HONORING THROUGH COUNTERING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING HOW BLACK MALE TEACHERS' IN THE SOUTH RACIALIZED AND GENDERED EXPERIENCES INFLUENCE THEIR TEACHING PRACTICES

by

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ABSTRACT

MARQUIS RASHAWN MASON. Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences in the South (Under the direction of DR. CHANCE W. LEWIS)

The recruitment and retention of Black male teachers continue to be a national effort. While there is a plethora of research on attempts to solve this critical issue of teacher diversity, Black males continue to represent the lowest percentage of teachers within the profession. This study narrows the research on Black male teachers by adding the contextualized lens of Black male teachers in the south. Additionally, this qualitative study explored Black male teachers in the south's racialized and gendered experiences to identify how those experiences impacted their teaching practices. The following research questions guided this study: 1) What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the south; 2) What are the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the south?; and 3) How do the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the south impact their teaching practices? was collected data through two rounds of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data, and findings were condensed to themes that explained the Black male teacher's racialized and gendered experience impact on their teaching practices. Recommendations are provided for school and district leaders, professional development staff, teacher preparation programs, and other educational stakeholders.

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And lastly, to the 2%-the Black male educators in this study and the ones that I've work alongside as a teacher and coach. This research is for us. We are not a monolith and our presence in schools is not merely to enforce the same policies and procedures on our Black boys that harmed the Black boy that lives within us. Our stories are rich, nuanced, and needed to transform education into thriving spaces for Black boys. Thank you for your transparency and fueling this Black boy with purpose.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Jolette and grandmother, Carolyn who are consistently the forces that drives me to persevere.

Mom, you have and continue to be a guiding force in my life! Thank you for all the times you advocated for me and countered the narrative of a little Black boy from rural South Carolina. This accomplishment represents your hard work and determination to ensure that I had access to opportunity. Thank you for all the ways that you continue to support me. Through every journey, God has blessed me to have you in my corner. You are the reason I strive for greatness, and I hope that I have made you proud!

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Love you always.

Mark

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to the National Center for Education and Statistics (2019), Black teachers comprise 7% of the national public school teaching population, while Black students account for 25%. While this data is representative of the student population becoming more diverse, the teaching population remains stagnant, overwhelmingly white and female (National Center for Education and Statistics [NCES], 2016; NCES, 2019). There are many implications based on this data that have led to efforts in understanding the impact of teacher-to-student mismatch in schools and subsequently identifying efforts to increase teacher diversity, specifically Black male teacher presence, in K-12 schools (Bristol & Goings, 2019). Even more disturbing, a deeper dive into teaching demographic data reveals that nationally 2% of the teaching workforce are Black males (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Concerns about the low percentage of Black males in the teaching workforce have led to research on recruitment, retention, and teacher preparation programs. According to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, 2019), roughly 3 % of education students at the bachelor's level are African American. Continued efforts to recruit and retain Black male teachers have not significantly impacted the retention and sustainability of Black male teachers. For example, 2016 was the first documented increase in Black male teachers since 1987 (Bristol, 2017; Ingersoll & May, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The data presented emphasize a need to investigate Black male teachers' experiences to consider why their presence has not increased nationally in schools. This study will explore the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers to add to the literature on their recruitment and retention.

Nationwide, initiatives have been implemented to address the challenges associated with teacher diversity. For example, The Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education (DRIVE) Task Force of North Carolina's 2021 report called attention to educator preparation programs as one of the most significant barriers to teacher diversity (DRIVE, 2021). On the undergraduate level, 24% of African Americans enrolled in bachelor's degree in education programs, at the top 100 producers of minority graduates are African American men (IPED, 2019; Richardson et al., 2019). Although there has been an increase in Black males enrolled in education degree programs, their enrollment rates are still dismal compared to their African American female peers. Compared to 24% of African American males, 80% of African American females are enrolled in bachelor's degree education programs at the top 100 producers of minority graduates (NCES, 2019). As a result of this critical issue, an emphasis has been placed on creating and sustaining a teacher pipeline for Black male students that increases their recruitment to enter teacher preparation programs. Additional attention has been paid to barriers preventing Black males from matriculating in teacher preparation programs (Bristol, 2020).

Initiatives such as Call Me Mister (Jones et al., 2019) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Teachers Initiative Networked Improvement Community (Bristol et al., 2020) exist to recruit Black males to enter the classroom via teacher preparation programs or alternative licensure programs. At the pre-service level, Black males cite racialized and gendered experiences as a root cause of not completing teacher preparation programs (Brown & Thomas, 2020). These racialized and gendered experiences include Black male teacher

candidate placement in high-poverty schools and behaviorally challenged classes (Woodson & Pabon, 2016).

Further, data highlights a high frequency of Black male teachers leaving the classroom once certified to teach. A study conducted by Bristol (2019) characterized the experiences of Black male teachers as loners or groupers to explore Black male teacher turnover. In this study, loners were identified as Black male teachers in schools where they are the only Black male teacher, and groupers are Black male teachers in schools with other Black male teachers. This study's findings provide implications for understanding varied perspectives of their retention or attrition.

Despite awareness and intentional efforts to address teacher diversity, Black male teachers represent the lowest population in teacher preparation programs and, subsequently, the entire teaching population. While Black male teachers are the lowest demographic represented in the teaching population, their presence has been linked to increased student outcomes for all students (Brooms, 2020; Lewis & Toldson, 2013). While simply increasing Black male teacher presence is not the answer to the systemic inequities that turn away potential Black male teachers, their presence does benefit students and communities. It informs the need for continued recruiting and retaining them to increase a diverse teaching workforce (Toldson, 2011). The experiences of Black male teachers provide an opportunity to identify challenges and potential solutions that inform teacher diversity initiatives aimed at recruiting and retaining Black male teachers.

Statement of the Problem

While there are many initiatives to recruit Black male teachers, recruitment efforts alone will not solve the issue of teacher retention (Ingersoll & Thomas, 2003).

Historically, the 1954 Supreme Court case of Brown vs. Board of Education's decision to integrate schools resulted in the mass firing and replacement of Black teachers by white teachers in integrated schools (Goings et al., 2019; Madkins, 2011). The percentage of Black educators in the workforce continued to decline following desegregation (Anderson, 1988; Foster, 1997), resulting in a gap in student-to-teacher based on race. Moreover, the respectability and high regard of the African American teacher declined with integration. Before integration, African American teachers were held in high regard by Black students, parents, and the communities they served (Anderson, 1988; Brown & Thomas, 2020).

Further, Lewis and Toldson (2013) emphasized the positive impact that Black male teachers have on the academic and social outcomes of students from diverse backgrounds. Sadly, the narrative of the disciplinarian role that Black male teachers are often seen as in schools overshadows their pedagogical power. Further, the positive impacts on social and academic outcomes that Black male teachers have on all students are dimmed when they are hired and retained to operate in a behavioral role (Pabon, 2016). According to Mitchell (2016), many Black male teachers who work in buildings as the minority are viewed as behavioral managers and intellectually inferior to their peers. Unsurprisingly, the combination of being seen as behavior managers and inferior status labeling contributes to Black male teacher attrition. The existing literature on Black male teachers calls for continued recruitment and retention efforts of Black male teachers with little attention to the racialized and gendered experiences that inform their teaching practices. This recruitment is based on generalized contextual factors and does not call attention to the nuanced experiences of Black male teachers that contribute to their

teaching practices. This study adds to the literature on recruiting and retaining Black male teachers by revealing how their racialized and gendered experiences inform their teaching practices.

Further, this study focuses on the experiences of Black male teachers in the South to provide an ever more unique perspective to consider challenges with Black male recruitment and retention. If a gap exists in the literature around how the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers inform their teaching practice, a study that adds to this literature will inform teacher diversity efforts starting at the K-12 level.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to explore how racialized and gendered experiences influence the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South. This study will inform partnerships between teacher preparation programs, school districts, and education stakeholders working to increase teacher diversity, specifically through recruiting and retaining Black male teachers. The support of Black males from practitioners, researchers, and policy is imperative to solve challenges with their recruitment and retention (Walker, 2020). These supports are widespread, ranging from how they navigate schools as both students and teachers to how they navigate teacher preparation.

Race/ethnicity demographics continue to change while the teaching workforce remains the same, highlighting a need for teacher diversity (NCES, 2022). Table 1 below highlights the shift in K-12 student demographics from 2019-2021.

Table 1

Shifts in National K-12 Student Demographics

Race/Ethnicity of Student	2019 (million)	2020 (million)	2021 (million)
White	23.5	22.6	22.4
Black	7.6	7.4	7.4
Hispanic	14.1	13.9	14.1
Asian	2.7	2.7	1.8
Two or more races	2.2	2.2	2.3

Table 1 above highlights that K-12 students with race/ethnicity of white showed the most significant decrease. In contrast, K-12 students with race/ethnicity of Two or more races showed the most significant increase in student population. Coupled with research that shows the positive impact of having a teacher of the same gender and/or racial characteristics (Egalite & Kisida, 2016; Gershenson et al., 2017), this data highlights the need for recruitment and retention of Black male teachers.

Further, research indicates that Black male teachers are desperately needed in rural schools (Aragon, 2016). To recruit Black male teachers into rural areas, researchers must first explore and uncover the experiences that Black male teachers have that ultimately result in their retention. These experiences will form methodologies needed for Black male students to navigate issues specific to their rural environment (Hill-Carter, 2013). While there are continued efforts to recruit and retain Black male teachers, research that delineates based on the rural context provides specific recommendations needed to address the challenges of the rural context.

Research Questions

To explore the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South, this study uses Critical Race Theory to access the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers. The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South?
2. What are the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South?
3. How do the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South influence their teaching practices?

Expected Outcomes

For this study, three expected outcomes were identified. The first desired outcome was to amplify Black males' racialized and gendered experiences in the South. To accomplish this first outcome, I asked participants to share personal experiences from K-12, and post-secondary that they believed were influenced by their race and gender. The second expected outcome was to highlight the teaching practices of the participants. This goal was accomplished through participants sharing their teaching practices and providing archival documents that reflected their teaching practices. The third expected outcome was to explore how racialized and gendered experiences influenced participant teaching practices. This goal was accomplished by asking participants to share how they believed their teaching practices and archival documents were influenced by their racialized and gendered experiences. The expected outcomes from this study have

implications for how teacher preparation programs and K-12 schools recruit and retain Black male teachers.

Theoretical Framework

Critical Race Theory

This study utilized Critical Race Theory (CRT) to examine the racialized components of this historically marginalized group of participants in the study. Conceptualized by legal scholar Derrick Bell, CRT situates the permanency of race and racism (Bell, 1995) in all aspects of human life. Critical race theorists examine how race creates and sustains systems of power and oppression. Through a critical race lens, researchers can identify ways to address systemic inequities by deconstructing whiteness and institutions of oppression. This theory was further applied to education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) to consider the permanence of race and racism in the educational context. Using CRT functions to disrupt racism in systems by unearthing the role of plays in the existing system. Five hallmarks of CRT: 1) social construction of race, 2) racism is not aberrational, 3) race serves the interests of dominant white culture (interest convergence), 4) intersectionality, and 5) the power of storytelling and counter storytelling (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) work to disrupt the permeance of race. The social construction of race counters the notion of a superior race based on some biological factor. Racism is not aberrational, emphasizing that it must take intentional efforts to address this everyday occurrence. Interest convergence calls attention to the idea that dominant white culture will only support the achievement of the minoritized when a mutual benefit is afforded to the dominant group. Intersectionality considers the intersecting identities of the lived experiences of people of color. Lastly, the power of

storytelling and counter-storytelling lifts stories that the historically marginalized lift to counter the narratives placed on them by the dominant culture.

Given that participants in this study share the impact of their historically marginalized experiences as Black male teachers, it is appropriate that the following tenets of CRT: intersectionality and the power of storytelling and counter-storytelling undergird this study. Intersectionality provides a lens for the experiences that participants share based solely on their race and gender identity. Storytelling and counter-storytelling provide space for participants to share aspects of their teacher identity that disrupt the monolithic narrative historically placed on them.

Understanding CRT in the Black male educator experience positions one to question the systems perpetuating inequities in K-12 discipline disproportionality, barriers to teacher preparation programs matriculation, licensure assessment barriers, district hiring practices policies, and Eurocentric curriculum assimilation that include curricula and textbook banning. Moreover, CRT is utilized in this study to offer counter-stories (Hiraldo, 2010) that accentuate the gifts and talents of Black male teachers.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy was employed as a conceptual framework to understand the teaching practices of participants from Research Question 2 of this study. Rooted in Critical Race Theory, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) was conceptualized to center teaching and learning on students' cultural references (Foxx et al., 2020). First introduced by Ladson-Billings (1995), teachers who practice CRP provide opportunities for students to succeed through access and equity by exposing them to their cultures in schools. Black male teachers naturally possess tenets of CRP. Still, they are often asked

to minimize or exclude those tenets when they do not align with the mandated curriculum to demonstrate proficiency in high-stakes testing (Sleeter, 2012). CRP consists of the following elements: a) focus on student learning and academic success; b) developing cultural competence to assist in the development of positive ethnic and social identities; and c) supporting students' critical consciousness. This study employed all elements as the participant's reflections on their teaching practices were rooted within student learning, cultural competence, and critical consciousness.

Not to be conflated with academic achievement through testing measures, student learning refers to the growth that students experience (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Within CRP, participants who practice culturally relevant pedagogy recognize that student learning is not merely determined by passing standardized testing grades. First introduced by scholar Paulo Friere (1970), critical consciousness provides a lens to view and analyze inequities to act against injustices. Within CRP, an essential conscious teacher provides opportunities for students to critique their environment and problems (Ladson-Billings, 2021). As a result of their own racialized and gendered experiences, Black male teachers in this study possess the knowledge to be critically conscious in their teaching practices but are often stifled in this approach.

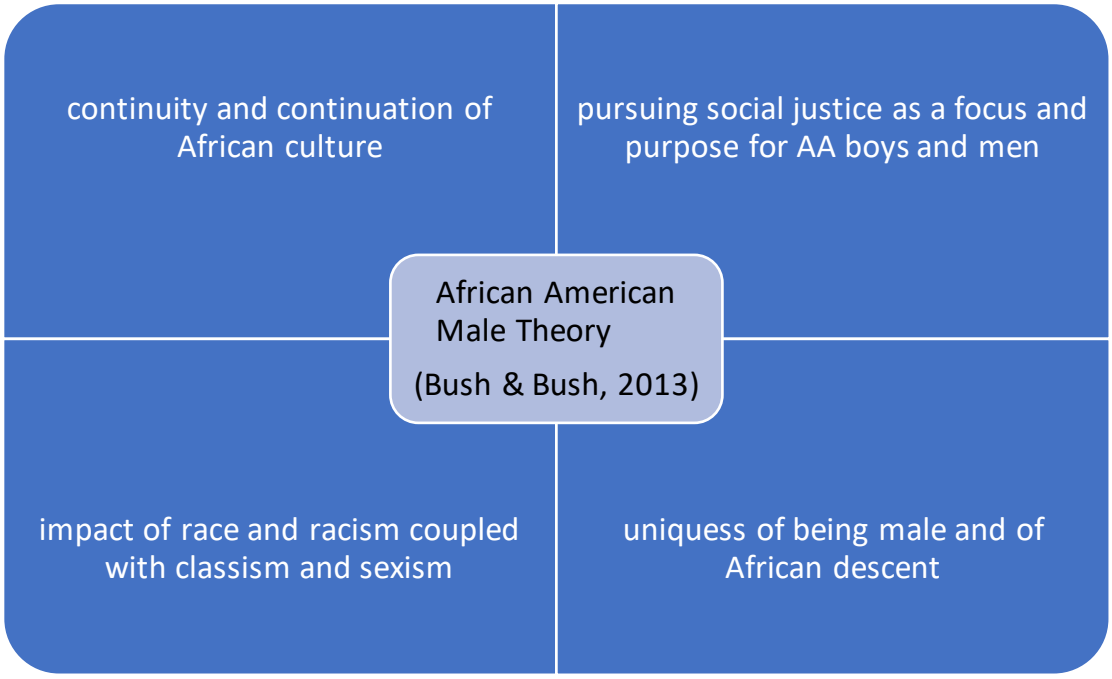
Lastly, Ladson-Billings (1995a; 2021) positions cultural competence to explain the necessity of culturally competent teachers. Cultural competence is emphasized within this study to understand how Black male teachers utilize their cultural competence and its positive impact on students. An ever-changing student demographic exacerbates the need for teachers who recognize the importance of the cultural assets that their students possess and bring them into the classroom.

African American Male Theory (Bush & Bush, 2013)

This study is situated in African American Male Theory to illustrate further the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers (Bush & Bush, 2013). This framework was introduced to provide a unique opportunity for the lives of Black males to take root in the academy and communities where institutions, policies, and programs intersect. Similar to other historically excluded populations of Black feminist and womanist theory (Cannon, 1998; Collins, 1990) and LatCrit (Bernal, 2001; Fernandez, 2002: Solorzano & Bernal, 2001), AAMT adds to the underpinnings of Critical Race Theory (Bell, 1995) to further disentangle the Black male experience. AAMT consists of the following six tenets: *1) ecological systems approach, 2) uniqueness of being male and of African descent, 3) continuity and continuation of African culture, 4) resilience and resistance of African American males, 5) impact of race and racism coupled with classism and sexism, and 6) pursuing social justice as a focus and purpose for AA boys and men*. Figure 1 illustrates the tenets of AAMT that were utilized in this study of Black male teachers.

Figure 1

African American Male Theory



The four tenets of African American Male Theory (Bush & Bush, 2013) provide the opportunity to articulate the experiences of African American males through an asset-based, authentic, and emic framework that counters the deleterious, oppressive literature that mars the image of African American boys and men. The ecological systems approach, the first tenet, considers the symbiotic and bi-directional relationship between AA boys/men and "other beings, matter, concepts, and phenomena (Bush & Bush, 2013). The uniqueness of being male and of African descent considers the individual distinctions within the group to create specialized pedagogies. Continuity and continuation of African culture, consciousness, and biology explore the idea that studies of African American men and boys must be anchored in Africa—resilience and resistance position AA boys and men with innate desires for self-determination. Race and racism, coupled with classism and sexism, consider the nuances within groups of African American men and

boys, such as classism. Focus on pursuing social justice strives to determine and develop social justice utilizing historical and current culture, consciousness, and community.

The AAMT provides the theoretical framework to analyze the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers. Through this framework, the experiences of Black male teachers are substantiated to identify themes that translate to implications for K-12, teacher preparation, and schools/districts. The ecological systems tenet provides the lens to analyze participants' relationships with their peers as students and now as teachers. The uniqueness of being male and of African descent and the continuity and continuation of African culture tenets allow for analysis of participants' teaching practices rooted within African culture. The resilience and resistance tenet provides for analysis of how participants navigate in a world in which they are subjected to bias, microaggressions, and mistreatment. Coupling race and racism with classism and sexism allows for analyzing differences within the participant group. Lastly, the pursuit of social justice tenet considers how participants' teaching practices are rooted in liberation and justice.

Overview of Context and Methods

This study interviewed six K-12 Black male teachers who have completed one or more years of teaching in a school district in the southeastern region of the United States. Participants hold teaching licensure or are enrolled in a residency program toward their initial teaching licensure. Participants are qualified to provide insight into teaching in districts in the southeastern region of the United States. Data collection consists of two one-hour, semi-structured virtual interviews and document analysis transcribed to find common themes across participants' interviews. The participants for this study were

selected through a convenience sampling strategy to obtain the desired set of participants. As noted in the methodology, the criterion sample includes six Black male teachers currently teaching in districts in the southeastern region of the United States. All participants have completed at least one year of teaching.

Significance of Study

This study is significant for three reasons. First, this study consists of participants representing the smallest percentage of the teaching workforce. The teaching workforce currently reflects the following demographics: 79% White, 7% Black, and 9% Hispanic (NCES, 2019). Second, this study is unique in capturing the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers currently teaching in K-12 classrooms in the southeastern region of the United States. Additionally, this is a different and needed approach from studies on Black male educators that are conducted at the pre-service level and will add to a limited body of literature that attempts to understand Black males' pedagogical approach and success in the rural setting (Goings & Bianco, 2016; Pabon et al., 2011). Third, this study is unique in that it will add to the limited body of research on Black male teacher retention in the K-12 classroom setting. Research indicates that compared to 8% of their white counterparts, 10% of Black teachers leave the profession (NCES, 2015). In a 2020 study on Black male teacher recruitment, Brown and Thomas (2020) recommend that researchers deeply examine Black male teachers' varied positionalities in rural, suburban, and independent school settings. This study explores the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in districts located in the southeastern region of the United States. This study can potentially inform Black male

teacher preparation and sustainability retention efforts at the local, regional, and national levels.

Positionality Statement

As a researcher engaging in a study of Black male educators, I acknowledge many life experiences that have influenced my view of the challenges of understanding the unique perspectives of Black male educators in the K-12 setting. I must outline my connections with the research in this positionality statement. I am a Black male who has served over thirteen years in the K-12 setting as a teacher, instructional coach, and education consultant. There are no parameters around the teachers I have coached and worked with, but I am particularly interested in recruiting and retaining Black male teachers from the rural South. This interest has led to my involvement in personal and professional endeavors that address the underlying challenges of Black male teacher identity, teacher role, recruitment, pre-service/in-service preparation, and retention.

A product of the rural South, I have experienced many racialized and gendered experiences that Black male teachers experience as students and teachers. Before pursuing my doctoral studies, I needed the language to articulate how those experiences have influenced my teaching and instructional leadership practices. Through my unlearning, I realized my desire to have a more significant impact on the communities I credit for my educational success.

While a doctoral student, I have worked as an instructional coach and educational consultant supporting teachers and districts across North Carolina, specifically in rural areas within the state's southwestern region. In that role, I have also worked closely with some university and K-12 school partners in designing and delivering professional

development that addresses many of the needs that research has shown work for all teachers to be successful. Through that work, I discovered that Black male teachers in the rural context possess a particular pedagogical prowess that has yet to be revealed in the existing literature. I aim to provide research that lifts the contextual challenges of Black male teacher recruitment and retention in the rural South.

In addition to my daily interactions with teachers, I am involved in affinity groups to retain teachers of color in rural districts. Due to my immersion in all these contributing factors, I understand that I may have some bias due to my connection with and navigating public schools in North Carolina as a Black male educator. I have experienced many factors contributing to Black male teacher recruitment and retention challenges. Additionally, operating in a leadership and servant role in education that focuses on the recruitment and retention of all teachers provides me with some bias that, if not checked, could impact the validity of the research. Thus, my acknowledgment of the possibility of subjectivity and prejudice when exploring this topic strengthens the research.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined and supported within the research for clarity on the terminology utilized in this study.

- Black males: used to describe a male who identifies as a descendant of the continent of Africa. Synonymous with African Americans.
- Critical Race Theory (CRT): theoretical framework conceived by legal scholar Derrick Bell (1995). Essential theorists of race examine how race creates and sustains systems of power and oppression. Through a critical race lens,

researchers identify ways to address systemic inequities by deconstructing whiteness and institutions of oppression.

- Double consciousness: As explained by DuBois (1903), double consciousness is the unique experience that one has in being Black and American. DuBois asserted that marginalized groups viewing themselves through the eyes of their oppressor are constantly in an internal war of identity.
- Gendered experience: A person's experience that they believe to be a result of their identified gender.
- Invisible tax: the extra work and burdens teachers of color take on (Dixon et al., 2019; Givens, 2016; King, 2015).
- In-service teachers: Teachers who have received their teaching credentials/licensure and practice in a classroom.
- Pre-service Teachers: Teacher in training who has not received teaching credentials or licensure.
- Racialized experience: A person's experience that they believe to be a result of their self-identified race.
- Rural: Any population, housing, or territory NOT in an urban area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Rural fringe: Rural territory less than or equal to five miles from an urbanized area and rural environment less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster (NCES, 2016).

- Rural, distant: Rural territory is more than five miles but less than or equal to twenty-five miles from an urbanized area, and rural environment is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to ten miles from an urban cluster (NCES, 2016).
- Rural, remote: Rural territory is more than twenty-five miles from an urbanized area and more than ten miles from an urban cluster (NCES, 2016).
- Teacher retention: Percentage of teachers who remain in the teaching profession.
- Teacher attrition: Percentage of teachers who leave the teaching profession.
- Urban characteristics: Geographic location not located in big cities but may be beginning to experience increases in English language learners in a community. These schools may be found in what might be considered rural or even suburban areas (Milner, 2012).
- Urban emergent: schools located in large cities but not as significant as those labeled as urban intensive. These schools are typically found in cities with at most 1 million people (Milner, 2012).
- Urban intensive: schools located in cities with a high population density and size. These schools are typically found in cities with 1 million or more people (Milner, 2012).

Organization of Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter One introduced the topic and provided an overview of research that supports the significance by outlining the research questions, defining key terms, establishing purpose, and overviewing the study's context, methods, limitations, and delimitations. The second chapter of the study, the literature review, reviews the literature on the history of Black teachers in the South following the

Civil War, Black male teacher identity, and Black male teacher recruitment and retention to include the rural context. It further illustrates the advantages of Black male teacher presence in K-12 schools leading to the need for increased Black male teacher retention efforts. Chapter Three outlines the methodology used for the study, including data collection methods and analysis. Chapter Four discusses the results that answer research questions and reveals salient themes for Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences in the South and their impact on their teaching practices. Chapter Five presents the findings, implications, summary, and recommendations for rural school districts and leaders, teacher preparation programs, and future research that advance the topic of Black male teachers in the rural context.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature detailed in this chapter starts with the history of Black teachers in the South following the Civil War, including implications pre and post-integration of schools marked by the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education legal case. Next, the literature focuses on Black male teacher identity and the pedagogical practices that they utilize to impact student outcomes. A detailed account follows that emphasizes Black male teacher challenges starting with their K-12 experience up to their current teacher status. The literature review will conclude with a summary of the existing literature that identifies gaps for this study to explore and act upon.

History of Black Teachers in the South

Pre Brown v. BOE

At the end of the Civil War, the education of Blacks in the South provided a unique perspective with implications in schools today. The ending of the Civil War represented a new era for the newly freed Blacks in the South. Still, the formation of newly legalized racial segregation, Jim Crow laws, continued to enforce racial segregation laws that stifled this progress. Through Jim Crow laws, legalized racial segregation of schools functioned to continue white people's attempt to prohibit access to Blacks in the South. These actions resulted in the lack of a viable Black public school system and a low percentage of Black teachers to influence the future opportunities for Blacks in the South (Anderson, 1988). By 1900, the number of northern White missionary teachers teaching Blacks in the South was insignificant. As a result, there was a need to increase the number of Black teachers in the South. Compounded with Southern white teachers' unwillingness to teach Black students,

Black education's future in the South depended on drastic education reform. The sixteen former slave states demonstrated the great need for Black teachers during the Reconstruction Period, where the Black teacher-to-Black student ratio was 1:93 (Anderson, 1988). While training Blacks to become teachers could be viewed as a benefit, some viewed this as an opportunity to utilize Black teachers further to socialize Blacks in the South as an inferior race, as outlined in the excerpt below:

> The right universal schooling could influence black children to accept the values embodied in the Hampton Idea so that, in time, black southerners would acknowledge the legitimacy of the South's racial caste system and submit willingly to its order. White southerners who encountered black southerners daily had good reason to doubt that blacks were that pliable. (Anderson, 1988, p. 98)

Whites in the South set forth efforts, such as gerrymandering of districts and reduction in school days of Black schools, to reduce efforts to educate Blacks. White school authorities expressed their interest in eliminating Negro education as much as possible (Anderson, 1988; DuBois & Dill, 1911). Initiatives such as normal schools and training schools were utilized to help these efforts by rapidly producing Black teachers who would embody ideologies that further oppressed Black people. These schools aimed to subject Blacks to a life of subordination but were quickly phased out after 1935.

Before the desegregation of schools, the role of the Black teacher was multifaceted (Peters, 2019). Black teachers served as teachers, administrators, and mentors to new teachers, community members, and supporters (Peters, 2019; Tillman, 2004). To further understand the value that African Americans in the South had for teaching and learning, Siddle Walker (2000) categorized segregated schools by their

exemplary teachers, curriculum and extracurricular activities, parental support, and leadership of the school principal. As noted in Anderson (1988), while African Americans appreciated the newly formed common schools, they resisted infringements of their self-reliance. The multifaceted roles of Black teachers caused them to be highly regarded in the community in which they worked. A Black male teacher shared one example of the regard and esteem for teachers during the Jim Crow era who reflected that "desegregation cause Black teachers to lose some of their ability to educate their kids" (Hayes et al., 2014; Thomas & Brown, 2020). A closer examination of Black teacher demographics before integration reveals that more than 50% of the African American professional population were teachers (Foster, 1996; Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014). Black schools were in Black communities where many educators interacted with their students outside of school. During these interactions within shared communities, familiar bonds formed and fostered nurturing relationships between educators and students. These bonds promoted Black students being successful through encouragement and a parent-like bonding, coined surrogacy parenthood (Hudson & Holmes, 1994).

The decline in Black teachers was significant due to their incredible impact on their students' lives (Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014; McCray et al., 2002). Studies on the experiences, expectations, and teaching practices of Black teachers show that their practices connect to the academic, political, social, and economic advancement of African Americans (King, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lash & Ratcliff, 2014). With desegregation and the decline of Black teachers in the classroom, Black students lost some access to resources that addressed their specific needs for advancement.

Post Brown v. BOE

By 1964, Black teacher attrition rates had increased to 46% (Going et al., 2019). Attrition, in this case, was not voluntary but primarily due to the involuntary displacement of Black teachers. According to Milner and Howard (2004), approximately 38,000 Black educators lost their teaching positions between 1954 and 1965. As a result, current data highlight that Black educators make up only 7% of the teaching workforce [National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2016, 2019]. Compare this to data that highlights an increase in student enrollment for students of color, Black and Hispanic students. Students of color need to see educators of color in their schools at proportional rates. The disproportionality of teachers of color, specifically Black teachers, to students of color has implications for the growth and achievement of all students (Dee, 2004; Gershenson et al., 2019). Integration of schools resulted in the loss of Black teachers as a powerful voice in their communities. Black teachers seen as powerful and influential in their communities were subjected to demotion and selection processes that based their ability to retain their teaching position on prejudiced factors such as skin color. Black teachers were replaced by white teachers who lacked the cultural awareness of Black students (Douglas et al., 2017; Villegas & Davis, 2007). This lack of cultural awareness often appeared in widespread belief by white teachers that Black students could not learn or master critical thinking skills (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). African American teachers faced many challenges following the integration of schools post-Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court decision. In addition to the significant displacement of African American teachers, culturally biased teacher proficiency tests were used as an exclusionary practice to determine which teachers would transfer to the newly integrated schools (Lash & Ratcliff, 2014; Stennis-Williams, 1996). These tests often showed

differences in scoring between Black and white teachers, with Black teachers having a lower passing rate (King, 1993). The intentional effort to diminish the voice of Black teachers was evidenced by actions such as retired Black teachers being replaced by white teachers and retaining white teachers with provisional certification over African American teachers who were fully certified (Lash & Ratcliff, 2014; Place, 1996).

Black Male Students

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, people of color will make up most of the U.S. population by 2040 (Colby & Ortman, 2014; Goings & Bianco, 2016). As a result, this increase will directly impact student demographics as there will be more students of color in the classroom (Hussar & Bailey, 2013). According to the National Center for Education and Statistics (2019), people of color comprise 21% of the teaching workforce. While Black male teachers are not only beneficial to social and academic outcomes for students of color, research notes positive results when students of color have Black male teachers (Bryan & Ford, 2014; Goings, 2015; Goings & Bianco, 2016; Johnson, 2014; Lewis, 2006; Lynn, 2006; Warren, 2014). Building upon the idea that Black male teacher recruitment should start with Black males in high school (Ramirez, 2009; Torres et al., 2004), Goings & Bianco (2016) explored the experiences of Black male teachers and the factors that influenced their consideration of becoming teachers. This study revealed that limited exposure to Black male teachers by Black male students impacted their interest in becoming teachers. As the title of Goings and Bianco's (2016) study implies, it is hard to become what you do not see.

When considering the challenge of recruiting Black male teachers, researchers recognize the many barriers that potential Black male teachers must overcome in their

educational trajectory (Howard, 2014; Noguera, 2008). Studies that explore these challenges highlight what Ladson-Billings (2011) referred to as a "love-hate" (p. 8) relationship between potential Black male teachers and schools. In her work, Ladson-Billings further explained that African American boys often view school as a space of control and discipline rather than academic achievement and student learning. Opposite to the historically positive relationship of African American students with the school before desegregation, research indicates a sense of low levels of respect for the teaching profession by African American students (Bianco et al., 2011). Further, Black boys' love-hate relationship with the school is fueled by incidences that include discipline disproportionality and exclusionary practices that impact the academic potential of Black male students (Goings & Bianco, 2016). Data at the K-12 level reveals that out of the 5.3% of students who receive out-of-school suspension, 17.6% are Black males (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, 2019). The subjective nature of offenses that result in out-of-school suspension is an area that Black male teachers have been able to navigate in their roles. Exposure to Black teachers has shown a decrease in discipline rates on average for Black students (Lindsay & Hart, 2017).

Witnessing a decrease in the discipline of Black students exposed to Black male teachers attempts to validate an argument that mere Black male presence is the answer. This general statement minimizes the relationship skill building that Black male teachers contribute to their success with Black male students. These relationship skills encompass how Black male teachers get to know their students through social and emotional development (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). While it does help that Black male teachers have some background knowledge and currency that helps with building relationships,

knowing how to build relationships with students, specifically Black male students, is a currency that many Black male teachers hold at their disposal. This currency reduces actions that could lead to negative experiences, such as out-of-school suspension. Connecting the currency that Black male teachers have with their ability to identify student behaviors with a culturally responsive lens is an opportunity for educators to learn ways to reduce disproportionality in Black male student discipline data from their Black male counterparts.

Black boys are less likely to be subjected to exclusionary practices when taught by Black males (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). For example, a Black male educator may interpret subjective offenses such as disrespect differently than their white counterpart. Too often, personal violations result in Black male students being subjected to exclusionary practices such as ISS and OSS (Office of Civil Rights Data, 2016). Identifying with Black male students allows Black male educators to counter negative stereotypes that Black male students encounter from school staff. Additionally, research highlights that Black male students feel that their white teachers are disinterested in their academic ability (Goings & Bianco, 2016).

Negative interactions such as those mentioned above have lasting impacts on Black male experiences, including their disinterest in entering the teaching profession. Black male students who experience low expectations, racial stereotypes, and microaggressions in the classrooms are unlikely to become teachers (Goings & Bianco, 2016). Understanding racialized and gendered experiences have implications for increasing the positive experience of Black boys in the K-12 educational system. Providing positive experiences for Black boys in school is one of the ways to impact

recruitment and their interest in the teaching profession. For some Black students, the K-12 educational experience was traumatic; thus, returning to the educational system heightens their stress levels. The educational system can be seen as toxic due to the disproportionate discipline practices they witness or receive. To increase recruitment of Black male educators. Stakeholders must consider ways to mitigate the harmful experiences that Black male teachers may experience in their interactions with white teachers. For example, Black male teachers who are expected to reprimand Black male students due to subjective offenses may experience psychological discomfort as they feel that they are adhering to subjective policies and contributing to the discipline gap of Black boys. In this case, disciplining Black boys for subjective offenses (the behavior) contradicts the Black males (belief) that they should be punished for such actions. Unfortunately, discipline disproportionality is not new in the educational narrative of Black boys in US schools.

According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights database, Black students represent 32-42% of suspensions (ISS, OSS, and expulsions) and only 16% of the student population (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). In comparison, white students represent 31-40% of suspensions (ISS, OSS, and expulsions) but are 51% of the student population (Office of Civil Rights Database, 2016). Furthermore, the National Center for Educational Statistics data reports that 80% of teachers in U.S. public schools are white, and 7% of the teaching force are Black, with 2% being Black males (NCES, 2020). This data shows that a predominately white teaching force disproportionately disciplines Black students. The white student population is projected to decrease from 49% to 45% by 2027 (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). While

public school student demographics are drastically changing, teacher demographics remain consistent, exacerbating the critical need for diversity within the teaching workforce. The diversity of students within K-12 schools does not match the diversity of the teaching workforce (Mitchell, 2016). According to NCES (2019), Black students comprise 15% of the student population. This dramatically contrasts the 2% of Black male teachers and strengthens the argument for increased teacher diversity recruitment efforts. Additionally, 80% of the teaching workforce is White (NCES, 2019), highlighting the disproportionality of teachers to students based on race. It is essential to highlight the research that points to the positive impact of Black male teachers on students, specifically Black male students.

In response to the need for continued recruitment of Black male teachers, scholars have developed a Grow Your Own Collective (GYOC) to define GYO initiatives (Rogers-Ard et al., 2019). Grow Your Own initiatives do not excuse putting the onus on the minoritized group but instead promote collaboration of stakeholders invested in diversifying the teaching workforce. GYOC recognizes the systemic challenges of race and gender and the importance of a culturally responsive environment for learning (Rogers-Ard et al., 2019; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2005). While GYO initiatives solve the challenge of teacher diversity, GYOC provides a much-needed framework for GYO programs such as Call Me Mister and Pathways2Teaching to make them more effective. Initiatives that recognize and respond to the racial and gendered challenges with recruiting Black male teachers must have impactful and sustained recruitment efforts that will grow the Black male student to Black male pre-service teacher pipeline.

Failed recruitment efforts of Black male teachers have implications for students at multiple levels. For instance, in their study on Black male teacher recruitment in gifted education, Bryan and Ford (2014) argued that Black male students are underrepresented in gifted education due to a lack of being identified as gifted from the overwhelmingly white teaching workforce (Ford, 2013). A lack of Black male presence in gifted education due to factors such as stereotyping and marginalization strengthens a need for more initiatives to recruit expert Black male teachers. To help contextualize talented Black male students, Whiting (2009) positions scholar identity as a model to identify and promote gifted education. The underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programs does not stop in urban schools. Research on rural schools examines Black students' underrepresentation in rural gifted education programs (Hemmler et al., 2022). As a result of the prevalence of this critical issue in rural and urban contexts, it can be implied that Black male teachers of gifted education can identify and promote a scholarly identity among Black male students, a critical need in education. Moreover, literature on Black males in rural settings highlights how they navigate the educational pipeline to college despite being under-resourced in schools (Byun et al., 2012). In a study of ninth-grade Black male rural students, researchers highlight the critical role that counselors play in cultivating their college and career goals (Crumb et al., 2021)

Black Male Pre-Service Teachers

Black males who advance into teacher preparation programs continue to encounter racialized and gendered experiences that impact their sustainability within their respective programs of study (Brown & Thomas, 2020). Goings and Biano (2016) cited the negative educational experience of Black males in school to explain the low

representation of Black males in undergraduate degree programs. Further, research indicates that Black males within teacher education programs express not feel validated (Brown & Thomas, 2020; Goings & Bianco, 2016; Sleeter et al., 2014). Some Black male teacher candidates describe a strained relationship between them and their teaching peers of a different race. For example, a study on Black male pre-service teachers revealed that they felt silenced and oppressed by their white female classmates when there were conversations around race in class (Pabon et al., 2011). While a desire to have a positive impact on society is a recurring theme in Black male teachers reasoning for pursuing a teaching career (Brown & Butty, 1999; Lewis, 2006; Shipp, 1999), the stereotypes and microaggressions that they experience have far-reaching implications on their retention in teacher preparation programs (Bryan, 2017; Goings et al., 2015). Teacher preparation programs are dominated by white faculty and students who may not create inclusive environments for Black male teacher candidates (Sleeter, 2017; Walker, 2020).

Black males often cite the influence of family, community members, and Black male teacher interactions as reasons they enter the teaching profession (Davis et al., 2020; Yates et al., 2008). Subsequently, Black male teachers' challenges in their teaching career's pre-service, in-service, and veteran stages impact their attrition rates (Walker, 2019). Fortunately, there are positive narratives that counter the challenges that Black males face in their pre-service experience. The needs of Black male preservice teachers are unique and cannot be treated with a monolithic approach (Going et al., 2018). In their study of a Black male refugee pre-service teacher attending a Historically Black College University (HBCU), Goings et al. (2018) highlighted the limited literature on the experience of Black male pre-service teachers. They emphasized attention to continued

research in exploring the Black male teacher in various contexts. Jones et al. (2019) highlighted an increase in Black males enrolling in education degree programs at predominantly white institutions and online universities. This study highlights that although Black males are enrolling in education degree programs, challenges that prevent them from successfully matriculating need to be explored.

Even after successfully entering and navigating teacher preparation programs, Black male teachers encounter additional barriers that may prevent them from successfully graduating and entering the teaching profession (Bryan, 2021; Goings & Bianco, 2016). Many teacher preparation programs require teachers to pass an assessment before graduating. In a study on teacher licensure requirements, Williams and Lewis (2020) shared how scores differ by race and gender on edTPA. edTPA is a performance-based, subject-specific assessment developed by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) and is required by many teacher preparation programs before teacher candidates can graduate (Pecheone et al., 2018; Williams & Lewis, 2020). While there was a slight increase in the Black male teacher population, the testing barriers with edTPA are reminiscent of assessment barriers post-integration of schools in the 1950s. Examining the role of race and gender bias in evaluating Black male candidates by edTPA scorers is critical to overcoming this challenge (Williams & Lewis, 2020).

In addition to where Black males have their pre-service experience in teaching are their experiences in their pre-service programs. Brooms (2020) argued that teacher preparation programs lack appeal for Black male pre-service teachers. He offered to counter this notion by intentionally focusing on measures that align with Black male

educational philosophies (Brown, 2020, p. 530). A Black male educational philosophy reflects the sociohistorical context of schooling experiences and critical perspectives that are needed to enrich students' lives (Brooms, 2020; Goings & Bianco, 2016; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Lynn, 2006; Pabon et al., 2011; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015; Woodson et al., 2020). Moreover, a Black male educational philosophy has implications for the injustices that Black boys experience in schools. Scott et al. (2015) contended that stereotype threat is an added pressure in the pre-service experience of Black male teachers. In the pre-service teacher context, stereotype threat is a fear of being viewed negatively or doing something that confirms a stereotype (Scott et al., 2015; Steele, 2003). Comparably to Black female teachers, Black male pre-service teachers report experiencing concentrated forms of this stereotype threat in the teacher preparation experience. To solve this challenge, the researcher recommended that teacher preparation programs promote curriculums that address the dual nature of school by lifting notions of inequity, such as stereotype threat, while ensuring a thriving environment for all students. If teacher preparation programs want to attract more Black males, there must be an intentional awareness of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ideologies (Bartolome, 2004; Scott et al., 2015).

Black Male Teacher

While research highlights the favorable outcomes that Black male teachers have on students, there is not as much attention to the pressures of being a Black male teacher. For example, the invisible tax (King, 2016) refers to the toll on time and emotions of Black male teachers leading to their burnout. Research by the American Federation of Teachers (2015) highlighted that Black teachers leave the profession more quickly than

their White counterparts (King, 2016; Will, 2016). The invisible tax is based on a monolithic view of Black male teachers as disciplinarians or cultural diversity experts. The invisible tax is paid by Black male teachers when they are assumed to be better able to deal with African American boys with behavior issues. The invisible tax further perpetuates a single-story narrative (Adichie, 2009) rooted in stereotypes and white supremacy. Black people, as a whole, have historically been subjected to additional pressures when navigating and existing in white spaces. In ways similar to the invisible tax, Black families and teachers were comparable "double taxed" through sweat equity and other resources to provide funding to Black schools (Givens, 2016; Anderson, 1988).

Black Male Teacher Impact

Black male educators positively impact changing Black students' narratives, particularly Black male students (Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Milner, 2016). Black males possess the background knowledge needed to connect with Black students and positively develop them. This background knowledge is just one currency that Black males use as leverage when working with Black students. Black male teachers who impart positive attributes to their students see changes, such as decreased discipline and opportunities to build leadership qualities in their students. Unfortunately, this currency is abused when Black males are relegated to behavioral roles. According to Mitchell (2016), many Black male teachers who work in buildings as the minority are viewed as behavioral managers and intellectually inferior to their peers. This combination of being seen as behavior managers and inferiority in intellectual ability contribute to Black male teacher attrition (Mitchell, 2016).

Other Fathering: Pedagogical Kind

The mixture of tough love, discipline, and caring that some Black male teachers display towards their Black male students have been referred to as "other fathering" (Brown, 2012; Lynn, 2002, 2006). Building upon Hacking's notion of humankind (1995), Brown (2012) contended that the African American man had been constructed into humankind (p. 299). While this type of relationship may benefit some Black male students, Brockenbrough (2012) lifted the impact of this notion on Black men's hegemonic construction of masculinity in teaching. Brockenbrough (2012) further questioned the pressures Black male teachers experience from their expectation of being patriarchal in the classroom. Consequently, Brown (2012) asserts that the expectation of other fathering from Black male teachers manifests a pedagogical kind. A pedagogical kind is defined as:

> An educator whose subjectivities, pedagogies, and expectations have been set in place before entering the classroom. In this sense, the Black male teacher has been situated directly in the context of the Black male student and received by the educational community to secure, administer, and govern the unruly Black boy in school. (p. 299)

The implications of the pedagogical kind present an additional barrier to Black male teacher recruitment and retention. The authoritative Black male teacher, a patriarch, is considered the ideal role model and surrogate father figure for Black youth (Bridges, 2011; Cooper & Jorda, 2003; Lewis, 2006; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Pabon, 2016). Black male teachers who do not fit this patriarchal mold are often subject to criticism from their peers and administrators (Brockenbrough, 2015; Pabon, 2016). This monolithic view of the Black male teacher can be a double-edged sword. From one perspective, this can give

the Black male teacher more opportunities to engage with Black male students that may align with their passion and commitment to the Black community. A differing perspective limits the Black male teacher and their opportunity to engage with a diverse student population because they do not assume the patriarchal ideologies positioned within a pedagogical kind. For example, Brockenbrough (2015) shared that Black male teachers who are not seen as stern with their Black students may receive criticism from others, including their male and female Black teaching peers. This critique perpetuates the idea that Black male teachers must portray a confident demeanor, in this case, sternness, towards their Black male students to have a positive impact and be respected by their peers. In this case, the ability of Black male teachers to discipline and control student behavior takes precedence over their ability to be instructional leaders. Other fathering positions the Black male teacher in a way that validates race and gendered stereotypes of the Black male resulting in the role entrapment of Black male teachers as such (Brown, 2012; Kelly, 2007; Madsen & Mabokela, 2000). A Black male teacher should not feel pressure to align with the limiting views of the Black male teacher for job security or respect within the teaching profession.

Other fathering implies that Black male teachers can serve as father figures to their Black male students. In a study at an all-male academy, Brooms (2017) concluded that race-gender matching is not enough to impact Black male students and emphasized the power of student-teacher relationships. The mere presence of the Black male teacher does not equate to surrogate fatherhood with all Black students. As highlighted in their research, Black male students want more than just role models as they continue to unpack

their racialized and gendered identities (Bristol, 2018; Brockenbrough, 2015; Brooms, 2017).

Assuming that Black male teachers' presence directly impacts Black male student behavior limits the view of Black male teachers as pedagogical experts and has implications for policy and hiring practices of Black male teachers. Thus, a need exists to move away from a narrow prescription of recruiting Black males to work with [only] Black boys in schools (Bristol, 2017; Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Goings & Bianco, 2016). Considering the impact of gender identity, the notion of other fathering (Brockenbrough, 2015; Lynn, 2006) is used to categorize Black male teachers' culturally relevant pedagogy of tough love and discipline. Black male teachers who do not exhibit those qualities of sternness are sometimes not hired in specific school demographics as they are viewed as ineffective with their Black student population. This stereotypical frame of reference may result in quality Black males not pursuing teaching as a profession or not teaching in schools where they could potentially have a more significant impact. Understanding that a cultural mismatch exists that allows for subjective offenses to be considered inflammatory and result in disproportionate suspension for students of color is the currency that Black male educators bring to the table. Teacher preparation programs must be prepared to facilitate how Black male teachers negotiate their roles in schools so that they are not seen as disciplinarians but as leaders within the profession to facilitate unpacking the implicit bias of non-Black educators that often drive their disciplinary decisions.

Black Male Teaching Pedagogy

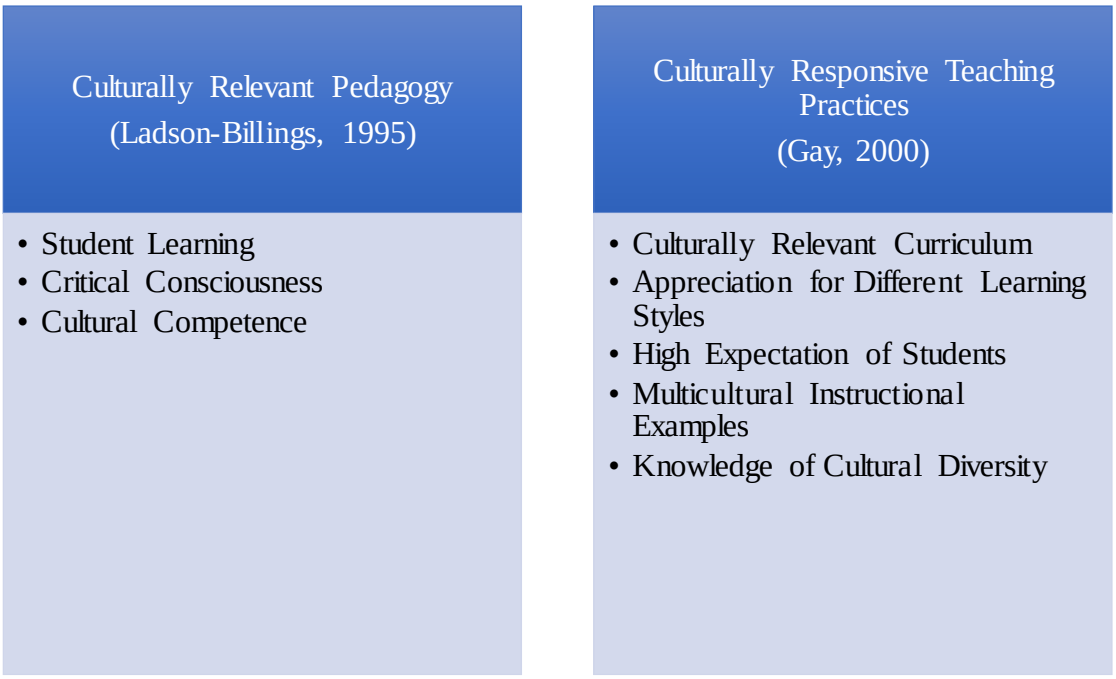
Research on the African American teaching experience is limited due to their exclusion from historical records (Foster, 1997; Solorzano & Yosso, 2005). Considering the disproportionality of Black teachers to white teachers, it is no surprise that the teaching practices of African American teachers, specifically Black male teachers, are missing from the literature. These teaching practices could have enormous implications for teacher preparation programs and Black male teacher scholarship (Lynn, 2002). The pedagogical practices of African American teachers are rooted in their personal and racialized experiences (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Durden et al., 2016; Hayes et al., 2014; Lynn, 2002). Scholars have referred to this form of teaching with a racialized and gendered lens as Black men's pedagogy (Pabon, 2017; Thomas & Brown, 2020). In a study on Black male STEM teachers, one math teacher taught how Ida B. Wells used statistical data to prove the terrorism that Black people were subjected to during the late 19th century (Lynn & Jennings, 2009; Thomas & Brown, 2020). A Black male teacher's pedagogy empowers students, specifically Black students who may not see themselves in the daily curriculum. A Black male teacher pedagogy creates an environment where Black students survive and thrive.

Black male teachers' practices are rooted in culturally responsive pedagogy. In response to a deficit tone narrative of Black children in schools, Ladson-Billings (1995) conceptualized Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) as a pedagogical framework that counters the narrative by providing opportunities for students to affirm their cultural identity through critical analysis. To further define CRP, Ladson-Billings asserts that culturally relevant pedagogy comprises three components: student learning, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Building upon Ladson-

Billings' seminal work, Gay (2010) conceptualized culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as those teaching practices that accompany culturally relevant pedagogy and consist of five essential components of culture: knowledge of cultural diversity, culturally relevant curriculum, high expectations of students, appreciation for different communication styles, and multicultural instructional examples. Figure 2 outlines the key components of the conceptualizations of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching. CRP and CRT frameworks support the literature on Black male teaching practices but do not provide as much context on how their experiences inform those teaching practices.

Figure 2

Culturally Responsive Teaching Conceptualization



Contextualizing Black Males in Rural Schools

The multidimensionality of Black male teachers is important when reflecting on their experiences. For example, the experiences of Black male teacher candidates differ

depending on the context of the schools they attend and potentially work during their teaching internships. Walker (2016, 2019) explored the isolation that Black male teacher candidates in rural settings experience during their teacher preparation and highlighted the increased need for support of Black male preservice teachers who may not have access to other Black male educators as mentors. The absence of Black male mentors limits Black male preservice teachers who may have historically strained relationships with white educators. Stakeholders involved in the preservice experiences of Black male teachers need to recognize the intersectionality of race, gender, and cultural identity (Brown, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Walker, 2020).

In an investigation of Black male preservice teachers, Walker (2020) explored the challenges of Black male teachers in rural contexts. In addition to the salient challenges of marginalization in any context, Black male preservice teachers in the rural context are impacted by stereotypes, pay, and disproportionate placement in underserved schools (Allegretto & Tojerow, 2014; Walker, 2020). Scott and Rodriguez (2015) noted that Black male rural preservice teachers' challenges are exacerbated as they have the added pressure of overcoming racial and gender stereotypes in addition to their duties in completing their educational degree. While rural schools can be diverse, many are faced with poverty, which can result in a lack of resources for teachers. According to Azano et al. (2021), poverty is exceptionally high in the rural South and West. Additionally, 85% of the persistent poverty counties are rural (Azano et al., 2021; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2020).

Research on the lower achievement of rural students compared to nonrural students raises questions about teachers' characteristics in those rural settings (Drescher et

al., 2022). Further, research on recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers in rural areas calls attention to the lack of diversity among teachers in those rural schools (Monk, 2007), with 90.2% of teachers being white and non-Hispanic in rural/small towns compared to 83.1% being white, non-Hispanic in all public schools. Solutions to teacher recruitment challenges include grow-your-own strategies, typically from an urban perspective (Monk, 2007). Research to understand the challenges of teaching in rural schools is needed to provide contextual solutions to the rural environment. Exploring Black male teacher practices in the South through the notion of place-based pedagogies (White & Reid, 2008) provides a contextual lens for a unique perspective to be considered in their recruitment and retention.

Conclusion

The existing literature supports the continued need for teacher diversity efforts, specifically Black male teacher recruitment and retention in the rural South. While there is extensive literature on the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers, the existing literature is not as detailed in how those experiences, based on contextual factors, impact their teaching practices (Walker, 2020). A void in the literature that contextualizes the Black male teacher experience provides an opportunity for a damaging monolithic view (Pabon, 2016) that does not consider their experiences' implications on their teaching practices. Increasing the literature that supports a nuanced approach to understanding the Black male teacher experience is needed to inform teacher preparation programs and other stakeholders invested in Black male teacher recruitment and retention.

Further, the overall recruitment and retention of Black male teachers continue to be a challenge within teacher diversity (Lewis & Toldson, 2013). The narrative that narrows the identity of Black male teachers diminishes the systemic issues contributing to the critical challenge of Black male teachers choosing teaching as a profession. The narratives of Black male teachers as surrogate fathers, disciplinarians, and authoritarians overshadow the pedagogical prowess and how their racialized and gendered experiences impact their teaching practices. With good intentions, initiatives respond to the challenge of the 2% of Black male teachers by increasing recruitment efforts that place more Black male bodies in the classroom as teachers and disciplinarians. Although robust, these concerted efforts have not successfully retained their intended outcome of retaining Black male teachers. How do Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences influence their teaching practices and inform their recruitment and retention? How do the contextualized experiences of Black male teachers affect their teaching practices? This study seeks to answer how the contextualized experiences of Black male teachers in the South influence their teaching practices.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to explore how the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South influenced their teaching practices. This study employed a qualitative approach to capture their perceptions of racialized and gendered experiences. Utilizing a qualitative design allows the researcher to develop categories and themes from patterns in the data (Merriam et al., 2002). The research questions in this study asked Black male teachers to share their educational trajectory experiences, including their experiences in K-12, teacher preparation, and teacher recruitment. Additionally, participants were asked to reflect on their teaching practices and, subsequently, how they believe their race and gender influence their teaching practices, including the selection of teaching curricula and resources. Data in this study was collected through two rounds of semi-structured interviews and analysis of archival documents. The following research questions guided this study:

1) What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South?

2) What are the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South?

3) How do Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences in the South influence their teaching practices?

This chapter begins with an overview of the qualitative study design. This overview included the selection process of Black male K-12 teachers in districts in the southeastern region of the United States. Next, the data collection and procedures outline the interview process, protocol, and pilot study. The data analysis procedures are outlined before ethical considerations, limitations, assumptions, and a detailed summary of the

methodological approach. A qualitative approach informed this study. As Creswell (2013) described, a qualitative approach is utilized to understand a complex issue. For this study, the complex issue was the experience of being a Black male teacher in the southeastern region of the U.S. Further. Qualitative research explores how people construct their worlds and the meanings they contribute to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In contrast to numbers with quantitative methods, Braun and Clarke (2013) highlight that qualitative methods use words as the data.

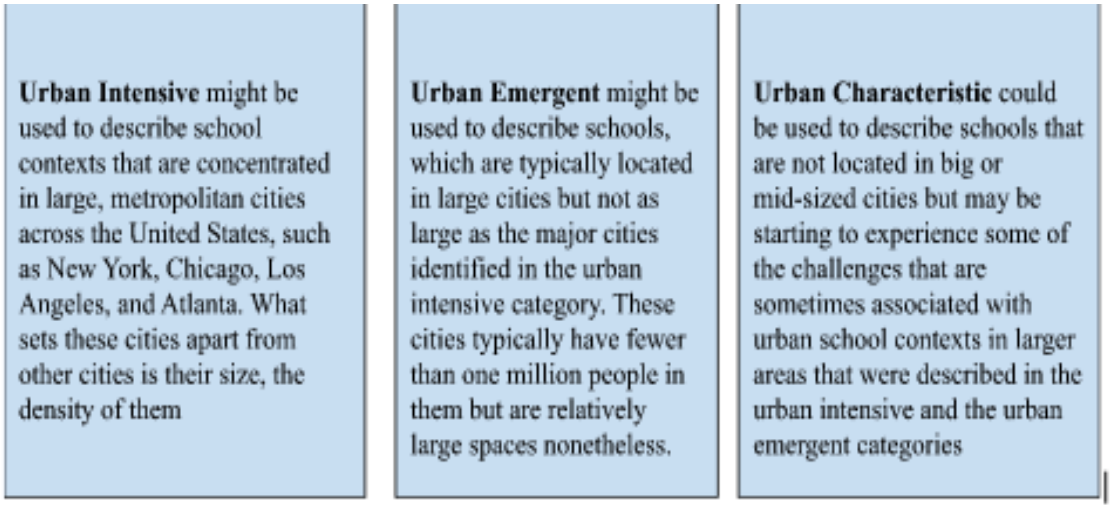
Research Context

Milner's Urban Typology (2012)

The participants in this study self-identify as Black and male and are practicing teachers within a K-12 school in the southeastern region of the U.S. To further contextualize this study, Milner's Urban Typology (2012) characterized districts as intensive, emergent, and characteristic. Milner notions that schools within communities that are urban characteristic are beginning to experience increases in challenges such as English language learners' proficiency and graduation rates of students. Additionally, urban characteristic districts may be located in rural and suburban areas. Figure 3 defines Milner's' Urban Typology (2012). Further, the designation of urban characteristics contextualizes the challenges of rural schools and attempts to differentiate those challenges from urban areas.

Figure 3

Milners' Urban Typology



To further contextualize urban characteristics, Table 2 provides an overview of the districts that participants currently teach, including the typology designation of the district based on English learners' progress of K-12 students based on the number of students who met the definition of progress toward English language attainment as demonstrated on the English language proficiency test and four-year graduation rate of K-12 students based on the percent of students who graduate in four years or less after first enrolling in 9th grade.

Table 2

District Profiles

District by Participant	English Learners' Progress (%)	Average English Learners' Progress of State	Graduation Rate of District (%)	Average Graduation Rate of State (%)
Elijah	23.1	21.1	81.9	87
Brian	32.9	54.3	80.5	85
Joey	32.9	54.3	80.5	85
Edward	56.5	54.3	86.0	85
Lawrence	60.2	54.3	77.9	85
Jaleel	22.4	21.1	88.1	87

Participant Selection and Recruitment Strategy

The target participants for this study were Black male teachers who currently teach in K-12 public schools in districts in the southeastern region of the United States. Qualifying participants for this study were identified utilizing convenience and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling is based on time, money, location, and availability of sites or respondents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The criteria for participants in this study were: a) a Black male teacher, b) completed at least one year of teaching, and c) currently teaching in a school district in the southeastern region of the United States.

The first criterion for years of teaching was considered to differentiate teachers without teaching experience. This specificity provided an opportunity to explore the lived experiences of Black male teachers who have experienced one year with students in the classroom and the specific challenges of being a first-year teacher. The second criterion of holding or actively pursuing teaching licensure in their grade level was employed to ensure that the teachers were versed in their content area and attempted to minimize pedagogical and content knowledge challenges. Participants were expected to hold a current teaching license in the content area that they are teaching to decrease the likelihood that challenges with their specific content knowledge would appear when the teachers reflected on their experiences within their current school environment. The third criterion of teaching in districts in the southeastern region of the United States strengthened the participants' qualifications to reflect on the racialized and gendered experiences of schools in the South and include the historical context (Creswell, 2013). Participants in this study were easily accessible for data collection. Convenience sampling was used to identify the desired number of participants. Participants were recruited through social media and the personal networks of the researcher. I followed the protocol as the previously approved IRB pilot study associated with this study. I solicited participation via Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram by posting a call for participants flyer to request participants. In addition, I sent the call for participants flyer to the personal network of former and current colleagues. Interested participants were instructed to respond to the email address on the flyer. They were contacted via email to schedule a time to speak with me to explain the study and answer questions about participation. After confirming that they were interested and willing to participate, I sent a consent

form for participants to sign. After receiving consent, I worked with the participant to schedule two interviews and informed participants of scheduled dates and times via email. Consent to participate in the study included: a) availability for two (2) one-hour semi-structured interviews; b) ability to provide a document for analysis; and c) notification of intent to use data for the study. The potential benefits and confidentiality of the study were communicated to the participants at each step of the process, starting with an informed consent form that participants were required to complete before participating. Participants

were informed of the option to skip questions that evoked personal experiences they did not wish to share. I concluded participant recruitment after securing consent and scheduling interviews with six participants. Table 3 provides an overview of the participants' teaching experience and the location for their K-12, teaching preparation, and teaching location.

Table 3

Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Content Area	Years Taught	K-12 Location	Teacher Preparation Location	Current Teaching Location
Elijah	HS ELA	4	North Carolina	North Carolina	North Carolina
Brian	MS ELS	5	South Carolina	South Carolina	South Carolina

Joey	HS History	10	South Carolina	South Carolina	South Carolina
Edward	MS English	4	South Carolina	South Carolina	South Carolina
Lawrence	MS History	5	South Carolina	South Carolina	South Carolina
Jaleel	HS History	8	North Carolina	North Carolina	North Carolina

Data Collection and Procedures

The Interview Process

The primary instrument for data collection in this study was the participant interview. The main goal of the interviews was to gain knowledge and perspective about individuals' experiences; understand how their experiences have shaped their worldview; and describe how

individuals who have gone through the same experiences relate to one another or past research on the topic (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Participants were asked to engage in a set of semi-structured interviews to reflect on their K-12 experience, teacher preparation experience, teacher recruitment experiences, and teaching practices. During the second interview, participants engaged in an analysis of documents that reflected their teaching practices. For this study, I developed a guide of questions to emphasize that knowledge of an interview is "produced, relational, conversational,

contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 63-65). The semi-structured interview protocol allowed the participants to reflect on their authentic experiences and for me to be able to ask follow-up questions for clarity as needed.

The interview process consisted of scheduling and conducting two (2) interviews for each participant and providing transcripts for member checking. The interview site, date, and time were reserved with consideration for the participant's convenience and privacy and were conducted via Zoom virtual platform. Participants were informed about securing at least one hour for each interview and that the interviews would be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription and analysis that would be used for published research.

Interview Protocols

To increase the level of comfortability of the participants, I began the first interviews with the following introductory questions:

- What three words would you use to describe yourself and why?
- What inspired you to become a teacher? Was there a specific event or person that inspired you to become a teacher?
- What do you enjoy the most about teaching at your current school?

The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed participant flexibility when responding to the prompts. After the introductory questions, participants were guided through reflections on their K-12, teacher preparation, and recruitment experiences with a specific lens of their race and gender. The following questions were presented to capture those experiences:

K-12 experience

- How did your race and gender impact your K-12 experience?
- What racialized and gendered experiences (if any) did you have in your K-12 experience?
- How do you believe that your K-12 experience compares to those who are of a different race and gender?

Teacher preparation experience

- How did your race and gender impact your pathway to becoming a teacher?
- What racialized and gendered experiences (if any) did you have in your pathway to teaching?
- How do you believe that your pathway to teaching experience compares to those who are of a different race and gender?

Teacher recruitment experience

- How did your race and gender impact your ability to obtain a teaching position?
- What racialized and gendered experiences (if any) did you have in your pursuit of obtaining your teaching position?
- How do you believe that your pursuit of obtaining a teaching position experience compares to those of a different race/gender?

Participants were asked to reflect on their teaching practices during the second interview. Again, utilizing a semi-structured natured interview allowed me to ask follow-up questions for clarity around the responses. The following questions were presented during the second set of interviews:

- What words/phrases would you use to describe your teaching practices?

- How do you believe that your teaching practices are similar to your colleagues of a different race and gender?
- How do you believe that your teaching practices are different from your colleagues of a different race and gender?
- What impact do you believe that your teaching practices have on your relationships with students?

In between the first and second interviews, participants were asked to provide teaching artifacts (lesson plans, student handouts, student activities) that aligned with their teaching identity. The following questions were used to guide the participants through the curriculum that they provided:

- Why did you select these artifacts to share?
- How did your race and gender impact the selection of these artifacts?
- In what ways do your selected artifacts (lesson plan, student handouts, student activities) reflect your teaching identity?

Data Analysis and Procedures

Data analysis is the classification of linguistic and visual data to make meaning of experiences (Flick, 2014). For this study, data was collected through interviews and archival documents, including artifacts of lesson plans, teacher and/or student handouts, and student activities used in their teaching practices. Since interviews served as the primary data collection method, thematic analysis was employed as the primary method for data analysis and was. It was conducted through the following steps: transcription of interviews, member checking, analytic memoing, and in vivo coding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). After conducting twelve interviews via Zoom, the online transcription tool (Otter)

was used to transcribe the recordings from the Zoom platform. After transcripts were produced from the online transcription tool, a member-checking strategy was employed in which participants received a copy of their transcript to review for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). I explained to participants that reviewing their transcripts for accuracy would ensure that they were accurately portrayed in a way that they agreed upon and that there were no inaccuracies in the recording of the transcripts.

Due to the large amount of data collected across multiple interviews, analytic memoing and in vivo coding was utilized to assist in developing preliminary codes from the interview questions. Analytic memoing is described as "sites of conversation with ourselves about our data" (Clarke, 2005, p.202; as cited in Saldana, 2016, p.44) and involved me making notes of my initial thoughts in my notebook during interviews and while conducting initial readings of the transcripts. Examples of analytic memos included phrases such as: "representation," "culturally relevant teaching," and "implicit bias," In vivo coding is the process in which the participant's language is used to developed preliminary codes (Saldana, 2016). Utilizing in vivo coding to develop initial codes allowed me to honor the voices of the participants as they shared their intimate experiences with race and gender. Examples of in vivo coding included the following phrases: "It's important for them to see teachers who look like them." "You are constantly having to jump through hurdles to prove yourself." "You gotta be real with these kids and teach them about the real world." "I'm more than that, I'm more than this disciplinarian."

Document analysis can be used to triangulate and point out discrepancies in the data that is being collected (Love, 2013). For this study, participants were asked to

provide documents they utilize in their teaching practice and supported Research Question 2. Document analysis was utilized to confirm or refute the findings from the participant interviews. Participants were instructed to provide a document between the first and second interviews highlighting their teaching practice. Each participant shared at least two artifacts for this data point. Artifacts included lesson plans, student and teacher handouts, student activities, and PowerPoint that were submitted for analysis. During the second interview, participants were asked to share how they believed the artifacts were influenced by their own racialized and gendered experiences and how they believe the artifacts impacted their teaching practices. Artifacts and interviews were triangulated to categorize codes and develop emerging themes.

After conducting analytic memoing, in vivo coding, and document analysis triangulation, NVIVO software was utilized to categorize codes. This process resulted in the development of several categories. Categories with the most significant number of codes were then identified as themes and subthemes for this study. The following themes were identified and organized by each research question:

Research Question 1: Racialized and Gendered Experiences

- Isolating Experiences
- Validating My Worth
- Restricting Experiences

Research Question 2: Teaching Practices

- Empowering Practices
- Relational Practices
- Humanizing Practices

Research Question 3: Honoring through Countering

- Honoring
- Countering

Chapter 4 will provide a detailed discussion of themes and subthemes.

Ethical Considerations

Upon receiving approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB), I received informed consent forms from the participants. The informed consent forms detailed the nature of the study, participant expectations, benefits of the study, commitment to confidentiality, and how the data will be used from the study. Participants were informed of audio recording and a transcription device that will be used during the interviews to accurately capture information and signed consent forms of their knowledge. Participants were advised that at any time during the study, they could remove themselves if needed due to comfortability with questions during the interview process. Additionally, the participants were provided with pseudonyms during the investigation and informed that any data that reveals identity would be redacted from the documentation.

Strategies for Quality

Pilot Study

Before the dissertation, I conducted a pilot study to evaluate the research design and revise the interview protocol as needed. According to Merten (2020), pilot studies help to strengthen the validity of research by testing the instrument and procedures. Pilot study participants all met the requirements to participate as they were Black male teachers who were teaching in districts in the southeastern United States. The responses from the pilot study were utilized to revise and improve the interview protocol. Key findings from the pilot study were

categorized into three major themes: service to the home community, duality of roles, and it's a calling. While significant, these findings did not highlight the nuances of race and gender. From this pilot study, I identified and addressed blind spots in the interview protocol. As a result, the interview protocol for this dissertation study was revised to reflect more pointed questions that asked participants to reflect on racialized and gendered experiences. The pilot study also allowed me to revise the semi-structured nature of the interview to have participants elaborate on their racialized and gendered experiences.

Delimitations

This study was delimited by participants being Black male teachers currently teaching in secondary public school districts in the southeastern region of the United States (South Carolina and North Carolina).

Limitations

The virtual interview aspect of the study is a potential limitation. Virtual participation could present challenges for accessibility and broadband challenges. Time to complete the interviews and not providing compensation for participants offer additional limitations to reach a more significant number of potential participants. Further, being a Black male teacher who attended schools like the ones in this study presented the challenge of potential bias of the experiences shared by the participants. The potential for me to have bias has been addressed in my positionality statement.

Assumptions

The implementation of this research design was based on several assumptions. The first assumption is that Black male teachers in the South have experienced racialized and gendered experiences. Also, this study assumed that Black male teachers in districts in the southeastern region of the United States use instructional practices that differed from their colleagues of a different race and gender. Further, I assumed that Black male teachers would have similar experiences in other school districts that are in the southeastern region of the United States. Lastly, this research design believes that participants would make connections between their race, gender, and their experiences in school districts in the South. This assumption implies that Black male teachers racialized and gendered experiences are significant enough to inform their teaching practices.

Summary

This method chapter introduced the guided methodology for a qualitative approach to Black male teachers in the south's racialized and gendered experiences. The study identified participants through the use of convenience and snowball sampling. Additionally, findings from an IRB-approved pilot study were utilized to revise interview protocols and strengthen the study. Utilizing a qualitative lens, I employed data collection and analysis tools that would best answer the intended research questions of this study. Lastly, a review of the ethical procedures, delimitations, limitations, and assumptions concludes this chapter. Chapter 4 will highlight the findings, and Chapter 5 will provide recommendations and implications for future research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This qualitative study explored Black male teachers in the South's racialized and gendered experiences. More specifically, the research sought to examine the influence of racialized and gendered experiences on the teaching practices of Black male teachers. The emerging findings capture the nuances and complexities that Black male teachers navigate throughout their trajectory to teaching that include a guided reflection of their own K-12 experience, teacher preparation, and teacher recruitment experiences. Participants also shared their teaching practices through interview questions and provided a teaching artifact for document analysis. To further contextualize their experience, this study considers the nuances and complexities of Black male teachers in the southeastern region of the United States through a racialized and gendered lens. This study contributes to the existing literature by exploring and providing a contextualized experience of Black male teachers in the southeastern region of the United States that accentuate their unique prowess and counters a monolithic narrative of how Black male teachers reach and impact student outcomes. Historically, research highlights the disparaging impact of integration on the displacement of Black teachers in the south (Anderson, 1988). The findings from this study provide context for those interested in increasing teacher diversity, specifically the recruitment of retention of Black male teachers, that currently represent the lowest percentage of teachers within the workforce in the United States (NCES, 2019).

The following research questions guided this study:

1) What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South?

2) What are the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South?

3) How do Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences in the south influence their teaching practices?

Research Question 1 (RQ 1) asked participants to reflect on experiences they believe may have been influenced by their race and gender. This research question seeks to lift the marginalization that Black male teachers have experienced historically based on their race and gender (Howard, 2014; Noguera, 2008) with an added contextual lens of the South. Additionally, this research question emphasizes the factors contributing to the negative and/or indifferent sentiments that many Black males have about the school as I have them reflect on their K-12 school experience. Ladson-Billings (2011) references the conflicting emotions that Black male teachers have with the school as a result of their own K-12 experience through the term "love-hate" relationship (p.8). Through this question, participants could lift what they believed were racialized and gendered experiences in K-12, teacher preparation, and teacher recruitment. Exploration through this research question is connected to this study's purpose in that the sharing of those experiences provides context to understand the challenges associated with Black male teacher recruitment and retention.

Research Question 2 (RQ 2) was constructed to lift the unique teaching practices that Black male teachers possess and bring to the classroom to impact student outcomes positively. This question serves to highlight the prowess of the Black male teacher and problematize the narrative that Black male teachers are intellectually inferior, incompetent, and do not possess the pedagogical practices that improve student outcomes (Bristol & Goings, 2019; Mitchell, 2016). Exploration through this research question

connects to the study of this purpose in that it provides implications for teacher diversity efforts and considerations for teacher preparation programs retention efforts.

Research Question 3 sought to explore how Black male teachers racialized, and gendered experiences impacted their teaching practices by connecting the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the south to their teaching practices. Since this study aimed to explore the impact of Black male teachers in the south's racialized and gendered experiences on their teaching practices, participants needed to provide artifacts that we could discuss as evidence of their racialized and gendered experiences. By having the participants provide and explain artifacts reflecting their teaching practices, I connected to how those experiences may have impacted their teaching practices.

Three major themes were identified and organized by each research question through transcription, member checking, analytic memoing, and in vivo coding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), a process described in Chapter 3 of this study. The major themes within each question were developed to emphasize similarities and any significant differences across participants' experiences. Through the detailed analysis of interviews and documents, the themes and subthemes outlined in this chapter uniquely represent the participants' racialized and gendered experiences, teaching practices, and how those contextual factors impact those teaching practices. This chapter is organized thematically by each research question to provide a contextual representation of Black male teachers in the South's racialized and gendered experiences and to see if those experiences impact their teaching practices. First, I will introduce each participant. Next, the major theme and their subthemes are provided to include the experience of participants with their

voices. Providing direct quotes from participants about their experiences as evidence of the identified theme validates the authenticity of those themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). I conclude this chapter by synthesizing the themes in connection to the purpose of the study.

Participant Overview

The six Black male teachers who participated in this study are secondary (middle/high) teachers across North and South Carolina. Four participants are employed in districts in South Carolina, and two are employed in districts in North Carolina. Further, all participants received their high school and college degrees and teacher certifications in either North or South Carolina. Interestingly, two participants are teachers in the same school they attended as a student. This section will provide narratives introducing each participant in the study and why they chose to become teachers.

Elijah

Elijah is a 28-year-old male from rural North Carolina. He is currently in his fourth-year teaching English at the high school level in rural North Carolina in the same district he attended as a student. Although he teaches in the same district as a K-12 student, he does not teach at the same high school he attended. Elijah shared that his high school was more affluent than where he currently teaches. After graduating from high school, Elijah attended a four-year PWI university in North Carolina and returned to his hometown after completing a bachelor's degree in English. Elijah recalls from a very young age that he wanted to teach:

> Honestly, it was well when I was in fourth grade. My teacher pretty much took me out of class and took me to the fifth-grade teacher's classroom for math. I was advanced in math and often had to teach the other students. I remember answering questions on the board and how it made me feel about teaching something to my classmates that they did not know. I think it's the same look students get today when I teach them something that they do not know, and you can see them looking at you when they finally do understand, it makes you feel some type of way. So even at a young age, I figure out that everybody just wants the right answer, and if you ask them a question, nobody wants to say I don't know, but most of the time, that's the first answer, but it's not that they don't know but need that extra little push...When I was young, I realized everybody needed that extra little push.

Brian

Brian is a 26-year-old male from rural South Carolina. He is in his fifth-year teaching middle grades English in rural South Carolina. He teaches in the same middle school he attended as a student and works alongside many former teachers. After graduating high school, Brian attended a four-year private HBCU in South Carolina. Brian was a Call Me Mister participant in college but did not complete the program due to time constraints. After dropping the Call Me Mister program, Brian completed his degree in English and returned to his hometown in rural South Carolina. Brian cites a mentor and the following reasons for pursuing a career in teaching:

> I don't know, it just you kind of just happen in a way, because I kind of when I went to college I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I did have some great teachers who...especially English teachers... who impacted me, who just opened up my mind and showed me that I could do more and be more...And so I thought about them, and I also thought about the representation of male teachers. I didn't have a male teacher till I was in the sixth grade, and he was a white male. I didn't have my first black male teacher until I was in the ninth grade, so I thought that was not normal and he wasn't relatable, and then I didn't have a lot of young teachers...All of our teachers were seasoned, you know, been there for 20-30 plus years. So I want more representation. That was one of the reasons I wanted to do it, and I do see a payoff in my being young in this area. So that's why...

Joey

Joey is a 34-year-old male from rural South Carolina. He is in his tenth year teaching History at the high school level in rural South Carolina. Joey teaches at the high school in the neighboring town he attended as a student. He recalls that the school he teaches currently is a long-standing rivalry with the one he attended as a student. After graduating high school, Joey attended a four-year PWI university in South Carolina and completed his degree in History. Joey has received several awards for teaching, including Teacher of the Year for his district. He notes the following as to why he became a teacher:

> It was a combination of many factors. One of the things is living in my small-town community has shaped and molded me. Being in a community or county and a predominately black city has been very interesting. I've also looked up to other

> people who have been outside and who have been inside of the community as well, and always want to strive for more and strive for higher. But I also noticed that even with me, and in general, I could experience different things that other black males and black females could not experience, like being able to travel. Being able to go visit different places and go see different things played a very important part in my life because I wanted other people to be able to experience the same things that I had been able to experience. And I knew that education would be the key part of those people being able to experience those things. So coming from my small community, which has always, for the most part, had a high unemployment rate and high poverty, it was very important for me to get back to my community and make sure that there was hope and that there was an image for the younger generation to actually follow by and also to look up to, and let them know that, hey, this isn't the only thing that you have, that you have the whole horizon that you can shoot for. And you can go beyond that, improve upon your life and help your family as well.

Edward

Edward is a 27-year-old male from rural South Carolina. He is currently a middle grades English teacher in the metropolitan area of South Carolina. Edward taught for three years in the rural school district he attended as a student before relocating to the metro area of South Carolina. After graduating high school, Edward attended a four-year PWI university in South Carolina. Edward returned home to rural South Carolina and began his teaching career as a middle grades English teacher. Edward reflects with the following when asked why did he become a teacher:

> I was a music major when I went to college, and during the summer, like two weeks after graduating high school, and throughout that summer, I was doing music courses, and I realized I didn't like this that much, but I had a scholarship because I was on a concert choir. I ended up switching my major to psychology and minoring in mid-level education, and what made me switch to wanting to end up becoming a teacher was because of all four years of college... I had a field experience in an elementary school classroom with my mentor. I was in his class all 4 years, the whole school year...I would be with him so much that I even substituted when he wasn't there. They wouldn't even get a substitute because they knew I was coming to class, so I would be the substitute. He would leave me his lesson plans, and I end up just like, you know... I got a degree in psychology, but I didn't necessarily know what I wanted to do with it, and most time, with Psychology, you have to have a master's degree to get the full experience of it. So I was like, well, I'm good at teaching. Seems like I seem to be good around kids. So maybe this is the pathway I should go with, and my grandfather He was a teacher in the New York school system for 50-plus years, so it all felt natural.

Lawrence

Lawrence is a 28-year-old male from rural South Carolina. He is in his fifth year of teaching in a metropolitan area of South Carolina. Lawrence began his career in education as a behavior specialist in Virginia before moving back to his hometown and gaining employment as a teacher. While heavily involved in his hometown as a minister, Lawrence commutes 45 minutes away to a metropolitan area of South Carolina to work.

After graduating from high school, Lawrence attended a four-year PWI university in South Carolina and received his bachelor's degree in history. After receiving his degree, Lawrence moved to Virginia and became a behavior specialist, which sparked his interest in teaching. Lawrence shared the following when asked about why he became a teacher:

> Well, I will say my family was inspired because my mother was an education major. She's a big inspiration for me, far as having that passion for a younger generation younger than my children or me. My fifth-grade teacher made me really like history. You know, she made it fun. She always had a video to show or relate it to what happened locally during that time if she could pull information from that period. Also, my eighth-grade teacher helped me cultivate that love for history. I think those three would shape me to want to teach and have a love for history because they made me see it through the lens of, like, we're dealing with race here, see through the lens of black people, and emphasized the fact that, hey, it's not just white people that have done important things during certain periods, or through the course of history, but it's also us who make up America who make up the world.

Jaleel

Jaleel is a 34-year-old male from suburban North Carolina. He is in his eighth year of teaching high school History in rural North Carolina. Before teaching, Jaleel was a YMCA counselor, which sparked his interest in education. Jaleel began his teaching career at the middle grades level for five years before moving to the high school setting. After graduating from high school, Jaleel attended a four-year PWI university in North

Carolina and received a bachelor's degree in History. Jaleel holds a master's degree in teaching and is pursuing his doctorate. Jaleel says the following about how he became a teacher:

> After graduating from college, I went back to working at the Boys Club, and one of my colleagues there was like, you would be a great teacher due to your interactions with the students and things of that nature, you know, there's a teaching pathway, and you should look. I said, " Okay, why not? Let's see what happens, you know, so I looked into the program, and I knew that I loved working with young folks, and I know that it would be a great way to leave a legacy. So, I just started doing the curriculum and became a teacher. I also knew I would love history because history was one of my favorite subjects. It was my favorite subject in school. I love learning about the past, and I relate to our present...so it just all just came together like that. To be honest.

Overview of Themes

Data analysis revealed several themes from each research question in this study. Research question 1 asked participants to reflect on racialized and gendered experiences throughout K-12 and their journey to the teaching profession. As a result, the following themes: 1) *isolating experiences,* 2) *validating my worth*, and 3) *restricting* emerged as the most salient throughout their experiences. Research question 2 asked participants to reflect on their teaching practices through two rounds of interviews and document analysis. The following three themes emerged from this data collection: 1) *empowering practices,* 2) *relational practices,* and 3) *humanizing practices*. Lastly, to answer research question 3, how do racialized and gendered experiences impact participants' teaching

practices, participants were asked pointed questions during the second interview about how their racialized and gendered experiences influenced the teaching practices and documents that they provided. This question revealed the following two emerging themes: 1) *honoring* and 2) *countering* that described how the participants used their past experiences to inform their teaching practices. The themes for this question were a result of asking participants how they believe that any racialized and gendered experience impacted their teaching practices or artifacts. Table 4 below outlines the major themes for each research question.

Table 4

Major Themes by Research Question

	Racialized and Gendered Experiences		
RQ 1	*Isolating Experiences*	*Validating My Worth*	*Restricting Experiences*
	Teaching Practices		
RQ 2	*Empowering Practices*	*Relational Practices*	*Humanizing Practices*
	Influence on Teaching Practices		
RQ 3	*Honoring*		*Countering*

Themes

RQ 1: Racialized and Gendered Experiences

Research Question 1 asked participants to reflect on racialized and gendered experiences. Before beginning the interviews, I explained to participants that for this study, racialized and gendered experiences are any experiences they can recall that they believe were impacted by their identity as a Black male. All of the participants reflected that they had experiences that they believed to be influenced by their race and gender.

The themes that emerged from this research question were categorized as 1) Isolating Experiences, 2) Validating my Worth, and 3) Restricting.

Isolating Experiences

Isolating experiences are defined as any experience that participants recall that made them feel alone, siloed, detached, and even targeted as a direct result of their race and gender. The experiences categorized within this theme encompass both physical and mental isolation. When recalling racialized and gendered experiences throughout their K-12 teaching journey, most participants recalled at least one instance in which they believed their race and gender were the isolating factors. In the example provided below, Lawrence recalls being the only Black male student in his classes up until middle grade:

> I think it wasn't until middle school that I started to have like core classes with other Black boys. They were my friend, but we would only hang out after school or on the bus. Maybe it was because I was in different classes, but it definitely was noticeable. I just wanted to be in classes with my friends from my neighborhood.

Joey won teacher of the year for his district a few years ago. He recalls attending the Teacher of the Year luncheon and being the only Black male in attendance. While happy about the award, he recalls being "hyperaware" of his race and gender and making sure he didn't say the wrong thing. "I kept scanning the room, thinking it had to be at least one other Black man there, but it wasn't."

Jaleel worked at an early college and expressed the exhaustion of being the only Black male at his school:

> I work at an early college, and I'm often expected to deal with all the Black boys who might need some support. It's never surprising when a teacher sends a kid to talk to me, but I know it's because I'm the only Black male in the building. I don't mind it, but I do have to teach.

Similarly, Brian reflects on how being a Black male means being asked to do everything related to Black cultures, such as the Black History Program:

> I know every year, they will ask me to help organize the Black History Program at school. What would they do if I wasn't there? One year I'm just going to say no to see what happens.

Isolation can also have its "benefits," as Elijah recalls being the only Black male in his district-wide professional learning cohort:

> Because I was the only Black male, I felt it was sometimes beneficial because I could get what I wanted. I pushed to get the book Monster in our library because I was the only one. They felt pressured to listen to my recommendation, which was good for the students and me.

On the other hand, Elijah reflects on how being the only Black male impacts his sense of belonging:

> If you're not a part of one of those circles as a Black male, it's kind of hard to get in where you fit in cause you try to hang out with the White males, and you don't connect with them that well, or you'll feel something in your

> heart's not right about certain things they say, or you don't know about what they're saying. Then you try to hang out with people that look like you, but you know nothing about their culture or your own culture. I mean, so you're trying to fit in with their jokes or songs that they all know. But you don't. So now you're still on the outside, looking in.

Participants consistently reflect that they were often reminded, by actions and sometimes words, of their isolating status due to their race and gender. Participants referenced several examples of being the only Black man on a team of teachers, looking for people who resembled them, being othered, and even exhausted from racialized and gendered experiences.

Validating My Worth

While there were many racialized and gendered experiences that participants' shared in which the intent of the experience matched the impact, there were several instances in which the purpose of the experience had the reverse effect on the participant. From these experiences, a consistent theme was one of inspiration and motivation to reject the narrative placed upon them. The validating my worth theme encompasses experiences where a participant felt inspired to provide a counter-narrative to the experience. This theme was highlighted when participants shared phrases and words like "prove people wrong," "achievement," "making my family proud," and "representing," just to name a few. Depending on the context, these racialized and gendered experiences could have been damaging, and while participants did not acknowledge it, these experiences somehow inspired them and were positive. For example, Brian shared how he was motivated by a conversation with a stranger at a game:

> I teach my students about being an outsider from my experiences. I think the biggest thing is like recognizing when you're being othered or recognizing when the microaggression is happening to you. Are you not being aware of it right in your face? I was at a football game in Dallas, and I was sharing with a white guy that I was a teacher and getting a master's degree. The guy seemed surprised...Why can't I be educated, you know? So I tell my students to recognize stuff like that...microaggressions.. or when they have been othered, and to recognize when they are disrupting the status quo. Work your hardest to prove them wrong!

Elijah discussed a similar motivating experience when he was the only Black boy to represent his school district at Palmetto Boys State, a club that he says mostly white boys in his school were selected to attend their junior year of high school:

> I was representing all the Black boys in my school. There were other Black boys there but not from my school. I felt like I had to represent everybody and be proud of who I represented. I was very sure of my race, though. My momma made sure I knew to be aware since I would be away for a week. She reminded me, as she does now, that I can't do everything they do. It was also in Charleston too, which we know can be racist.

Lawrence and Jaleel shared how it felt to be the first Black male in their family to graduate to college. Lawrence shared that he how much it meant to his family for him to leave home for opportunities that others like him didn't have:

> Every time I wanted to give up and go back home, I thought about all the people who were waiting for me to come back and make a difference. It was hard because I was at a PWI about three hours away from home. I knew I had to stay there. I knew there were people back home that were rooting for me, and that's what made me stay. I remember how hard I had to fight to get there too.

While Jaleel shared the racialized and gendered experience of being the first Black male to go to college in his family, his source of inspiration was different in that he felt the need to validate his ability to achieve:

> Being the first person in my family to attend college was a big deal because people doubted me. I had to show that I could achieve, which made me continue when times got hard. I wouldn't even go home on summer breaks because I knew I needed to stay focused, so I would do summer work to stay in the dorms. I was determined to graduate. Education was my way out.

While Joey shared how his Teacher of the year award was isolating, he also shared how this achievement made a positive impact:

> One of the things you have to do when you get the award is go around and speak. I felt like people saw me, a Black man coming from a small town, and made a positive impact on their lives. Like they could do it too, you know? I wouldn't say I'm a celebrity and all, but I do think I made a positive impact. I just want them, especially my Black male students, to see a teacher who looks like them being recognized and successful. If I can be an inspiration for them, at the end of the day, that's all that matters.

Validating my worth as a theme was very nuanced because of the paradoxical way it was shared from the participants' reflections of experiences in which the impact did not match the intent. I developed this theme by listening to participants' words and feelings as they shared their unique racialized and gendered experiences.

Restricting

Restricting as a theme emerged from racialized and gendered experiences shared by participants that evoked feelings of limitations, exclusion, denial, and other descriptors that conveyed the confinement of their potential to progress and make an impact. When asked about racialized and gendered experiences, all participants recounted an event that produced feelings of being confined in some capacity. One example of this restriction is Joey's childhood memory of exclusion from his local boys' scout troop:

> I remember being in about the third grade, and there wasn't much to do in the small town that I am from. Many of my white classmates were involved in boys scouts, and you would hear them talking about camping trips and things like that. I always wondered what it was like, but it was kinda like an unspoken rule that we (Black boys) weren't invited. I mean, some of my brave white classmates would even joke about it being a thing that only they would do. I wasn't told to join, but I definitely wasn't encouraged to even try and join. I would have benefited from being in it, but I guess they (the white people) in town didn't think so.

While he was able to overcome a restricting experience, Brian shared the following incident in middle grade when his Black assistant principal interjected on his behalf to be tested for placement in academically gifted and talented:

> We had just started 7th grade, and my Black assistant principal was doing an observation in our classroom. This classroom was not the honors class....it was what we called the CP (college prep) classes. It was about three weeks into the class. She looks at me and says, "what are you doing here? Why aren't you in the honors class? She actually really looked surprised to see me not in the gifted and talented class. It was because of her that I was able to go to the other gifted class and have two high school credits before I went down high school. It feels like I was overlooked.

Edward articulated a similar access-denied experience of being questioned about his placement in academically gifted coursework due to his high math scores:

> I definitely felt ostracized. I tested well, and because of that, I was placed in academically gifted coursework. Because you are in a classroom with a majority of white students...I think I was probably one of two Black students... and the teacher is constantly signaling you out, and you already know you are challenged in this class. You are trying to figure out the work but are being questioned about your presence.

Many of the participants restricting experiences have recurred as they navigate into teaching. Elijah shared that he often feels limited within the teaching profession as a result of the frequency of observations:

> They make it difficult for you to stay in teaching because they constantly make you jump through hurdles, constantly. It's kind of like the hidden conversations that we have with each other. I feel that I am under a microscope a lot, which is aggravating. Because, you know, you start to question if you belong here. I know

> that many colleagues of a different race or gender do not get as many classroom observations or have to do as much to keep their jobs.

Even after successfully navigating high school, Lawrence and Jaleel also recall these feelings of exclusion in their college experiences. For example, Lawrence recalls a time when he experienced a feeling of access being denied when he was applying for college:

> You know, I wanted to apply to this school, and we asked about scholarships and many things that I had to learn in my home. We had a friend group that would all work together and tries to figure out how to find scholarships and apply. We were all the Black students in this group. We thought the guidance counselor would help with stuff like that, but they only promoted USC and Clemson, schools that were hard to get into...you know? It wasn't like they were promoting the HBCU....it was discouraged to go to an HBCUs. I also had issues because the guidance counselor sent my transcripts late, although I had them to her on time!

RQ 2: Teaching Practices

Research Question 2 asked participants to share their teaching practices. To accomplish this, participants were asked about specific teaching practices compared to those of their colleagues of a different race or gender. Additionally, participants were asked to share teaching documents that demonstrated those teaching practices that they named. Participants provided documents such as activities they did with their students, student handouts, and books. During the second interview, participants were asked questions about the artifacts they provided and how they represent their teaching practices. Three emerging themes: 1) empowering practices, 2) relational practices, and

3) humanizing practices capture how the participants intentionally implemented teaching practices and resources from their pedagogical toolkit. To honor the culture and lived experiences that their students bring to the classroom and their own cultures.

Empowering Practices

The theme of empowering practices captures how participants utilize awareness of cultural differences as an asset in their teaching practices to inspire student learning. For this question, participants in this study shared that their teaching practices are different from their counterparts of a different race and gender because they embed cultural aspects that are often ignored or perhaps are not known by the dominant group. Words such as honor, supportive, and inspire were used to define teaching practices and supporting teaching documents that they believed built confidence in their students. Participant teaching practices were more than just the instructional strategies and lessons they used but included the small details that contribute to a collaborative and connected classroom environment. As an example, Edward reflects on how he sometimes uses the arrangement of his classroom to connect to culture:

> I am known to switch up my classroom arrangement all the time. Students have no idea what to expect when they walk into my classroom on any day. For example, sometimes I set my classroom up in a U shape because it encourages students to talk. I don't mind the talking as long as it's on task. I also like to use soft lights, curtains, lamps, and couches so that the classroom feels like home. I also have art that represents the culture in the classroom. Students notice the small things.

Empowering practices are also those that they believe disrupt myths about the narratives of Black culture, including Black identity. Participants shared phrases such as "rejecting white-washed curriculum," "showing Black intellectuals," and "not all the same" to emphasize ways that they were intentional about disrupting myths in their teaching practices.

Joey, Brian, and Lawrence shared examples of how they disrupt myths in their teaching practices with students. For instance, shares the following reflection on how his teaching practices about different cultures disrupt myths of a monolithic Black culture:

> Because many of my students didn't quite come from the same culture, being a social studies teacher...my job is to teach my kids about all cultures. I teach them that cultures are huge and very complex. There are big cultures that we have. And there are smaller cultures that we have within those large cultures. For example, with Black culture, some things are similar about all Black cultures, but then within that, you have a Black southern culture, which is my culture, that is different. Some things are myths because some cultures believe it is this way in all Black cultures. My job is to teach about all the cultures and the small things within the cultures. This even goes for something like food. Black southern and Black northerners have different terms for the same thing.

Brian reflects on the following about how his teaching presence disrupts the myth of the Black male teacher as only a disciplinarian:

> I will say that I think Black men are needed in the classroom and education system and can be used more. They just use us for discipline and athletics. And that's been something I really have expounded upon my

> boys in my school because most of the time, at least in my experience, when I think about a black man in the school, he was either like the guy coming to deal with the discipline. They sent the black male in the room to deal with the kids because they were acting up, or he was the coach. But there was never anything that was an alternative because I'm not athletic, and I don't have to deal with a lot of major disciplinary issues. I'm not that person, and I just want to be able to show my young men and show everybody that we can be used for other things than just sports and laying down a hammer like there's an empathetic side to us as educators.

Lawrence shares how his lessons on slavery serve as a way to disrupt myths about Black people who were enslaved:

> Our history still shows up to date. I get them to commit to learning their family history. You know. Things that happened to your family. But I'm just trying to show them other ways to debunk things that are myths. That's what I'm trying to do...you know. Like for example, I share that all slaves weren't gullible. You had those that resisted. You had your Nat Turner rebellion. You get them to see that, you know. Not all of the enslaved were gullible and submissive. You have some that resisted.

Empowerment can also show up in the teaching artifacts that participants use to inspire their students. Elijah shares the following about his selection of The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost as one of his teaching artifacts as a way to inspire his students:

> This activity is about choosing your path, and I would say, as a Black man, I've chosen my path. I walk my tread. I've done things that most would say isn't normal for a black man, but I would say, Why isn't it normal for a black man to do and achieve those things? Those are the lessons that I want to instill in my students.

Relational Practices

Relational practices as a theme are encaptured in participants' teaching practices and artifacts connected to culture. For this question, participants shared their teaching practices and artifacts that they believed to be cognizant and reflective of lived experiences of both students and teachers. Words and phrases such as "real world," "relevant," and "culturally responsive" were indicative of relational teaching practices and artifacts. Most participants shared that their teaching practices were not just about academics and testing but provided students with real lessons about life. It is important to note that all participants conveyed that their teaching practices incorporated strategies and content that allowed their students to build upon their own background knowledge. Joey shared the following when discussing how he modified a lesson to have students consider their backgrounds:

> So a lot of times, the material that we are given will have us asking a question about something foreign to our students. For example, we may be talking about Germany or France, and there are many cases when my students don't have the background to make those connections...It's not their fault...they just don't know. A lot of the things I just learned about as an adult and being around more people that are different in college and stuff. Because I knew that my kids would struggle

> with that content, we came together and planned how we help them be successful. We planned a world travel activity where we asked them where they had been or even heard of...you know..some students have never left the town where we are, so we can never assume things about students without asking questions first.

He goes on to share another way he gets his students to be reflective of the real-world implication:

> I'm always telling my students, what more can you do to be an asset to your community? You know...Why are you getting this education? How can you use it to help other people? And so I guess my best practices are building around the community and using that community to go out and help one another. But that's what education is supposed to be about.. learning and using those skills to help one another and service. Yes, service would be the best word to describe my teaching practice.

When reflecting on his teaching artifact, a lesson that had students compare the works of Langston Hughes and Tupac Shukar, Jaleel shared the following explanation for his lesson being culturally responsive:

> This lesson gives me a chance to show students about me. I am hip-hop, you know. I love the hip-hop era, but I also love the jazz era as well, because the hip-hop era grew out of that. So the students get a good glimpse into me because some students will look at it like, Wow, you know, they'll see like this is, this is different, you know what I'm saying? This is a different side of me. We're comparing two eras. But this also goes back to me making sure that my content is relatable as well and how we bridge these eras in American history because

> history does repeat itself. You know, we borrow from history... we borrow trends all the time, you know, and it also goes back to me, saying, If we don't teach a proper history, then it will repeat itself. So that all goes back to me, making sure that the students know that history and how I connect to that history.

Additionally, participants used words and phrases such as "more than tests," "life skills," and "whole child" to describe how their teaching practices get students to read the world, another aspect that contributes to the relational practices theme.

To illustrate the notion of reading the world, Edward provides his thoughts on assessments:

> I've never really focused on just the assessment when it comes to teaching. I'm not focused on whether you will pass the test this week. I'm more so focused on...did you get what you need today during this class period? We'll get to the test when we get to the test, and you'll know what you need to know.

Humanizing Practices

Humanizing practices as a theme captures how participants' teaching practices promote their student's personal and social growth. This theme shows through teaching practices and artifacts highlighting mentorship, advocacy, beliefs, values, affirmation, and many other key ideas for students to thrive and succeed in their classrooms. For example, Jaleel shared that he believes "advocacy" is the most important thing he can teach his students. He goes on to say the following:

> I always incorporate ways to have my students debate in my class. I want them to know how to take a stance about a topic and develop their argument for what they

> believe is right. Now, that's not a lesson you might find in my textbook for my curriculum, but I believe it is equally as important for students to have those skills also.

Promoting the social growth of students can sometimes be a battle when students have a short amount of time to learn core content. Edward reflects on the following when discussing the flexibility in the courses that he teaches:

> I kinda like that my content area doesn't have an EOC because it allows me some flexibility...I can spend time to make sure that my students not only have academic support but have those other supports outside of academics and grades.

Elijah and Brian also recognize the importance of the social and emotional growth of their students. In the first example below, Elijah shares how he recognizes the need to promote the personal growth of his students:

> There's a side that wants to engage students with the knowledge and help students get better, and there is more to the classroom...that there's more to us than that, and that's been my whole real sole purpose for teaching is to show there is more to us than just those things when it comes to education because that's been my experience.

Further, Brian recalls how he supported the social growth of a former student dealing with bullying through affirmation and support:

> The kids would pick at him because of his appearance and stuff. I really took him under my wing, and he started caring about his appearance. He would even mimic some of my dress habits. He reminded me a lot of my younger self. We stayed in

touch after he left the school and most recently discussed what he plans to do after high school.

Participants with strict testing requirements have found ways to incorporate personal and social growth into their standards-aligned curriculum and demonstrated with Lawrence's reflection on one of his teaching artifacts:

> I'm big on content. But sometimes you got to talk about life. I mean, like my 4th block. I was surprised that...you know...they want to know about life insurance. Some students were talking about the viral video when the rapper paid for the funeral of a fan. From that viral video, I reminded students in my class, who are mostly African American, that, you know, you gotta be smart with your money. Depending on the financial status of your family and if you don't come from generational wealth, as an adult, you may need to save money for insurance or even for college so that you can have access to opportunities.

RQ 3: Influence of Experiences on Teaching

RQ 3 asked how racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the south influenced their teaching practice. The themes for this question were developed by analyzing the responses to the question: do you believe that your racialized and gendered experiences influenced the methods and/or artifacts you shared, and if so, how? Participants were asked this question during their second interview in connection to their first interview reflection on racialized and gendered experiences. As a result, the themes developed from this question reflect how participants said that their racialized and gendered experiences influenced their teaching practices and/or artifacts selection.

Participants shared words /phrases such as: critical, community, social justice, honoring, critique, culture, missing, relational, intellect, wanted, reject, and perspectives when discussing how their teaching practices and/or teaching artifact was influenced by their racialized and gendered experiences. Analysis of words/phrases and the documents participants shared led to the following central theme: Honoring through Countering.

Honoring through Countering captures how participants intentionally provided students the opportunity to counter the narratives they are subjected to through honoring their experiences. This theme will be further detailed in subthemes 3.1, honoring, and 3.2, countering.

Honoring

The theme of honoring captures how participants believed their teaching practices honor their marginalized identity as a Black male student and their current students with the same identity. For example, participants shared that they believed the teaching practice was something that would have been helpful to them as a student. This theme was developed from conceptualizing words/phrases that participants shared, such as my younger self, the things I needed, a different perspective, and validation. An example of the theme honoring is Jaleel's statement of preparation for his lessons:

> I've had to go out and seek other things, I guess, to show the case that there's more to it than what is in the textbook. I want students to get the whole truth and not just one side of the story. Those are the lessons I wish I had as a student so I would not have felt like an outsider.

Similarly, Edward's involvement in the district's revising of standards allowed him to provide perspective for the resources that would be used considering his knowledge. On a

larger scale, Joey recognized that his Teacher of the Year award allowed him a seat at the table to share the perspectives from his small district. He reflected that he "considered it an honor" to serve in that capacity.

Honoring is also captured in practices that teachers implement with their students. For example, as Lawrence shares, his "hot topics" strategy allows him to validate his students' experiences by honoring the knowledge that they bring to the classroom:

> The hot topics activities help students learn how to take a current topic of interest and look at different perspectives before they make a claim. They must provide evidence to support the claim that they make about the topic to demonstrate that they understand.

As evidenced in the participants' narratives, honoring their past selves as students and their current students were influenced by their racialized and gendered experiences.

Countering

Countering as a theme emerged when participants referenced teaching practices that they used to counter the narrative and, thus, inspire motivation in their students. Words and phrases that represented countering in teaching practices were "different," "not what they expect," and "creative." When sharing, participants often referenced how their teaching practice rejected the narrative of them as students and teachers. An example of countering is Joey's teaching artifact, in which he had students create representations of their learning in ways that other teachers may not have considered. He shared that he often has students recreate the lesson for their classmates to understand in a way that highlights their creativity. He shared that this is something that other teachers might not do with students:

> I often will give students the topic and tell them to find ways to create the information so other students can understand. Sometimes I am shocked at how creative the students get with the assignment. They all try to find the most creative way to beat their classmates, and they tell me that they appreciate me letting them showcase their skills. This is often the students who look like me who don't get to show their learning in class.

Elijah shared how he inspires his colleagues when collaborating on ways to plan lessons:

> My colleagues are always coming to me for new ideas to motivate students. Well, my Black and brown students. A lot of times, they come to me for motivational strategies that inspire students because I hardly have discipline issues in my classroom, and they want to know the secret. Really, I think it's the teachers. They have an idea of what the student will be and don't give them a chance. I try to show the student in another light. In a way, Elijah shares how countering the narrative with his students helps motivate them and his colleagues to want to know the "secret."

Brian and Lawrence both discussed how they motivate students by giving them choices and options in the classroom that inspire. Brian reflects on one of those examples, using choice boards:

> In my second year, I started using choice boards for some of the assignments, and I could tell the difference in the way students engaged in the class. They liked being able to have options on how they demonstrated their learning. It showed them in a different light than other students. Sometimes it's a lot to keep up with the different assignments, but I think I found a system that helps me stay on track.

In the example above, countering was demonstrated through students showing themselves in a different light. When Elijah shared his purpose for teaching, he said the following statement that aligns with countering:

> I like when you can see somebody doesn't understand something, and the way they look at you when they finally understand, makes you feel some type of way. In a good way. Like I brought something out of them that they didn't expect. That's how I know my purpose is to be a teacher.

Many participants recognized how their teaching practices allowed students to show themselves in a different way (countering) that went against preconceived notions. They also were able to make the connection to how their experiences as a student inspired them to be the teacher who provides those experiences to their students. For example, Edward reflects the following about the more significant implications of having students understand their capabilities:

> Everything that I teach my students is connected to a larger purpose. They might not remember some of the content but will remember that I gave them a chance to be seen and heard in my class. I hope they know I gave them what I needed...to be seen as my authentic self without bias and judgment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study's findings revealed much about Black male teachers' experiences in the south. The themes from each research question connect how Black male teachers mitigate their racialized and gendered experience into teaching practices. Themes from research question 1 named the racialized and gendered experiences Black male teachers in the South experienced throughout their K-12 teaching journey. Themes

of isolating experiences, validating my worth, and restricting captured salient findings that participants shared in their reflections. While those experiences were oppressive, there were robust instances of participants utilizing those experiences for their empowerment. RQ2 explored the teaching practices of participants. From interviews and document analysis, themes of empowering techniques, relational practices, and humanizing practices emerged as participants reflected on the practices they utilized to mitigate racialized and gendered experiences. In response to racialized and gendered experiences, participants could make meaning that translated to the teaching practices that addressed how they felt and, in some ways, interacted with their students. From this reflection, the central theme Honoring through Countering, encaptures how participants honored their former selves as students by providing opportunities for their students to counter the narratives placed on them by the dominant culture.

Through this study, I was able to add to the literature on the conceptualization of a Black men's pedagogy by providing tangible practices and artifacts that Black male teachers intentionally use with their students. Some participants employed elements of Black men's pedagogy to make sense of the influence of their racialized and gendered experiences. For most participants, these elements allowed them to make meaning of how they could teach in spaces that overwhelmingly were the antithesis of a welcoming environment for them and other Black males. Chapter 5 will further discuss these findings and implications for further development.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a summary of the study to introduce the scholarly significance of findings. Informed by critical race theory (Bell, 1995) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), this qualitative study aimed to explore how Black male teachers in the south's racialized and gendered experiences influence their teaching practices. In this chapter, I will reiterate the need for the study before presenting the findings by overarching themes. Next, I will discuss results that align and differ from the existing literature, presenting new insights. Lastly, I will offer recommendations for education stakeholders invested in teacher diversity, specifically Black male teachers in the South. Future research opportunities and possibilities are offered before this study's final summary and conclusion.

I conducted this study by engaging six Black male teachers to reflect on their racialized and gendered experiences before moving into a discussion of their teaching practices. Further, this study sought to understand how Black male teachers racialized, and gendered experiences influence their teaching practices. The development of themes from the participants' reflections highlighted in Chapter 4 confirmed that Black male teachers' racialized and gendered experiences do have a significant influence on their teaching practices. This finding is representative of the literature presented in Chapter 2 on culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching. The following research questions were utilized to guide this study:

1) What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South?

2) What are the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South?

3) How do the racialized and gendered experiences of Black males in the South influence their teaching practices?

Chapter 2 provided historical, racialized, and gendered experiences of Black male teacher trajectory. The discussion of the existing literature laid the foundation for the qualitative methodology introduced in Chapter 3. Moreover, chapter 3 presented a semi-structured interview protocol and document analysis that allowed participants' lived experiences to be organized by research question and presented as eight major themes.

Comparison to Literature

Racialized and Gendered Experiences

When exploring participants' racialized and gendered experiences, emerging themes of isolating, validating my worth, and restricting captured the most salient findings from participants' reflections. Across participants, findings consistently represented the participant's experiences of being alone, siloed, and outside of the dominant group. These isolating experiences made participants feel lonely, singled out, and sometimes invisible. Further, racialized and gendered experiences also left participants believing they were restricted due to incidents in which they were excluded, denied access, stereotyped, and secluded. These restricting experiences caused participants to feel silenced, targeted, threatened, and not considered. Interestingly, motivating as a theme emerged consistently in participants' reflections on racialized and gendered experiences.

Theme 1.1: Isolating Experiences

The theme of isolating aligns with the existing research highlighting Black male teachers' feelings of being outsiders revealed in a 2019 study conducted by Bristol in which he categorized Black male teachers as loners or groupers to explore Black male teacher retention. By categorizing Black male teachers are loners (only Black male teacher in a building) and groupers (Black male teachers in schools with other Black male teachers), Bristol was able to come to some implications about BMT retention as articulated below:

> Compared to Groupers, loners described having more consistent negative interactions with colleagues, most of whom were White. For loners, these encounters were often characterized by having their colleagues, who were often White, intimate that they were not qualified to teach or hold school leadership positions. In other instances, loners thought their White colleagues felt emboldened to use racially charged and insensitive language in public without fear of repercussions.

In comparison, the research from this study highlights instances where participants were the direct recipient of inflammatory interactions from their white counterparts. These interactions reminded them of their singleness and illustrate Bristol's findings (2019) that male teachers often cite feelings of isolation and loneliness due to their minoritized status within this profession.

The existing literature on isolation within Chapter 2 highlights that Black male teachers often cite feelings of isolation in their teacher preparation due to a lack of diversity in faculty in teacher preparation programs. Teacher preparation programs are dominated by white faculty and students who may not create inclusive environments for

Black male teacher candidates (Sleeter, 2017; Walker, 2020). Black males who advance into teacher preparation programs continue to encounter racialized and gendered experiences that influence their sustainability within their respective programs of study (Brown & Thomas, 2020). In a survey of Black male pre-service teachers, Pabon (2011) revealed that Black male pre-service teachers felt silenced and oppressed by their white female classmates when there were conversations around race in class (Pabon et al., 2011). Further, in a study on Black male pre-service teacher candidates in rural settings, Walker (2016, 2019) explored the isolation that Black male teacher candidates experience during their teacher preparation and highlighted the increased need for support of Black male preservice teachers who may not have access to other Black male educators as mentors. The absence of Black male mentors limits Black male preservice teachers who may have historically strained relationships with white educators. It is essential for stakeholders involved in the preservice experiences of Black male teachers to recognize the intersectionality of race, gender, and cultural identity (Brown, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Walker, 2020). Further, the lack of cultural awareness of Black students often appeared in widespread belief by white teachers that Black students could not learn or master critical thinking skills (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). Black teachers were replaced by white teachers who lacked the cultural awareness of Black students (Douglas et al., 2017; Villegas & Davis, 2007).

Theme 1.2: Validating my Worth

The theme validating my worth encompasses racialized and gendered experiences where participants felt inspired to provide a counter-narrative to the experience. This theme is evident within the existing literature aligned to the tenet of critical race theory

counter-storying (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Additionally, motivating is a byproduct of the culturally relevant pedagogy essential tenet of consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Critical consciousness is defined in Chapter 2 as the ability to recognize systems of inequity.

Interestingly, while most participants could articulate elements of critical consciousness in their instruction for their students, there were instances where participants did not recognize the potential that their racialized and gender experiences resulted from a lack of critical consciousness. This observation was most evident in the participants that were English teachers. For example, when sharing about racialized and gendered experiences of isolation, Elijah could not articulate that his experiences could result from interest convergence, one of the core tenets of critical race theory that implies that the achievement of Blacks is in response to the interest of whites. In his specific example, the likelihood that Elijah is asked to lead a newly formed equity team at his school where he is the minority could easily be considered interest convergence of white people interested in showing that they are equitable. In comparison, many of the participants that were history teachers and those that attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) could more easily name the source of their racialized and gendered experiences to tenets of critical race theory. This observation has implications for understanding the nuances of Black, and solutions will be further detailed in the recommendations.

Theme 1.3 Restricting Experiences

The restricting theme refers to feelings of denial to access and opportunity that

participants shared they felt as a direct result of racialized and gendered experiences. This theme emerged due to the frequency participants shared feelings of restriction or denial. Several instances in Chapter 2 of this study highlight literature of Black males being restricted, as defined in Chapter 4. Historically, culturally biased teacher proficiency tests were used as an exclusionary practice to determine which teachers would transfer to the newly integrated schools (Lash & Ratcliff, 2014; Stennis-Williams, 1996). An exploration of the history of Black education in the United States further illustrates restricting as it details how Black teachers were denied access to teaching positions in integrated schools following the historic Brown v Board of Education decision to integrate schools.

The literature on Black male students in Chapter 2 emphasizes the disproportionate data discipline of Black male students that restricts them from being in the classroom due to exclusionary suspension practices. Factors contributing to Black students who may not perform well academically include discipline disproportionality of Black male students and exclusionary practices that influence the academic potential for Black male students (Goings & Bianco, 2016). Data at the K-12 level reveals that out of the 5.3% of students who receive out-of-school suspension, 17.6% are Black males (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, 2019).

In these cases, Black male students are restricted and denied access to school due to teachers' subjective interpretation of their behaviors. The impact of these exclusionary practices can have a damaging impact on the academic outcomes of Black male students. The literature on limited exposure to Black male teachers (Goings & Bianco, 2016) emphasizes the theme of restricting Black male students from mentorship opportunities.

The literature in Chapter 2 on Black male teacher preparation and testing barriers also connects to a theme of restriction. In Black male teacher recruitment literature, Bryan and Ford's (2014) study on Black male teacher recruitment in gifted education highlights that Black males are underrepresented in gifted education due to the lack of being identified as gifted from the overwhelmingly white teaching workforce (Ford, 2013). In this example, not being identified restricts Black males' access to gifted education. Williams and Lewis (2020) shared the connection between scores, race, and gender on edTPA assessments needed for students to graduate from many teacher preparation programs. They conclude that while there was a slight increase in the Black male teacher population, the testing barriers with edTPA are reminiscent of assessment barriers post-integration of schools in the 1950s.

Black Male Teaching Practices

When exploring Black male teaching practices, themes of empowering, relational, and humanizing captured the most salient findings. These themes capture how the participants intentionally implemented teaching practices and resources from their pedagogical toolkit.

Theme 2.1: Empowering

The theme of empowering captures how participants utilize awareness of cultural differences as an asset in their teaching practices to inspire student learning. Empowerment as a theme from the study is evidenced by BMT teaching practices that emphasize culture as an asset. These findings are similar to the research in Chapter 2 that emphasizes a Black men's pedagogy:

> The pedagogical practices of African American teachers are rooted in their personal and racialized experiences (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Durden et al., 2016; Hayes et al., 2014; Lynn, 2002). Scholars have referred to this form of teaching with a racialized and gendered lens as Black men's pedagogy (Pabon, 2017; Thomas & Brown, 2020).

Empowering is evident in Chapter 2 findings that Black male educators can have a positive impact on changing the narratives of Black students, and in particular, Black male students (Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Milner, 2016). Black males possess the background knowledge needed to connect with Black students and positively develop them. Additionally, Ladson-Billings (1995) conceptualized Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) as a pedagogical framework that counters the narrative by providing opportunities for students to affirm their cultural identity through critical analysis.

Theme 2.2 Relational Literature

Relational as a theme is encaptured in participants' teaching practices and artifacts connected to culture. Words and phrases such as "real world", "relevant," and "culturally responsive" were indicative of relational teaching practices and artifacts. Much of the literature in Chapter 2 on culturally relevant teaching and culturally responsive pedagogy captures the essence of the relational theme. When describing Black male teaching practices, scholars highlight that the mixture of tough love, discipline, and caring that some Black male teachers display towards their Black male students have been referred to as "other fathering" (Brown, 2012; Lynn, 2002, 2006). Additionally, Black male educators' cultural currency or funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) has

been shown to have positive implications on the outcomes of their Black male students (Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Milner, 2016). Black male educators can have a positive impact on changing the narratives of Black students and, Black male students (Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Lewis & Toldson, 2013; Milner, 2016). A Black male teacher pedagogy creates an environment where Black students survive and thrive. Ladson-Billings asserts that culturally relevant pedagogy comprises the following three components: student learning, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).

Theme 2.3 Humanizing Literature

In Chapter 4, the finding of humanizing reflects the participants' teaching practices that promote their student's personal and social growth. This theme shows through teaching practices and artifacts highlighting mentorship, advocacy, beliefs, values, affirmation, and many other key ideas needed for students to thrive and succeed in their classrooms. These relationship skills encompass how Black male teachers get to know their students through their social and emotional development (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). Again, much of the literature that aligns with this humanizing theme is encaptured within the conceptualization of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching. Considering the impact of gender identity, the notion of other-fathering (Brockenbrough, 2015; Lynn, 2006) is used to categorize Black male teachers' culturally relevant pedagogy of tough love and discipline.

Honoring through Countering

In Chapter 4, the finding of honoring through countering captures the way that participants' racialized and gendered experiences influence their teaching practice.

Further, honor and countering subthemes were developed to provide further context for this pedagogy. The theme of honoring encaptures the way that participants believed their teaching practices celebrate their marginalized identity. Countering as a theme emerged when participants referenced teaching practices that they used to counter the narrative.

The existing research in Chapter 2 on culturally relevant teaching and culturally responsive practices aligns with this theme. The existing literature highlights that in response to a deficit tone narrative of Black children in schools, Ladson-Billings (1995) conceptualized Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) as a pedagogical framework that counters the narrative by providing opportunities for students to affirm their cultural identity through critical analysis. Building upon Ladson-Billing's seminal work, Gay (2010) conceptualized culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as those teaching practices that accompany culturally relevant pedagogy and consist of five essential components of culture: knowledge of cultural diversity, culturally relevant curriculum, high expectations of students, appreciation for different communication styles, and multicultural instructional examples.

Additionally, the findings from Research Question 3 honoring through countering align with the ideology presented in a Black men's pedagogy in Chapter 2. The pedagogical practices of African American teachers are rooted in their personal and racialized experiences (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Durden et al., 2016; Hayes et al., 2014; Lynn, 2002). Scholars have referred to this form of teaching with a racialized and gendered lens as Black men's pedagogy (Pabon, 2017; Thomas & Brown, 2020). Implications of a pedagogical kind result in recruiting Black males to work with Black boys only (Bristol, 2017; Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Goings & Bianco, 2016).

While participants shared culturally competent practices in the existing literature documented in Chapter 2, there were elements within the findings that needed to be referenced in the existing literature. For example, the literature review did not indicate the notion of humanizing as a teaching practice that involved how participants in the study promote student social and personal growth. This finding adds to the existing literature on Black male teaching practices.

Implications

All participants in this study currently teach in the southeastern region of the United States. This geographic designation is important to the findings of this study and broader literature in that it considers the historical, cultural, and social considerations of the South post-Civil War and Jim Crow legislation. While the emerging themes from this study are connected to the existing literature in many ways, the participants' distinct experiences of being a Black male in the South present a new context that rejects a monolithic view of the Black male teacher. For example, when discussing how they use language in their courses, participants referenced terms reflective of their geographic region of the South and experiences with white teachers and colleagues that are unique to the South. In several instances, participants shared how their experiences were specific to their geographic location and different from Black male teachers in other regions of the United States.

Further, this study has implications for Black male teacher mentorship. For example, the snowball sampling method utilized in this study resulted in forming an informal community of Black male teachers. Research highlights the positive impact of such affinity groups (Bristol et al., 2020) on Black male teachers. I was able to recruit

many of the participants through one of the participants sharing a friend from college or high school who was also a Black male teacher in a similar context. Several participants would ask at the end of the interview if I needed another participant or if I had heard back from someone that they referred to be a participant. This network of Black male teachers in the South was unexpected but needed for this study to happen. In this way, the participants and I have created a community of Black male teachers in rural areas that can share their lived experiences as a solution to many of the themes lifted in their racialized and gendered experiences.

Participants reflected on racialized and gendered experiences from K-16; thus, this study has implications for elementary, secondary, and post-secondary programs. The consistent examples of racialized and gendered experiences that participants shared from their formative years to, in one case, graduate studies provide a vivid picture of these Black male experiences as they transition throughout their entire educational trajectory. Participant reflections about their experiences and teaching practices provide a unique lens to teacher diversity initiatives in similar contexts.

Recommendations

This section will highlight several recommendations from this study on the teaching practices of Black male teachers in the South. This study is unique in that the participants attended school and taught in a similar context and, thus, supports the findings from this study about the geographical region of the rural South. The study revealed that the participants shared sentiments of loneliness and restriction in their K-12 experience and beyond. The participants' feelings of motivation, captured in the theme of *validating my worth*, were in response to racialized and gendered experiences and were a

counter-narrative to identities placed on them by dominant groups. The findings from this study emphasize the connection between the participants' racialized and gendered experiences and the teaching practices and documents they use with their students. The following recommendations will be outlined by each stakeholder group.

Recommendation for School and District Leaders

This study captured participant's reflections of their K-12 experience and thus provide opportunities and recommendations for K-12 schools and districts. More specifically, the opportunities and recommendations can be personalized to school and district leaders in the South. The following section will highlight recommendations for school and district leaders in the South invested in recruiting and retaining Black male teachers.

- Many of the participants from this study shared feeling isolated and restricted in the teaching profession. This is not surprising, as Black male teachers are only 2% of the teaching workforce. However, this finding does have implications for the ways in which schools and districts make their Black male teachers feel welcome in their community. To address these feelings of isolation and restriction, it is essential that school and district leaders create and encourage affinity groups for Black male teachers to find a community within their school or district. Affinity groups should be created as safe places for Black male teachers to gather and discuss topics related to their identity and positionality within the school context. For authenticity of these efforts, protect the affinity groups' time so that Black male teachers do not feel that they have to choose between attending and other duties related to their job. Making affinity groups, a priority will facilitate the

authenticity and fidelity of those efforts. Authenticity and fidelity of affinity groups include creating budget line items allocated towards this effort.

- Additionally, other staff must be engaged in professional development that allows them to become aware of the implications of the microaggressions, bias, and other forms of discrimination that create isolation and restriction within schools for both Black male students and Black male teachers.

From this study, participants revealed a "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogy" in which they intentionally honor their past experiences through countering narratives that others have placed on them. While there is literature on a Black Male Teacher pedagogy, a "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogy" reveals more nuanced and contextual practices. Thus, the following recommendations are offered for a "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogy":

- Implement a intentional curriculum that provides opportunities for teachers to utilize those teaching practices. Ensure that Black male teachers are at the table when decisions are being made about the curriculum and resources that will be used.
- Create equity frameworks within the curriculum at your schools and district to lift Black male experiences and voices. Equity should not be embedded in another work but isolated to build capacity.
- Consider the voice of your Black male teachers in professional development offerings and content. Hire Black male teachers to write and develop curricula in your districts that highlight their pedagogical prowess.

- Develop teacher leadership within Black male teachers to remove the stigma of disciplinarian or behavior modification specialist that is often associated with Black male teacher presence. Such opportunities allow Black male teachers to be seen as instructional leaders in your school.

Recommendation for Teacher Preparation Programs

In addition to K-12 experiences, this study captured teacher preparation experiences of Black male teachers in the South and thus, offers recommendations for teacher preparation. The following section will highlight recommendations for teacher preparation programs:

Rural Black Male Teacher Coursework

- It is imperative to include "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogies" in teacher preparation program coursework. Create courses for your teacher candidates that provide them with a curriculum that honors through countering.
- Approach coursework with a racialized and gendered lens to identify opportunities to develop, adjust and develop coursework that prepares teacher candidates to enter schools to support profitable opportunities for Black boys. The data highlights that Black boys in schools receive the most discipline infractions and are targeted in disproportionate numbers.

Teacher Preparation Program Recruitment and Retention

- Identify the barriers with testing and assessments for teacher candidates. Research indicates instances of Black male teachers viewing assessments for teacher licensure as barriers. Provide support for edTPA and other testing barriers to increase retention of Black male teacher candidates.

- Develop partnerships with initiatives that have identified recruitment of Black males in rural school districts to the teaching profession as a goal. While many initiatives recruit Black male teachers, a consideration of their unique context, such as the rural south, could provide more viable solutions for success.
- Partner with local community colleges to provide opportunities for teacher pathways to your university. Use community college connections to bridge gaps in recruitment of Black male teachers. Analyze the data from your local community college. How many Black males are enrolled in the local community college? How many of those Black male students have declared a major? What opportunities might there be to recruit them through teacher preparation coursework?

Black Male Teacher Leadership

- Develop a task force within your college that intentionally seeks out potential Black male teachers. Seek funding for initiatives that recruit Black males to teacher preparation programs at your college. Secure funding and stipends for Black male teachers to be able to enroll in your teaching preparation programs.
- Conduct assessments with your current Black male teacher candidates to see what attracted them to your school and the barriers/challenges of matriculating through the teacher preparation program.
- Hire Black consultants to assist in your needs assessment to develop an aggressive plan for Black male teacher recruitment. Of your current student enrollment to see who is coming to your school for teacher preparation. Funding should provide tuition reimbursement and create a pathway from high school to a college degree.

- Assess your course catalogs and determine how coursework for teacher preparation aligns with the themes of empowering, relational, and humanizing—audit coursework to determine the prevalence of equity classes that you are offering within your course catalog.
- Hire Black male teachers to teach some of your teacher preparation courses. This could be teachers who may be enrolled in graduate studies but are still in the classroom. Increase diversity within the teacher preparation program staff so potential Black male teacher candidates will see other Black male teachers and foster mentorship.

Recommendation for Future Research

This study focused on the experiences of six Black male teachers who self-identify as Black and teach at secondary schools in the southeastern region of the United States, specifically districts in North and South Carolina that are categorized as urban characteristics. As such, this study provides many opportunities for future research to recruit and retain Black male teachers in the South. The section below will outline options that have been identified for future research on "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogies":

- Include the voices of Black male teachers who teach in the elementary school setting as well as Black male teachers who teach in the higher education settings.
- Including the experiences of Black women teachers in the South to add to the context. This perspective might offer a different lens and themes that could add to the literature on Black teachers' racialized experiences.

- Conduct a comparative analysis study of teachers in a different geographical region, such as the Midwest, to consider the differences and implications based on those differences.
- Quantitative studies in the specific context of this study that measure self-efficacy, recruitment, and performance of Black male teachers.

Rural Beginning and Experienced Black Male Teacher Perceptions

Replicating this study to capture the racialized and gendered experiences of beginning teachers in the same context could provide additional data supporting this study's findings. In comparison, conducting the same research on experienced rural Black male teachers provide opportunities to differentiate the influence that these experiences have on teaching practices based on years of teaching.

Interestingly, while Black male teachers could cite racialized and gendered experiences, it was unclear if their understanding of critical race theory had any impact on their understanding of those experiences. Due to this finding, I recommend future research that assesses Black male teachers understanding of critical race theory and its impact on their teaching practices and identity. While participants were able to recognize a racialized and gendered experience, they were not able to articulate the source of the oppression that they were experiencing. Further studies could differentiate how an understanding of critical race theory impacts the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers.

Summary

This study lifted the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South and the influence that those factors have on their teaching practices. Teacher

diversity continues to be a challenging issue in today's educational landscape, and this study approaches this challenge through analyzing the experience of teachers within a given context to develop recommendations for stakeholders invested in teacher diversity. In that vein, this study provides an approach to the challenge of recruitment by providing an opportunity to lift Black male teachers in the South's racialized and gendered experiences that influence their teaching practices. Moreover, this study contextualizes the South and presents a unique perspective that could be used to further develop literature on Black male teacher identity and teaching practices with considerations of the South.

The findings from this study add to the literature on Black male teaching practices in the South and reveals what has been termed "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogies." While there were many tenets of culturally relevant teaching in the participants' reflection of their teaching practices, there is an opportunity to add to that existing literature with principles that are inclusive of the social, historical, and cultural aspects of the South and exemplars of teaching practices that are contextualized through this lens. As defined in Chapter 4, a Black men's pedagogy captures the ways that the Black male teacher utilized their racialized and gendered experiences to reconcile the negative connection to the experience. Still, it does not consider the contextual factors of the South that are unique for Black male teachers. For this contextualized study, a Black men's pedagogy is furthered conceptualized to consider the unique nuances of the rural South and is thus reimagined in "Rural Black Male Teacher Pedagogies" that is exhibited in the ways that they *honor* their experiences in a context rooted deeply in racial and gendered discriminatory practices by *countering* the narrative through their teaching practices.

Being that I am a Black male educated in a similar context, this study was significant in sharing the lived experiences of a specific group of Black male teachers. While conducting the research, I could make connections to several statements from the participants. These connections ere unique instances that were not lifted in the existing literature. An understanding of the participants' social, cultural, and historical aspects provides an understanding that rejects a monolithic view of the Black male teacher.

This study is significant because it adds to the literature of Black male teachers, specifically Black male teachers in the rural south. Through qualitative stories with a critical race theory lens (CRT), this study considers the ways that their racialized and gendered experiences impact their teaching practices in comparison to the existing literature that situates the Black male teacher from a monolithic view. Additionally, this study provides implications for rural school districts and teacher preparation programs that produce teachers who will teach in rural school districts. This study challenges the existing literature on Black male teachers by contextualizing the experiences and teaching practices of Black male teachers in rural schools with consideration for the historical, political, and cultural context in which they teach. Overall, participants shared how they recognize the influence of the history of the rural South on their pedagogical prowess and how they navigate as Black male teacher in those spaces.

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APPENDIX A: CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

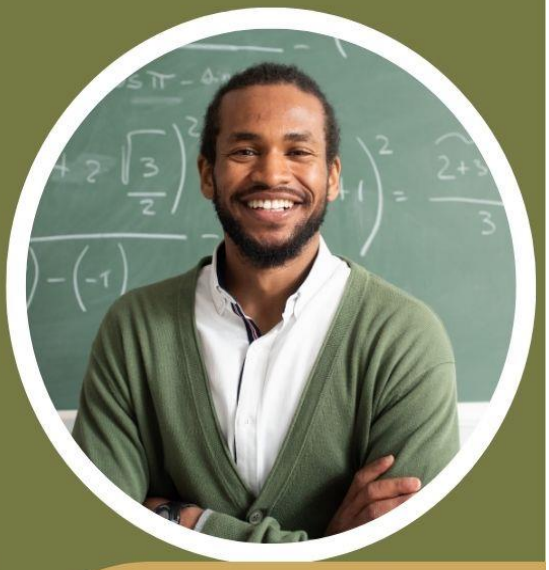
CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

BLACK MALE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE SOUTH

This UNC Charlotte IRB-approved dissertation study seeks to explore the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South.

ELIGIBILITY:

- *At least 18 years of age*
- *Certified K-12 teacher*
- *Identify as a Black male*
- *Currently teaching in a rural district in North Carolina, South Carolina, or Georgia*



PARTICIPATION:

- *Complete two (2), 60 minute in-depth, semi-structured interviews via Zoom*
- *Provide a reflection document between the first and second interview*
- *Participants are eligible for compensation for their time*

INTERESTED?

Contact Marquis Mason (Principal Investigator) at mmason32@uncc.edu OR 704-609-0586

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

To:	Marquis Mason University of North Carolina at Charlotte
From:	Office of Research Protections and Integrity
RE:	Notice of Exemption with Limited Review
Approval Date:	09-Jan-2023
Exemption Category:	
Study #:	IRB-23-0475
Study Title:	Black Male Teachers' Experiences in the Rural Context

This submission has been reviewed by the Office of Research Protections and Integrity (ORPI) and was determined to meet the Exempt category cited above under 45 CFR 46.1 04(d). In addition, this Exemption has received Limited Review by the IRB under 45 CFR 46.111(a)(7). This determination has no expiration or end date and is not subject to an annual continuing review . However, you are required to obtain approval for all changes to any aspect of this study before they can be implemented and to comply with the Investigator Responsibilities detailed below.

Important Information:

1. Face masks are optional on UNC Charlotte's campus. This includes classrooms and other academic spaces. Researchers conducting HSR activities in other locations must continue to adhere to local and state requirements in the setting where the research is conducted.
2. Face masks are still required in healthcare settings. Researchers conducting HSR activities in these settings must continue to adhere to face covering requirements.
3. Organizations, institutions, agencies, businesses, etc. may have further site-specific requirements such as continuing to have a mask requirement, limiting access, and/or physical distancing. Researchers must adhere to all requirements mandated by the study site.

Your approved study documents are available online at Submission Page.

Investigator's Responsibilities:

1. Amendments must be submitted for review and the amendment must be approved before implementing the amendment. This includes changes to study procedures, study materials, personnel, etc.
2. Data security procedures must follow procedures as approved in the protocol and in accordance with

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Warm Up:

Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. During this study, we will be talking about your experiences as a Black male teacher, specifically a Black male teacher in the southeastern United States. I will be asking you about racialized/gendered experiences and your teaching practices. Racialized being anything that you believe your race as Black has impacted and gendered being anything that you believe has been impacted by your gender as a male. To start, I would like to know more about you personally.

1. What three words would you use to describe yourself and why?
2. What inspired you to become a teacher? Was there a specific event or person that inspired you to become a teacher?
3. What do you enjoy the most about teaching at your current school?
4. Years teaching and how many districts/schools have you taught in that were different from the context where you currently teach.
5. Grade level/content area that you currently teach

Research Question 1 (Interview 1)

What are the racialized and gendered experiences of Black male teachers in the South?

1. Tell me about how/why you became a teacher.
    a. What role do you believe that your race/gender had in your K12 experience as a Black male student?
    b. What racialized/gendered experiences did you have as a student that led to you pursuing a teaching career?
    c. How do you believe that your experiences compare to those who are a different race/gender?
2. Tell me about your teacher preparation experience.
    a. What role do you believe that your race/gender had on your pathway to becoming a teacher?
    b. What racialized/gendered experiences (if any) did you have as a teacher candidate that impacted (good and/or bad) your pathway to teaching?
    c. How do you believe that your experiences compare to those who are a different race/gender?
3. Tell me about how you obtained your teaching position.
    a. What role do you believe that your race and gender had on your ability to obtain a teaching position?
    b. What racialized/gendered experiences (if any) did you have in your pursuit of obtaining your teaching position?
    c. How do you believe that your experiences compare to those who are a different race/gender?