuals to consider teaching as a career. This may be particularly useful for leaders seeking to increase the number of qualified minority teachers in their districts. Connecticut teacher salary appears attractive in comparison to teacher salaries in other states. However, it appears that teachers have come to the conclusion that a higher salary does not necessarily equate to a better quality of life if the cost of living and level of education negatively outweigh the salary.

The minimum teacher salary is determined by the Connecticut State Department of Education and school districts generally adjust their teacher salary to meet specific criteria (e.g., supply and demand, budgetary needs, etc.). However, a recommendation is for Connecticut to take a radical stance and outline a two year plan to significantly increase teacher salaries to better align with the cost of living and professions that require comparable levels of education.

Support Recommendations

There is much variation in the types of support teachers cited as important to retaining teachers. However, support groups specific to Black teachers emerged as an important need. Not only must school systems support Black teachers to remain in the classroom, they must intentionally help Black teachers develop their knowledge and

skills through structured, strategic supports. Further exacerbating the support needs of Black teachers is the challenge that Black teachers often face being the only one in schools and districts. This leads to feeling that they are either the spokesperson for the Black community or they are overlooked and not valued. Therefore, support considerations should be given to the distinctive needs of Black teachers. Perhaps, as part of the state's minority recruitment goals, Black teachers could be surveyed to determine needs, monitor progress, and adjust support efforts as necessary. State leaders could then use the data to inform decisions about Black teachers and prospective Black teacher candidates.

Also, Black teachers may desire to talk freely and openly without the threat of negative repercussions. I recommend that Black teachers utilize technology to establish a district or statewide online Black teacher support forum or discussion board (similar to the online teacher support groups that exist for new teachers and special education teachers) where they can anonymously and confidentially share experiences, get and give advice, vent, and/or post questions, issues, and concerns that other Black teachers could assist with.

In an effort to jumpstart the inevitable statewide teacher evaluation rollout slated for the 2013-2014 school year, proactive school districts (that are not part of the 10 pilot districts) could develop and implement a comprehensive district wide teacher evaluation protocol in conjunction with the components identified in the new evaluation framework recommended by the state. The evaluation protocol should be transparent and linked to improved teacher quality. Therefore, it is essential to have accurate and objective evaluations. Teacher evaluation should include both formative and summative evaluation

measures. Frequent formative evaluations identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas in need of improvement. Evaluators should work with teachers to improve weak areas before conducting follow-up evaluation. Summative evaluations will assist in determining overall yearly performance progress.

In addition, the protocol must allow for extensive training for all teacher evaluators, allow for additional evaluators such as peer and coach evaluators, and allot the necessary time to effectively conduct a comprehensive teacher evaluation complete with a plan of action for teacher improvement, follow-up meetings, and timelines for observations. School and district leaders who provide meaningful teacher support are more likely to have teachers who are engaged, connected, and satisfied with their careers.

Recruitment Recommendations

With respect to minority teacher recruitment fairs, Connecticut relies on the annual minority teacher recruitment fair hosted by CREC. However, only approximately 25 of Connecticut's 169 school districts currently participate. Moreover, the audiences for these recruitment fairs are generally credentialed teachers or those soon to be. More minority recruitment fairs are needed as a means of advertising the profession to prospective teacher candidates both at the district and college levels. Districts could host a minority teacher recruitment campaign as part of its traditional informational College Night presentation. This would be an excellent opportunity for high school students and their parents to interact with Connecticut minority recruitment counselors who would be able to provide information on the profession.

In addition, utilizing social media and technology to more aggressively expose and market the profession may be a cost effective measure to consider. Connecticut could

launch a public relations campaign that promotes the positives aspects of teaching, as well as target Black and other minority students. Social media has the potential to raise the profile of the profession. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, to name a few, can be used to appeal to a targeted population of followers (in this case the Black community) who can then be engaged and encouraged to consider teaching. Moreover, including links to educational blogs, posting informational and personal experiences videos, and/or *Did You Know* section to increase awareness is a practical, cost effective way to use social media to your advantage while potentially gaining an incredibly large number Black and minority followers. These followers can then be streamed directly into a district or state website.

Over a decade ago, Connecticut school districts were required by law to have a written minority teacher requirement plan. These recruitment plans are to be monitored through biennial reports (Lohman, 2000b). Every attempt should be made to build relationships with HBCUs to actively and aggressively recruit minority candidates. However, districts must not only have a rigorous recruitment plan that includes components to support Black teachers to become successful teachers, the plan should be vigorously monitored and evaluated, and adjustments made accordingly.

Also, community colleges were cited as a prime platform to recruit Black and minority students because a large number of minority students begin their higher education in community college. However, transition to a four-year institution can be difficult. Therefore, it is important for two- and four- year colleges to design a plan of action to make the transition smoother.

Diversity Recommendations

There is a need to significantly increase diversity and cultural competence of Connecticut's teaching force. Every attempt should be made to make recruitment efforts transparent. Generally, the common response to why there are so few Black teachers is that there are not any Black teachers to hire. The Black teachers who participated in this study disagreed and cited experiences where they have participated in minority recruitment fairs that had many Black and minority teachers that simply were not hired.

The presence or absence of minority teachers implicitly conveys information to students about the possibilities for their futures. Diversity goals must be embedded into the districts and schools' mission and vision statements. One direct way for school districts to support diversity efforts, recruitment efforts, and staffing efforts is to target funds explicitly for these purposes. Lack of funding has the potential to cut programs and initiatives and slows progress.

Connecticut must strive for more than surface diversity. The training of teachers, administrators, district leaders, and central office personnel in the area of racial and cultural diversity should be a priority across the state and districts. Individuals have to more than say or agree that diversity is needed, they must take actionable steps that demonstrate meaningful efforts to diversify, include, and consider all students and teacher equitably. Recognizing that it is highly unlikely that the number of Black teachers will significantly increase to effectively represent the number of Black students in the near future, it is imperative that teacher education programs equip prospective teachers with culturally relevant pedagogical strategies and equity training in order that they may understand and better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

Contribution to Research

The following section includes the contribution of this research study's findings to the wider body of research on the shortage of minority teachers. There is a large body of research on majority and minority teacher shortages in the U.S., but fewer studies specifically focus on Black teacher shortages. This study seeks to broaden our understanding by considering the perspectives, experiences, and opinions of Black teachers.

Implications for Practice

The following section describes the implications of this study for Black teachers, administrators, and educational policymakers.

Implications for Black Teachers

The dwindling number of Black teachers is disconcerting because the research shows that when they are present in the classroom there is significant academic improvement for Black students. Black teachers believe that Black students can achieve at high academic levels. Black teachers play a key role in helping students to reinforce the importance and value of education, especially as a vehicle for upward mobility. Black teachers must support and encourage Black students toward becoming teachers. In this study, Black teachers were hesitant about being the voice of the Black community because they recognized the multiple cultures and ethnicities within the Black community, and thus question how one voice could accurately represent the multitude. I understand their position. However, albeit difficult, Black teachers should embrace, rather than shun, being the voice of the Black community in school settings while encouraging others to join in the journey. Without their voice, Blacks may continue to be

marginalized in educational settings. Black teachers must continue to advocate for inclusive multicultural curricular programs and galvanize appropriate professional development opportunities that support cultural and racial diversity in all facets of education. They must continue to advance and demonstrate culturally relevant teaching practices for their colleagues as well as be positive role models who have high expectations for and sensitivity toward their students. It is important to underscore that Black students and teachers have made progress. Consider where Black students and teachers would be today without the perspectives and voices of influential scholars such as James Banks, Derrick Bell, Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Joyce King, and Sabrina King, to name a few. These scholars have provided sound arguments for increase racial and ethnic diversity in the teaching workforce.

Implications for Administrators

As Connecticut public school administrators strive to provide a successful educational experiences for all students, reduce racial isolation, close the achievement gap, and meet the state and federal accountability standards, diversifying the teacher workforce is critical to their success in these areas. Administrators must reflect on their role in this endeavor.

A primary responsibility of human resource recruiters, superintendents, and principals is to seek, hire, and retain highly qualified teachers. They must intentionally and sincerely seek talented and qualified individuals who are representative of the student population.

Based on the findings of this study, superintendents and principals should actively and aggressively strengthen their efforts to recruit qualified minority teachers to

teach in Connecticut. Superintendents and principals must develop targeted recruitment plans that outline specific minority teacher recruitment strategies and procedures. Connecticut has made some gains in establishing grow your own programs to target students early. However, there needs to be a way to accurately and efficiently monitor the number of individuals who actually enter and remain in the profession to determine program effectiveness. It would be beneficial to study exemplary minority teacher recruitment models such Ohio's model Grow Your Own program and South Carolina's Call Me MISTER program.

A district's organizational culture must be accepting and appreciative of diversity. Thus, successfully diversifying the teaching workforce necessitates that human resource personnel and district leaders believe in and commit to advocating, supporting, and promoting broad diversity efforts. District leaders should regularly examine their recruitment and hiring practices in an effort eliminate institutional practices and conditions that limit the entry of minority candidates. One way to accomplish this is to include Equal Opportunity and Inclusion officials in the hiring and selection process. It would be advantageous for district administrators and leaders to proactively identify hiring needs, minimum selection criteria, and to outline a minority teacher search strategy complete with affirmative action goals. To address this, districts should be required to track, measure, and annually report the steps taken to identify, recruit, select, and retain racially and ethnically diverse teachers. An action plan designated for minority teacher recruitment complete with goals, strategies, timelines, and responsible persons should be an integral part of the districts' improvement plan. Districts should determine indicators

of success and review their level of success annually, then modify and adjust as necessary.

It would be beneficial for Connecticut to track and periodically audit districts' diversity practices. This would allow Connecticut to determine if districts have made a good faith effort to hire and retain minority teachers in urban, rural, and suburban school districts. This procedure would assist in a more accurate tracking of applicants and documentation to ensure equal opportunity and fairness in hiring and selection practices. This would allow state and district leaders to reflect on more strategic approaches to address the growing minority teacher shortage epidemic. This reflective component is important because it has the potential to make visible and meaningful the intricacy of what is not usually visible on the surface. In addition, leaders should track the racial composition of new hires as well as monitor teachers that leave the profession. Conducting exit interviews is important in determining causes of departure. This knowledge can lead to more informed changes and modifications that will inform future retention efforts.

Administrators need appropriate diversity training. Institutional discriminatory practices and policies are most often indirect, overt, invisible, subtle, and normal that the White majority, who benefits, are unable to perceive the traditional educational structures as bias, discriminatory, and racist. Incorporating cultural competency training into the Connecticut Administrators' Induction Program and future administrator professional development training could be beneficial in strengthening the cultural understanding and awareness and thus reduce the cultural divide between majority educators and administrators and minority education and administrators.

Educating and sensitizing administrators and policymakers is critical to achieving more than surface diversity. An individual's view of racism is defined by their worldview. Whites typically view racial issues from a privileged, hegemonic viewpoint which often prevents them from accurately labeling acts, practices, and policies as bias, discriminatory, or racist.

Educational policies and practices are routinely based on the mainstream ideological perspectives, and thus exclude and unfairly marginalize minority students and teachers. Nonetheless, educational policies and practices construction continue to be racially and culturally inequitable and prejudicial. Policies and practices need to be reviewed and revised in order to effectively prepare administrators to deal with racial and ethnic diversity issues and concerns and eradicate detrimental institutionalized practices and policies.

Implications for Policymakers

Teacher quality and student achievement are high priorities in educational policy. All teachers need focused supports to master their craft and impact student learning. To that end, policies that target, train, monitor, and implement minority teacher supports in addition to traditional support structures are needed.

Although Connecticut has developed some promising minority teacher recruitment and retention initiatives, these strategies have not sufficiently increased the pool of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers. As Connecticut considers policies to recruit and retain more minority teachers in to the profession, the policymakers and leaders must critically consider the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers. Likewise, it is vital that state and district leaders

share a common goal of increasing the numbers of qualified minority teachers in

Connecticut. The research findings suggest that policymakers should actively and

aggressively strengthen their directives to recruit qualified minority teachers to teach in

Connecticut. Although parity of teacher and student population may be improbable in the

near future, policymakers should continue to aggressively attract, recruit, and retain as

many qualified minority teachers as possible.

Education policymakers should seek out education research to inform education

policy decisions. Research evidence on recruitment and retention factors will allow

policymakers to make evidence-based policy decisions. Research emphasizing the

importance of Black teachers (Gay, 2000; Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 1990; King, 1993a) state

that Black teachers benefit both majority and minority students (Milem, 2003).

Another policy recommendation based on the results from this study is to

establish and monitor incentive initiatives to attract and retain minority candidates. The

recommendation is to expand the incentive initiatives (e.g., housing assistance, tax

credits, loan forgiveness, salary, etc.) to include incentives for all districts as opposed to

primarily hard to staff schools and urban school districts. It is equally important to have

minority teacher representation in rural and suburban school districts. This strategy may

entice more minorities to seek employment in rural and suburban school districts.

Effective minority recruitment and retention changes are contingent upon accurate

data. The state should facilitate the development and implementation of a statewide

coordinated teacher data reporting system that tracks, collects, and evaluates data

regarding minority teachers. This data must be analyzed regularly to determine if and

where there is evidence of race discrimination in hiring policies and practices.

Subsequently, the discrimination needs to be eradicated.

Limitations of the Findings

In hindsight, the first and second research questions should have been separated into two questions. Factors to becoming a teacher were markedly different from factors for remaining a teacher. The CSDE database of Black teachers was initially difficult to obtain delaying the timeline of the research study. This difficulty led to delays in the delivery of the online survey and the subsequent focus group interviews. Also, the database included 15 certified staff that were not Black teachers. Another limitation is that a number of respondents left various questions unanswered.

Future Research

Connecticut is one of many states nationwide who are experiencing extreme shortages of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers. As the trend is expected to continue, more extensive research studies are need to examine the psychology of Black teachers as it pertains to factors associated with becoming and remaining a teacher. This study examined why Black teachers enter the teaching profession, why they stay, and why they leave against the backdrop of CRT and its influence on diversity in education. In addition, future research efforts may be directed to the following:

1. Extend the study to include a comparative study of other minority groups. Simultaneous and systematic collection of quantitative and qualitative information from other groups of minority teachers and White teachers in Connecticut would enable researchers to determine if they cite similar obstacles, catalysts, diversity

issues, and policy recommendations that impact the recruitment and retention of teachers.

2. Extend the study to include Black teachers in states with similar demographics to further explore the issues associated with recruitment and retention of Black teachers.

3. There is a need to undertake research associated with each of the prominent themes to determine the precise link between each theme and improved recruitment and retention of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers.

4. Despite the growing focus on the low number of minority teachers in the U.S. and Connecticut, relatively little research exists on the district practices to recruit, screen, select, and retain minority teachers. To fill this gap, research on the hiring of minority teachers is needed. Therefore, future research may be directed at institutional practices and human resource practices and procedures to determine the precise mode, manner, practices, and policies that positively impact the recruitment and retention of minority teachers and those practices and policies that impede or obstruct the process. In particular, the reporting system must consider and include indicators of equal opportunity and fairness in order to accurately monitor and analyze practices and policies for equity and fairness. This would provide empirical evidence of race discrimination in institutional and hiring policies and practices.

5. Future research should focus on reviewing and analyzing Connecticut programs, practices, and policies related to minority teacher recruitment and retention such as human resource hiring practices, HBCUs recruitment, Praxis Preparation, and

Alternative Routes to Certification to ascertain what aspects of the programs are effective and what aspects are not.

These five future research recommendations are important as they may serve to clarify the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of each group of teachers. Thus, the convergence of data from different groups will provide policymakers with a more accurate understanding of why individuals become teachers, the issues that impede or help them along the journey, and how race and culture factor into the equation. This would provide more comprehensive data upon which to make evidence-based policy decisions.

Conclusion

Each year the student enrollment in Connecticut is becoming more and more diverse. The Condition of Education in Connecticut 2010 reported that Connecticut has 13.9% Black student representation and only 3.7% Black teacher representation. Goals are easier to set than to achieve. Over the years, Connecticut has developed several recruitment strategies to encourage and attract more minority individuals in the teaching profession. Likewise, Connecticut has also developed retention strategies to encourage current teachers to remain teachers. Despite these efforts, Connecticut continues to have low numbers of minority teachers, particularly Black teachers.

All teachers, principals, central office personnel, superintendents, and policymakers must share in the responsibility of increasing the number of minority teachers in Connecticut public schools. Connecticut recognizes the racial disparity between the teacher population and the student population, and has made efforts to address the minority teacher shortage in the state. For example, Connecticut Regional

Educational Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruiting (MTR) Alliance

program was established in 1984 to "assist Connecticut school districts to recruit, hire,

develop, support and retain a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse teaching and

administrative workforce" (Connecticut RESC, 2010, p.6). However, considerable work

remains to be done. As Connecticut continues to explore strategic ways to recruit and

retain qualified teachers into the field, it is important to seek the perspectives, viewpoints,

and opinions of minority teachers they seek to recruit and retain.

Thus, it is clear that Connecticut is experiencing a critical shortage of Black

teachers. The recruitment and retention of Black teachers for Connecticut's increasingly

diverse student population, particularly Black students, depends on educational leaders

and policymakers valuing the cultural benefits that Black and minority teachers bring to

teaching and learning.

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of Black teachers in

Connecticut to ascertain the perceived obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining

a teacher in Connecticut. Black teachers perceived teacher salary and human resource

hiring practices to be salient obstacles to becoming a teacher and lack of teacher support

as the main obstacle to remaining a teacher. Black teachers perceived giving back to their

race and working with children to be the primary catalysts for becoming a teacher. Black

teachers serve as positive role models who demonstrate culturally sensitive and culturally

responsive teaching that benefit all students. In addition, they perceive the teacher-

student relationship that they developed to be catalyst for remaining a teacher.

Why might the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of Black teachers be

important; and why should Connecticut worry about the limited number of Black

teachers? Black teachers noted that Connecticut's teacher workforce is not diverse, particularly in personnel, curriculum, instructional practices, and cited a number of experiences that demonstrate feelings of frustration and isolation. In general, Black teachers' policy recommendations support the prominent obstacles and catalysts that emerged from the study. Therefore, the most prominent policy recommendations were teacher support policies and recruitment policies.

The major findings are offered as a mechanism for understanding how Eurocentric practices and policies impact Black and minority teachers, and by extension Black and minority students. Thus, any serious attempt to address the low number of Black teachers in Connecticut public schools must be approached from multiple perspectives. Increasing the number of Black and minority teachers is only part of the solution and thus cannot be viewed as the sole remedy. Increasing the number of Black and minority teachers must be approached in conjunction with strategies for shifting the dominant Eurocentric philosophies and ideologies that ingrain a sense of superiority by virtue of their social privilege. Deep appreciation for and serious attention to racial and cultural diversity in teacher education programs may mitigate some of the persistent inequalities faced by minority teachers and students. As this study indicates, Black teachers have a great deal to offer and their voices must be included in the educational discourse and embedded in policy decisions.

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Appendix A

Survey

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

1. Informed Consent

Dear Colleagues,

My name is Maxine Ursery. I am currently completing my doctorate at Central Connecticut State University. I am a veteran Black teacher in Connecticut. I am conducting a study on Black Teachers' Perceptions of the Obstacles and Catalysts to Becoming and Remaining Teachers in Connecticut. Black teachers comprise approximately 3.7% of the teacher workforce in Connecticut while Black students comprise 13.9%. Moreover, about one-third of our Connecticut school districts have no minority teachers in their schools.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of Black teachers in Connecticut to ascertain the catalysts and the obstacles to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. Your insight is greatly needed. The results will be used to inform Connecticut educational policymakers and school district leaders about effective minority teacher recruitment and retention strategies. You are being invited to participate in this study to better understand why Blacks enter or do not enter the profession and why they choose leave or stay. All information collected from you during the study will be confidential and anonymous. The data collected from participants in this study will be used exclusively for analyses in this research study.

In addition, I am inviting Black teachers to participate in a focus group interview. If you would like to participate in the focus group interview, at the end of the survey please select "yes" and provide your name and contact information.

As a way to show my appreciation, all survey respondents will be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Amazon.com gift card. Thank you in advance for your time and contribution. If you have any questions, please contact me by email: maxursery@comcast.net.

Also, you can contact my doctoral supervisor: Dr. Ellen Retelle (retelleelm@ccsu.edu or 860-490-8563). If you have questions of a more general nature, to verify the ethical approval of this study, questions about your rights as a research participant or if you have a research related complaint, please contact Ms. Kim DeMichele, Assistant Director, Office of Sponsored Programs and CCSU Human Studies Council Administrator at (860) 832-2366, email: kim.demichele@ccsu.edu or Dr. Bradley Waite, Chair, CCSU Human Studies Council at (860) 832-3115, email, Waite@ccsu.edu.

Sincerely yours,

Maxine Ursery, Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership
Central Connecticut State University

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

2. Demographic Information

1. Heritage

- ◯ African American/Black
- ◯ African American/Caribbean
- ◯ Other

2. Gender

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

3. Age

- ◯ 22 to 30
- ◯ 31 to 40
- ◯ 41 to 50
- ◯ 51 or older

4. Years you have been a public school teacher (part-time or full-time)

- ◯ 1 to 5 years
- ◯ 6 to 10 years
- ◯ 11 to 15 years
- ◯ 16 to 20 years
- ◯ 21 or more years

5. Level of educational attainment (Highest degree obtained)

- ◯ Bachelor's degree
- ◯ Master's degree
- ◯ 6th Year (any area)
- ◯ Master level program
- ◯ Doctoral degree

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

6. Obtained teaching certificate: (Schooling/Education)

○ Attended community college and traditional four year college

○ Attended traditional four year college

○ Attended alternate route to certification

Other (please specify)

[   ]

7. Identify which grade level(s) you are currently teaching (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

☐ Kindergarten

☐ 1st Grade

☐ 2nd Grade

☐ 3rd Grade

☐ 4th Grade

☐ 5th Grade

☐ 6th Grade

☐ 7th Grade

☐ 8th Grade

☐ 9th-12th Grade

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

8. Identify the subject(s) you are teaching this school year (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- ☐ Math
- ☐ English/Language Arts
- ☐ Science (including biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)
- ☐ Social studies
- ☐ Foreign language
- ☐ Band/orchestra/music/chorus
- ☐ Business courses
- ☐ Computers/technology
- ☐ Physical education
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Special education
- ☐ Vocational education

Other (please specify):

[   ]

9. How many Black teachers did you have during your K-12 schooling?

- ○ 0
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6 or more

10. When did you first consider becoming a teacher?

- ○ Elementary school
- ○ Secondary school
- ○ College
- ○ Post-college

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

3. Catalysts and Obstacles for Choosing Teaching as a Profession

11. What was important to you in becoming a teacher?

	1=Unimportant	2=Important	3=Very Important	4=Not Sure
Salary	○	○	○	○
Benefits (health & retirement)	○	○	○	○
Job security	○	○	○	○
Work Schedule (Sept to Jun)	○	○	○	○
Influence of family member(s)	○	○	○	○
Influence of a teacher(s)	○	○	○	○
Influence of a role model(s)	○	○	○	○
Desire to work with children/youth	○	○	○	○
Opportunity for career advancement	○	○	○	○
Student motivation to learn	○	○	○	○
School learning environment	○	○	○	○
Student population in school	○	○	○	○
Principal of school	○	○	○	○
Need a job	○	○	○	○
Love of subject area	○	○	○	○
Desire to contribute to my race	○	○	○	○
Public respect for teachers	○	○	○	○
Demand for Black teachers	○	○	○	○
Location of job	○	○	○	○
Location of spouse/significant other	○	○	○	○
Signing bonus	○	○	○	○
Housing accommodations	○	○	○	○
Lower mortgage rate	○	○	○	○
Financial assistance (i.e. loan, grants, scholarships)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify):

[_____]

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

4. Teacher Recruitment and Retention

12. What is important in recruitment and retaining Black teachers?

	1=Unimportant	2=Important	3=Very Important	4=Not Sure
Salary	◯	◯	◯	◯
Benefits (health & retirement)	◯	◯	◯	◯
Job security	◯	◯	◯	◯
Opportunity for career advancement	◯	◯	◯	◯
Ongoing professional development	◯	◯	◯	◯
School administrative support	◯	◯	◯	◯
Adequate resources provided	◯	◯	◯	◯
Parental support	◯	◯	◯	◯
Community support	◯	◯	◯	◯
Collegial support	◯	◯	◯	◯
Collaboration	◯	◯	◯	◯
Working relations with non-Black teachers	◯	◯	◯	◯
Participation in school wide decision making	◯	◯	◯	◯
Planning time	◯	◯	◯	◯
Administrative paperwork	◯	◯	◯	◯
Committee work	◯	◯	◯	◯
Class size	◯	◯	◯	◯
Teacher evaluation process	◯	◯	◯	◯
School climate	◯	◯	◯	◯
Safety of school environment	◯	◯	◯	◯
School learning environment	◯	◯	◯	◯
Student behavior	◯	◯	◯	◯
Student motivation to learn	◯	◯	◯	◯
Public respect for teachers	◯	◯	◯	◯

Other (please specify):

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

13. Did you participate in a district new teacher induction program as you began your teaching career?

◯ Yes

◯ No

14. How satisfied are/were you with the district's induction program?

◯ 1=Dissatisfied   ◯ 2=Satisfied   ◯ 3=Very Satisfied   ◯ 4=Not Sure

15. Did you participate in a district new teacher mentoring program as you began your teaching career?

◯ Yes

◯ No

16. How satisfied are/were you with the district's mentoring program?

◯ 1=Dissatisfied   ◯ 2=Satisfied   ◯ 3=Very Satisfied   ◯ 4=Not Sure

17. How important do Black teachers perceive the following obstacles are to becoming a teacher in Connecticut?

	1=Unimportant	2=Important	3=Very Important	4=Not Sure
Teacher salaries	◯	◯	◯	◯
Status of teachers	◯	◯	◯	◯
Working conditions	◯	◯	◯	◯
Lack of financial aid	◯	◯	◯	◯
Lack of scholarships	◯	◯	◯	◯
Financial considerations	◯	◯	◯	◯
More lucrative career options	◯	◯	◯	◯
More prestigious career options	◯	◯	◯	◯
Negative perception of the teaching profession	◯	◯	◯	◯
Academically unprepared for college	◯	◯	◯	◯
Competency testing	◯	◯	◯	◯

Other (please specify):

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

18. In your opinion, how can the recruitment and retention of Black teachers be improved?

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

5. Diversity

19. How important is it for teacher education programs to include a multicultural curriculum?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

20. How important is it for teacher education programs to include discussions about race in their courses?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

21. How important is it for teacher education programs to include equity/social justice topics in their courses?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

22. How important is it for other race children to have Black teachers?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

23. How important is it for Black children to have Black teachers?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

24. How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with your students?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

25. How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with teachers that you work with?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

26. How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with your principal?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

27. How important is it to you to discuss racism with your students?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

28. How important is it to you to discuss racism with the teachers you work with?

◯ 1=Unimportant   ◯ 2=Important   ◯ 3=Very Important   ◯ 4=Not Sure

Black Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey

29. How important is it to you to discuss racism with your principal?

○ 1=Unimportant   ○ 2=Important   ○ 3=Very Important   ○ 4=Not Sure

30. How important is it to you to have multicultural content embedded in the curriculum?

○ 1=Unimportant   ○ 2=Important   ○ 3=Very Important   ○ 4=Not Sure

31. How important is it to you for teachers to use culturally relevant teaching practices in their classrooms?

○ 1=Unimportant   ○ 2=Important   ○ 3=Very Important   ○ 4=Not Sure

32. Would you like to participate in a focus group interview?

○ Yes

○ No

Contact Information: Provide Name and Email Address

Appendix B

Focus Group Protocol

1. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key obstacles to becoming and

    remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

2. What do Black teachers perceive to be the key catalysts to becoming and

    remaining a teacher in Connecticut?

3. How do Black teachers in Connecticut value diversity in the teaching force?

4. What policy recommendations do Black teachers believe would support the

    recruitment and retention of Black teachers?

Appendix C

Research Assistant Confidentiality Statement

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Educational Leadership

1615 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06050

CCSU Human Studies Council,

This study, Black Teachers' Perceptions of the Obstacles and Catalysts to Becoming and Remaining Teachers in Connecticut, is being undertaken by Maxine Ursery. The purpose of the study is to examine the perspectives of Black teachers in Connecticut to ascertain the obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a teacher in Connecticut. Data from this study will be used to inform Connecticut educational policymakers and school district leaders about effective minority teacher recruitment and retention strategies. I will be assisting Maxine Ursery with the focus group interviews. I understand that the focus group interviews are completely confidential and that the participants need to be anonymous. I agree to keep all research information strictly confidential. I will not share or discuss the research information with anyone other than the researcher.

Sincerely,

Ellen Retelle

Dr. Ellen Retelle
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Leadership
School of Education and Professional Studies
Central Connecticut State University

Appendix D

HSC Approval Letter

HUMAN STUDIES COUNCIL

CCSU

Central Connecticut State University

CCSU Federalwide Assurance #: FWA00005627
CCSU IRB Registration #: IRB00003671

Maxine D. Ursery
25 Valley View Drive
Bloomfield, CT 06002

October 20, 2011

HSC Number: F11031
Title of Proposal: *The Limited Presence of African American Teachers in Connecticut Schools*

Dear Ms. Ursery,

The CCSU Human Studies Council - Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your proposal. With this notification, you are authorized to begin your study. This approval is valid through October 20, 2012.

If your project is intended to continue past the *valid-through* date, it will be subject to continuing review. In this case, please submit an *Approval Renewal Request* at least four weeks prior to the approval expiration date to avoid any gap in your project's good standing.

Please note: Per CCSU-HSC policy and Federal regulation, investigators are required to report promptly any adverse events or proposed methodology changes associated with your study. Relevant HSC forms can be found on the HSC website (www.ccsu.edu/humanstudies). Also, note that protocol changes must be approved by the HSC *prior* to their implementation.

On behalf of the Human Studies Council (HSC), I extend best wishes for a successful project. If you have any questions, please contact me or Kim DeMichele, HSC Administrator at hsc@ccsu.edu or 860-832-2366.

Sincerely,

Bradley M. Waite, Ph.D.
Chair, CCSU Human Studies Council - IRB
email: waite@ccsu.edu
phone: (860) 832-3115

CC: Dr. Paulette Lemma
        Dr. Retelle
        HSC files

Appendix E

Number of Respondents for Each Survey Item

	Items	$\underline{n}$
1.	Heritage	354
2.	Gender	350
3.	Age	352
4.	Years you have been a public school teacher	353
5.	Level of educational attainment	350
6.	Obtained teaching certificate	332
7.	Identify which grade level currently teaching (check all that apply)	344
8.	Identify the subject(s) you are teaching (check all that apply)	302
9.	How many Black teachers did you have during your K-12 schooling?	353
10.	When did you first consider becoming a teacher?	352
11.	What was important to you in becoming a teacher?	351
12.	What is important in recruiting and retaining Black teachers?	336
13.	Did you participate in a district new teacher induction program as you began your teaching career?	345
14.	How satisfied are/were you with the district's induction program?	322
15.	Did you participate in a district new teacher mentor program as you began your teaching career?	344
16.	How satisfied are/were you with the district's induction program?	316
17.	How important do Black teachers perceive the following obstacles are to becoming a teacher in Connecticut?	343

	Items	_n_
18.	In your opinion, how can the recruitment and retention of Black teachers be improved?	252
19.	How important is it for teacher education programs to include a multicultural curriculum?	344
20.	How important is it for teacher education programs to include discussions about race in their course?	336
21.	How important is it for teacher education programs to include equity/social justice topics in their courses?	337
22.	How important is it for other race children to have Black teachers?	341
23.	How important is it for Black students to have Black teachers?	339
24.	How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with your students?	336
25.	How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with your teachers?	340
26.	How important is it to you to discuss all ethnic groups and their culture with your principals?	341
27.	How important is it to you to discuss racism with your students?	341
28.	How important is it to you to discuss racism with the teachers you work with?	335
29.	How important is it to you to discuss racism with your principal?	339
30.	How important is it to you to have multicultural content embedded in the curriculum?	341
31.	How important is it to you for teachers to use culturally relevant teaching practices in their classrooms?	340

Appendix F

Open-ended Survey Question Code Map: Two Iterations of Analysis
(to be read from the bottom up)

(SECOND ITERATION: THEMES)

Teacher Support	Proactive Recruitment	Perception
Racism	Salary	Incentives
Academic Preparation	Importance of Black Teachers	Competency Testing
		Other

(FIRST ITERATION: CATEGORIES OF INITIAL CODES/CONTENT ANALYSIS)

Administrative Support	Commitment	Image of teaching
Mentoring	College Recruitment	Appreciation/value/respect
Minority Teacher Support	Minority Teacher Program	
Professional Development		Financial
	Low Salary	Scholarship
Unequal Opportunity	Commensurate Salaries	Housing
Cultural Sensitivity		General Incentives
Only one	Blacks in leadership roles	
	Blacks in roles of authority	Competency Testing
Quality of teacher preparation	Blacks as role models	
Quality of K-12 education	Benefits All students	
DATA	DATA	DATA

Note: The second iteration themes match the themes discussed in Chapter 4.

Appendix G

Focus Group Data Code Map: Two Iterations of Analysis (to be read from the bottom up)

(SECOND ITERATION: THEMES)

Research Question 1 Obstacles	Research Question 2 Catalysts	Research Question 3 Diversity	Research Question 4 Policy
Financial Consideration	Intrinsic Motivation	Importance of Black Teachers	Teacher Support
Human Resource Practices	Role Models	Human Resource Practices	Recruitment
Perception of Teaching	Student Academic Experiences	Only One	Incentives
Competency Testing	Competency Testing	Role Models	Teacher Evaluation
Role Models	Love of Subject	Professional Relationships	Funding
Teacher Education Programs	Benefits		Bullying
Access to Higher Education	Shortage Area		Salary
Incentives	Salary		Benefits
College Readiness	Incentives		Teacher Education Program
Lack of Support	Working Schedule		Standards
Diversity	Teacher-Student Relationships		Adult Education
School Climate	Human Resource Practices		Teacher Protection
Human Resource Practices	CRP		
Teacher-Student Relationships	High Standards		
Intrinsic Motivation			
Role Models			

(FIRST ITERATION: CATEGORIES OF INITIAL CODES/CONTENT ANALYSIS)

Salary	Desire to work with race	Marginalized	Administrative Support
Cost of Living	Desire to work with children	Only One	Mentoring Support
Student Loans	Desire to work with community	Voice of the Black Community	Recruitment
Financial Security	Caring		Teacher Evaluation
Lack of Awareness, Interest	Encourage students	Curriculum	Housing
Grow Your Own Programs	Student Teacher Relationships	Instruction	Loan Forgiveness
Minority Recruitment Organizations	Encourage teachers	Narrowed Curriculum	Financial considerations
HBCUs	Role model	Teachable Moments	Race Relations
Lack of Resources	Parity	Dominant Perspectives	Student Discipline
Lack of Knowledge	Important to see diversity	CRP	Racial Profiling
Fair Hiring Practices	Family influences	Core values	School Funding
standardized testing	Influences of a teacher	Role models	Teacher Education
Improvement to Teacher Ed programs	Communicate positives of profession	Blacks in roles of authority	Alternate Programs
Lack of good role models	Shortage Areas	Blacks in leadership roles	Standards
Other Career Options		Diversity benefits all students	Adult/Parent Education
			Teacher Protection
			Accountability

No respect	Housing	Courageous	
Do not value education	Love of Education	Conversations	
Poor perception of	Work Schedule	Diverse populations	
teaching	Salary	Decisions makers must	
Housing	Retention Efforts	value diversity	
Student are not prepared	Cultural Understanding	Build Understanding	
for college	Teacher Student	and acceptance	
Lack of Administrative	Connection	Value Differences	
Support	CRP	Build Understanding	
Lack of Mentoring	High Standards	Professional	
Black Support Groups		Development	
Subjective Teacher		Commitment to	
Evaluations		Diversity	
Diversity		Respect for Cultural	
Poor Student Behavior		Diversity	
Working Conditions		Parity	
Collegiality		Accountability	
Teachers Student			
Relationships		High expectations	
Commitment to students		Motivate	
Role models		Educational system	
Human resource		…undermines	
practices		Professional	
		relationship	
DATA	DATA	DATA	DATA

Note: The second iteration themes match the themes discussed in Chapter 4.