NUANCES OF ATTRITION: A COMPARISON OF FACTORS
INFLUENCING TURNOVER OF BIPOC TEACHERS AND THEIR WHITE PEERS

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Nuances of Attrition: A Comparison of Factors Influencing Turnover of BIPOC teachers and Their White Peers

This study examines K-12 public school teacher turnover, with a particular focus on teachers of color. Recruiting and retaining well-qualified teaching staff is a challenge in the United States, where annually roughly 16% of teachers either leave the teaching profession entirely or transfer to a different school. This high rate of turnover is of concern given the relationship between a changing teaching workforce and low student learning outcomes. The literature on factors associated with teachers' decisions to leave the workforce or change schools, along with the impacts on school districts, schools, and students, is synthesized, and the results of a mixed methods study are presented. Sources of data collected for this study include an online survey administered to 120 teachers in the state of Oregon as well as individual interviews with 15 teachers, and 4 focus groups, in which a total of 25 teachers participated. The survey sample includes 36 BIPOC teachers and 84 White teachers. Interview/focus group samples include 16 BIPOC and 9 White teachers.

Quantitative findings from Phase 1 include an analysis of variables of interest- *School Connectedness*, *Administrator Supports*, *Professional Development*, *Student Processes*, *Resources* and *School Diversity* by teacher racial groups and intent to leave. When considering all 120 participating teachers in the online survey sample, those who intended to leave the

profession reported a significantly less satisfaction with *School Connectedness, Professional Development*, *Student Processes,* and *Resources.* Teachers who had considered leaving their worksite reported a significantly less satisfaction with *Administrator Support*, and *Professional Development*. When comparing the experiences of BIPOC teachers with that of White teachers, BIPOC teachers reported a greater satisfaction with *Professional Development* compared to their White peers; BIPOC teachers who did not intend to leave their worksite also reported a higher satisfaction with *Professional Development*.

Qualitative analysis of focus groups and individual interviews in Phase 2 provided evidence that for BIPOC teachers, race impacted both their experiences in the workplace and their dissatisfaction influencing their desire to leave their worksite or profession. Recommendations for further study, as well as implications for practice are discussed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

U.S. Schools Serve an Increasing Number of BIPOC students

Recent national data from the National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES] (n.d), a

federal entity that collects and analyzes data related to education, details that of the 49.5 million

students enrolled in K-12 public schools in the United States in 2021-22 school year, only 22.4

million students were White. This means that almost 55% of students who attended a public

school in the last year were BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students. Further,

between the 2009 and 2020 school years, within a span of eleven years, the percentage of

students attending public schools and identifying as Latine[1] increased from 22 to 28% whereas

that of White students decreased from a 54% to a 46%. This rising enrollment for BIPOC

students was observable in all US states except the District of Columbia where there was a 6

percentage point increase in enrollment of White students (NCES, 2022).

The trend of progressively rising enrollment of BIPOC students is also observable in the

state of Oregon. According to the Oregon Department of Education [ODE], a state governing

body that collects and analyzes data to inform state educational polices, there has been an

increase in percentage enrollment of BIPOC students in the last ten years. In the 2009-2010

school year, of the total student enrollment, 19.56% of Oregon K-12 students were identified as

Latine, 2.7% were identified as Multiracial, a comparable 2.76% were identified as Black, and

67.48% identified as White. Twelve years later, in the 2021-2022 school year, there was an

observable rise in the number of BIPOC students in the state's schools, with only 59.67%

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[1] For this paper, Latine will be used as an inclusive reference for any and all persons who may identify as Latino, Latina, Chicano, Hispanic and/or Latinx. The author acknowledges the cultural strife embedded in this word choice, and is intending for more inclusive representation, and not less.

identifying as White, whereas the number of students identifying as Latine rose to 24.97%. Although there was a slight decrease (0.46%) in the percentage of students identifying as Black, a 4.39% increase was also observed in students identifying as Multiracial.

BIPOC Students Are Not Being Served Well by U.S. Schools

As discussed above, both national and state data confirm that US public schools serve an increasing proportion of BIPOC students. However, extant sources of data also illustrate widening gaps of opportunity between BIPOC students and their White peers. These disparities influence graduation rates, disciplinary outcomes, and ultimately academic achievement for BIPOC students.

Disparities in Graduation Rates

Disproportionalities of outcomes are evident in graduation of BIPOC students. According to a 2021 report by NCES, the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for Black and Latine students was lower than that of their White peers. This was true for both the nation as a whole and for all individual states and the District of Columbia as well. Nationally, the ACGR of White public high school students in the 2018-2019 school year (89%) was 10% higher than that of Black students (79% ACGR) and 8% higher than that of Latine students (81% ACGR). In the state of Oregon, the ACGR rates of White students, at 81%, was 11% higher than that of Black students (70% ACGR) and 5% higher than that of Latine students (76% ACGR).

Disparities in Disciplinary Actions

Disciplining for subjective offenses such as disrespect or disruption, frequently and disproportionately involves exclusion from education for BIPOC students (Burke & Nishioka, 2014; The Civil Rights Project, 2000). The U.S. Department of Education discipline data from the year 2000 indicated that although Black children only represented 17% of public-school

enrollment nationally, 32% of students who received out of school suspensions were Black, whereas White students, at a 63% enrollment, represented only 50% of suspensions and 50% of the expulsions (The Civil Rights Project, 2000).

This disproportionality exists at the local state level too. Burke and Nishioka (2014) found similar discipline patterns in six Oregon public school districts. One of the key findings in their study was that at elementary school age, Black students were likely to receive one additional day of suspension for the same infraction compared to White students. Burke and Nishioka's data illustrated that Black middle school boys received higher disciplinary exclusion from education compared to White peers. The 2018-2019 Oregon Department of Education (ODE) state discipline data illustrates that the disparity in discipline outcomes for Black and Latine students continued to persist. Of the total number of students, 12.6% of Black Students, and 7.8% of Latine students were more likely to receive severe disciplinary consequences, compared to 6% for their White peers. Additionally, in the 2016-17 school year, of the total number of Black students, 10% received exclusionary discipline. This number was at 6% for Latine enrollment and only 4% for White enrollment (ODE, 2017).

Disparities in Academic Achievement

Frequent removal from the classroom impacts access to education both in terms of learning content and knowing expectations. Ability to stay involved and engaged is also diminished upon return to the classroom because of missed instruction and perception by peers (Wortham, 2003). Unsurprisingly, student achievement data for Black and Latine students in Oregon shows a discrepancy in performance compared to their White peers. In the 2018-2019 school year, Black and Latine students performed at least 10% below their White peers in Language Arts and almost twice as many percentage points lower in Math (ODE, 2019). Trends

from prior years illustrate similar discrepancies. Exclusion for subjective disciplinary infractions that may be indicative of bias may contribute to higher achievement gaps for Black and Latine students due to reduced access to education.

BIPOC Students Are Not Being Taught by Teachers Who Resemble Them

The teaching workforce in the United States of America has been historically White and female dominated, and it has remained vastly unchanged in the last 30 years (Nguyen, 2020b). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], the national average for teacher workforce being predominantly White was 84% in 1999-2000. Ten years later, the percentage ratio was still staggeringly disproportionate. In the 2017-18 school year, 79% of the U.S. teacher workforce remained White, while the projected enrollment numbers for White students accounted for only 46% of the student population (NCES, 2019; NCES, 2021).

Following the national trend, the state of Oregon data also points to a lack of representation. Statewide data from 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports show a continued discrepancy between the proportion of students of color and teachers of similar demographics (ODE, 2022). Although Oregon has made some progress in adding more diverse teaching staff, with the current race/ethnicity proportions at 4.6:1 for Latine students to teachers, compared to 0.68:1 for White students to teachers, it is clear that although White students have more than a 100% chance of having a teacher who looks like them, this is far from true for other racial groups (ODE, 2018).

Role Models Can Help Foster Intrinsic Motivation

Patterns of inequities in education indicate that there is a presence of bias in educational practices; the lack of proportionate numbers of teachers might be a contributing factor. Stone (2012) asserts that when a population does not seem to perform better regardless of incentives, it points to a larger problem that stems from a disagreement of values and suggests a need to

reanalyze policy. When people neither trust those in power, nor feel empowered by their presence, it is highly unlikely that they will perform for them. Students who perceive stereotype threat, therefore, are less likely to engage in expected behaviors because of the need to constantly evaluate their environment for safety (Hammond, 2015). Policy changes, however, take root only when there is substantiated evidence to dictate the change.

Representation through race-alike teachers has been shown to be related to improving academic and disciplinary outcomes for students (Bates & Glick, 2013; Egalite et al., 2015). Bates and Glick (2013), used different modeling to measure the impact of students' race and race ethnic match between teacher and student on perception of externalized behaviors. Utilizing data from four waves of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study- Kindergarten Cohort, they found that Black students who were placed with non-Latine White teachers received statistically significantly worse assessment of what is perceived as *externalizing behavior* (arguing or disruption) when compared to the assessment of the same student for the same behavior in a Black teacher's classroom. Then, in a 2015 quasi-experimental study analyzing the effect of same race teachers on student achievement in grades 3-10, Egalite et al. (2015) found that matching students to race/ethnicity alike teachers increased math and reading achievement for Black students between 0.6 and 6 percentile points. Egalite et al.'s study was conducted in Florida utilizing data from 2001-2009, but these results were also confirmed in later studies where researchers found that matching students of color by race to the teacher had a positive outcome on reading scores for Black male students, using national data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and NCES (Yarnell & Bohrnstedt, 2017).

Improvement in outcomes was also reported in non-academic aspects such as academic perception and the desire to pursue education past mandatory public K-12 education. Utilizing

student survey data from six U.S. public school districts from different states (North Carolina, Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, New York, and Texas), Egalite and Kisida (2017) tracked 3000 teachers and their students' performance in a randomly assigned sample. As a result, they found that students who were assigned to a racially similar teacher experienced positive benefits in terms of academic perception and attitudes. The data were drawn from the MET project funded by Bill and Melinda Gates foundation over the 2001-2011 school years. Within the same time period, in their study outlining the long-term impacts of same-race teachers, Gershenson et al. (2017) reported that having at least one Black teacher for a Black student who was experiencing poverty in grade 3-5 significantly increased the likelihood for college aspirations regardless of the student's gender. Drawing data from North Carolina Education Research Data Center, Gershenson et al. (2017) found that this effect illustrated about a 10-percentage point increase in desire to attend a 4-year college for both male and female students when compared to Black students who did not have a Black teacher in grades 3-5 or did not qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The study of teacher effects on student perception of themselves, triggered by aspects of teacher identity such as teacher race and gender, are not new. Analyzing data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 that spanned a period of 12 years (1988-200), Dee (2005) found that among students with low SES, the odds of being seen negatively by a teacher were 35-57 % higher when students did not have a teacher of the same race. Furthermore, having a teacher who does not share a student's racial/ethnic identity increases the odds of being seen as inattentive by 33%. Similarly, after interviewing eight Black students, Douglas et al. (2008) concluded that teachers bring some epistemological assumptions about their students based on their identities into their classroom. These assumptions highly influence pedagogy in a

classroom. Just like teachers, students also bring their past experiences (which may be defined by their identities) into the classroom, and these experiences may get in the way of academic achievement (Douglas et al., 2008).

Clearly, one of the reasons why it is important to find ways to sustain BIPOC teachers in the workforce is the potential influence their presence has on student motivation and consequently their academic and behavioral outcomes. Motivation —the willingness to achieve a goal—is a much-studied phenomenon in educational psychology. Motivation when emanating from within is called intrinsic motivation and when sourced from outside is called extrinsic motivation. When it comes to personal development and striving for excellence, intrinsic motivation is often something we hope our students will rely upon. Intrinsic motivation may be seen as people's willingness to overcome adversity without extrinsic variables. For students, teacher representation provides positive external influences that may help tap intrinsic motivation in both active teacher effects and passive teacher effects as discussed earlier. As mentors, race-alike teachers are more likely to help students develop a sense of belonging that may play a role in unlocking students' intrinsic motivation (Achinstein, 2010).

Influence of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy on Improving Outcomes

In the absence of adequate BIPOC staff, school districts have taken steps to nurture inclusion and a sense of belonging in their students through a push for culturally responsive pedagogy. Cultural proficiency can play a role in alleviating variables that prevent access to education and improve student outcomes. A few decades ago, Adeeb (1994) studied the impact of multicultural training for pre-service teachers in Jacksonville, Florida. Pre-service teachers in their experimental group who received the training were placed in schools serving a diverse student population whereas pre-service teachers in the control group received no such training.

Adeeb (1994) found that teachers who received multicultural training were more likely to be inclusive in their practices; this gain was more apparent for White teachers for factors such as "Discomfort with Different Cultures" (p. 241). Since 1994, several others have further bolstered this research. For example, Hammond (2015), asserts that teachers who embrace culturally responsive pedagogy become "warm demanders," (p. 99) teachers who hold high expectations of their students while simultaneously recognizing their intersectional identities and ways in which those identities may influence student learning. Teaching culturally responsive skills in teacher preparation programs and incorporation of culturally responsive practices in the classroom can have a positive impact on understanding student behavior and needs, and therefore improving student academic outcomes. However, as discussed earlier, disparities in outcomes suggest that there is more work to do.

The Current Study

Continued high disproportionality in discipline and low academic performance for Black and Latine students suggests that there may be unidentified or unmet needs. Perhaps these are connected to a lack of proportionate systemic representation. If a sense of identification and therefore representation has the capacity to create an intrinsic motivation to persist for teachers and students alike, they could have a significant impact on the outcomes for disenfranchised students. Increasing the proportion of BIPOC teachers in the schools, thereby providing BIPOC students with active and passive teacher effects, may also increase students' feelings of belonging, academic persistence, and achievement (Dee, 2005). Finding ways to improve the recruitment and retention processes for BIPOC teachers may offer substantial benefits to the field. In this dissertation, I examine the person- and systems-level characteristics that might

positively impact the decision of a BIPOC teacher to remain in a teaching position, as well as the factors that might prompt them to leave.

For the purpose of this paper, I use the terms *teacher turnover* and *teacher attrition* to describe both voluntary and involuntary movement of teachers from a school, regardless of the reasons behind the change of placement. Prior research describes the changes in teacher movement as *leavers*— those who decide to quit teaching, *movers*— those who decide to leave their current work location and go to another school, and *stayers*— those who decide to stay at their current work location (Kukla, 2009; Sutcher et al., 2019). Thus, to keep in sync with prior research, I also use the terms *leavers*, *movers* and *stayers* in the same way when discussing changes in placement.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Attrition, in General

Teachers leave the schools in which they work every year. As early as 2001, Ingersoll found that approximately 7% of teachers leave the profession each year. More recently, this number has increased. Through an analysis of data obtained from the National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES] *2011-2012 School and Staffing Survey* [SASS] and *2012-2013 Teacher Follow-Up Survey* [TFS], Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) found that in addition to the 8% of teachers who leave the teaching profession every year, an additional 8% transition to another school, for a total of 16% turnover annually. Of the teachers leaving the teaching profession, only 18% of the total turnover was explained by retirement, whereas the remaining 82% was for other voluntary and involuntary reasons not associated with retirement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Nguyen, 2020a).

During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of teachers leaving the profession increased dramatically. A 2022 press release from NCES reported resignation as the leading cause of attrition of teachers. Fully 51% of teachers who left the profession in the 2021-2022 school year resigned, whereas this number was significantly lower in years prior to the pandemic. A 2015 report from NCES illustrates that the number of teachers leaving the profession increased from 6% between 1987-1989 to 8% between 2011-2013. Of these, about 75% of teacher loss in these earlier decades was due to non-resignation factors such as retirement, electing military service, or moving to a position in the field of K-12 education that was not teaching related, significantly lower than the 51% loss due to resignation reported in between 2021 and 2022.

Teacher attrition, however, is not new. Prior reports also suggest a nationwide teacher shortage. This shortage is especially concerning because even twenty years ago, a national report indicated that in the 1999-2000 school year, 534,861 new teachers entered the workforce and 539,778 others left by the end of the school year (Ingersoll, 2003). These data suggest that the reason behind the shortage might not be a demand supply imbalance but rather related to factors that lead to the attrition of teachers. Findings such as these point to a problem of retention.

Teacher turnover interrupts continuity of relationships and has consequences beyond the cost of recruitment (Ronfeldt et al. 2012; Sutcher et al., 2019). Frequent loss of teachers may reduce teacher effectiveness and may negatively affect student outcomes. Schools with a high turnover rate are more likely to get teachers with less experience who are, in turn, likely to be less effective (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). As a result, students in schools with high turnover engage with fewer experienced teachers, which puts them at an educational disadvantage for learning (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Additionally, the disruptive effects of teacher turnover have an impact on student outcomes because interrupted relationships are associated with less student connectedness to school **(**Holt & Gershenson, 2015; Ladd & Sorenson, 2014). Turnover of employees also negatively impacts school climate, school culture, and peer morale (Gottfredson et al., 2005; Van Eck et al., 2017).

Predictors of Teacher Attrition

Prior research points to a variety of factors that may contribute to teacher attrition. Among these predictors, I group characteristics such as teacher identity and educational background as *person level characteristics* because they describe the visible and invisible attributes of people most closely analyzed in teacher effectiveness research. I group extraneous systemic factors and support systems such as administrator support, resource availability, student

achievement, and student discipline as *systems level characteristics* because they are reflected in

prior research as systemic reasons behind teacher attrition.

Person-Level Characteristics Associated with Teacher Attrition, in General

Person level characteristics as used here are attributes that can be assigned to people and

have been discussed in prior research on teacher attrition. At the employee level, certain

characteristics of teachers may influence their experiences, motivation, and desire to stay in the

profession or leave. Some of the person-level characteristics that stand out in teacher attrition

literature include their choice of certification pathway, area of expertise, years of experience,

gender identification, and race.

Certification Pathway. Whether a teacher's license was acquired in a traditional teacher

certification program (TCP) or an alternative certification program (ACP) can influence their

likelihood to stay, move, or leave (Fuller & Pendola, 2019). Limited field experience during the

certification process for those trained through ACPs is cited as one of the main reasons for this

difference. Using descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis for binary outcomes,

Fuller and Pendola (2019) found that alternatively-certified (AC) teachers reported less pre-

service exposure and felt less prepared compared to their traditionally certified (TC) peers.

Earlier, a 2016 analysis of trends from four waves of the national *Schools and Staffing Survey*

(SASS) by Redding and Smith, shows that although initially during the inception of ACP in the

school year 1999-2000, AC teachers were less likely to leave the profession than their TC peers

(6% vs 11%), since the 2008-2009 school year, 27% of AC teachers have left or moved,

compared to 17% of TC teachers ($p < .001$).

Five-year persistence rates of 175,664 teachers from a span of 15 years (2000-2015) in

Texas showed that teacher certification type and initial school setting were statistically

significant predictors of attrition (Guthery & Bailes, 2019). Using logistic regression models, Guthery and Bailes (2019) found that TC teachers placed in traditional public schools were 67.5% more likely to persist compared to 55.9% for AC teachers whose initial placement was in charter schools. Finally, a comparison of over 20 teacher preparation programs within the state of Washington (Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014) concluded that improving the quality of teacher preparation programs would be instrumental in creating effective teachers who persist rather than resorting to existing teacher preparation pathways that have a limited effect on student achievement. This finding is consistent with previous research which points to lack of field experience and the general feeling of a lack of adequate preparation expressed by teachers in *Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS)* and *Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS)* data.

      Area of Expertise. In their meta-analysis on teacher attrition and retention, Borman and Dowling (2008) found that secondary-level general education teachers had higher odds of leaving when compared to special education teachers (ES = 1.02). This finding came from a metanalyses of 33 quantitative studies with 63 attrition moderators that were used to analyze what factors moderate attrition outcomes. The outcomes were different for elementary teachers, who were found to be slightly more likely to leave compared to secondary teachers, indicating that subject-level expertise may be associated with attrition. Area of expertise was also found to be a contributor to attrition in a 2020 case study of geographically rural states conducted by Nguyen (2020a). In this study, Nguyen describes mobility patterns of teachers in Kansas and compares them against the national average using various iterations of *SASS* and *TFS* data from 2000-2012. From a regression analysis, Nguyen (2020a) found that special education teachers in Kansas were 7% more likely to leave when compared to general education or non-STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) teachers.

Years of Experience. Years of experience have also been found to relate to teacher attrition. In a comprehensive occupational health study evaluating demographic, occupational, and health factors that may be strongly associated with a teacher's intention to quit, Mack et al. (2019) surveyed 2588 teachers from 46 school districts in Texas. They found that teachers with more years of experience were more likely to remain ($p < .05$, $d = .217$).

Gender. Prior research also indicates that women are more likely to leave teaching than men. Borman and Dowling's (2008) metanalysis found that the odds of women leaving the profession were 1.30 times higher than the odds of men doing so. They also found that White teachers were 1.36 times more likely to leave than non-White teachers (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Although more recent research reported no significant differences based on either of these factors (Mack et al., 2019), Nguyen (2020b) points that the teacher workforce is predominantly White females; thus, these attrition rates might not be reflective of proportionate losses. It is also noteworthy that the Borman and Dowling study was a metanalysis of 33 nationwide quantitative studies, whereas Mack et al. (2019) focused on districts within the state of Texas, and Nguyen's (2020b) primarily focus was descriptive analysis of rural districts in Kansas.

Age. Teacher age is another person-level characteristic found to be related to teachers' decision to stay or leave. Mack et al.'s (2019) univariate and multivariate analysis of survey data from 2588 teachers from 46 Texas school districts revealed that younger teachers were more likely to leave compared to older teachers ($p < .05$, $d = .216$). Similar findings were reported by Nguyen (2020b), who, in their descriptive analysis of several waves of *SASS* and *TFS* data, found that younger teachers were 7.7 % more likely to leave their current position compared to older teachers.

Furthermore, Mack et al. (2019) also confirmed that teachers who indicated a desire to remain in the profession reported significantly more organizational commitment ($p < .001$, $d = 1.810$), job involvement ($p < .001$ $d = .847$), better job support ($p < .001$, $d = .943$), job control ($p < .001$ $d = .747$) better school climate ($p < .001$, $d = 1.170$), and fewer school problems ($p < .001$ $d = 0.378$) compared to teachers who indicated they intended to leave. Teachers who intended to leave reported higher levels of stress ($p < .001$, $d = .935$) and lower scores of mental quality-of-life ($p < .001$, $d = .920$). (Mack et al., 2019). Results connecting teacher age and area of expertise to intentions to leave were also found by Kelly et al. (2019) in their study analyzing Early Career Teachers' (ECT) intention to leave. Although Kelly et al.'s (2019) study was conducted in Australia, the findings suggest that many of the factors leading to teacher attrition may be similar across westernized cultures.

Teacher Racial Identity. Patterns of teacher attrition show that a teacher's racial identity might be associated with a greater likelihood of leaving the profession. When describing diversity of newly-prepared STEM teachers, Fuller and Pendola (2019) stated that BIPOC teachers in the districts they based their study on in Texas were more likely to seek alternative forms of certification. They found that of the two types of alternative certifications (school district ACP and university ACP), 60% of teachers graduating from a school district sponsored ACP with a license were BIPOC teachers, and 52% of teachers graduating from a University ACP were BIPOC teachers (Fuller & Pendola, 2019).

Later in the same study, analyzing hiring and layoff patterns from 2004-2011, Fuller and Pendola (2019) concluded that recession and concomitant teacher layoffs in urban districts may have had an impact on attrition of racially and ethnically diverse teachers in schools serving racially and ethnically diverse populations (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). Fuller and Pendola

(2019) observed that limited field experience and little to no clinical experience are contributors to attrition in the first five years in high-needs schools (a school where 50-75% of the student body are experiencing poverty). In the same year, in another study conducted in Texas, Guthery and Bailes (2019) concluded that certification pathway was a statistically significant predictor of attrition, acknowledging that teachers accessing an AC pathway in this geographical area also happened to be BIPOC teachers. They found that under similarly favorable conditions a teacher who attended an TCP and was employed in a traditional public school had a 32.5% likelihood of quitting in the first five years whereas a teacher who entered the profession through an ACP had a 44.1% likelihood of quitting in that time period.

In contrast to studies conducted in urban areas, studies conducted in rural areas for teachers with the same area of expertise (STEM subjects), where the teacher population was predominantly White and female, in schools where the student body was racially and ethnically diverse, White teachers quit more often (Nguyen, 2020b). White teachers who quit in urban areas often cite lack of administrator supports as the reason for leaving (Nguyen, 2020b). Additionally, Nguyen (2020b) found that teachers who reported high level of administrator support were 3.2 percentage points less likely to leave compared to those who reported lower level of administrator support. They also noted the attrition rate in Kansas was high at 19% in the 2007-2008 school year, compared to other midwestern states.

Interestingly, recent research observing patterns of population demographics also suggests that rural spaces in the United States of America tend to be more disproportionate in terms of racial representation within the area compared to racial diversity in suburban spaces (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). Although not explicitly stated in any of the mentioned prior

research in this section, these findings suggest that teacher racial identity may play a role in teacher attrition.

Systems-Level Characteristics Associated with Teacher Attrition, in General

Predictors of teacher turnover that are organizational or societal in nature are classified in this manuscript as systems-level characteristics. Prior studies have reported a significant connection between teacher preparation pathway, administrator support, and salary scales and availability of resources as major predictors of whether a teacher stays at a school or leaves, especially in the first five years (Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2019; Ingersoll, 2011; Mack et al., 2019). It is noteworthy that when variables are drawn from issues arising from systems, the results are complex products of the interactions of the variable. For the purpose of clarity, I will focus primarily on school demographics and district characteristics as the larger ideas.

School Demographics. Schools are made up of students, and the demographics of the student body substantially impact the culture of their school. Because student characteristics often are a product of other systems-level characteristics such as funding, I group these as such. School demographics constitute the most studied and documented literature in the area of teacher attrition, with student achievement levels, a school's ratio of disciplinary referrals, students' socio-economic status, and students' racial diversity standing out as the characteristics most related to teacher attrition.

Student Achievement Levels. Prior research points to student achievement at school as a predictor of teacher attrition. Schools with higher percentages of students with low achievement scores were associated with increased odds of teacher attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Noticeably, the reverse is also true. Prior studies illustrate that schools experiencing high teacher

attrition also report low student performance (Ronfelt et al., 2012). Drawing on data from 1.1 million observations of fourth and fifth grade students in New York City Department of Education and New York State Education Department from 2001-2010, Ronfelt et al., (2012) used regression models with two different estimation strategies to study the effects of school-by-grade-by-year level teacher turnover on student achievement. They found that students in grade levels with higher teacher turnover scored lower in both English Language Arts [ELA] (by 5.0-8.5%) and math (by 5.6- 9.4%) when compared to grade levels with no turnover at all. This effect was especially strong in schools with low student achievement scores and higher enrollment of Black students (Ronfelt et al., 2012). This finding held true when comparing students in the same grade within the same schools as well as within the same school but in different years (Ronfelt et al., 2012).

Number of Disciplinary Referrals. The influence of the number of disciplinary referrals is also apparent in prior studies. As the level of disciplinary infractions increase in a school, so does the likelihood of teachers leaving. In their binary logistic regression analysis of the impact of student body on migration of 76 science and mathematics teachers in an urban setting, Harrell et al. (2018) reported that the ratio of the number of students with disciplinary infractions was significantly related to attrition of science and math teachers. When the teacher preparation program was held constant, a teacher was found to be 45 times more likely to *move* or *leave* a school in which the annual student to discipline referral ratio was high compared to schools in which the discipline referral ratio was low (Harrell et al., 2018). Interestingly, this study was conducted in an urban setting in Texas, where as suggested in prior research (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017), the student population is more likely to be diverse. This phenomenon is more

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prevalent in schools with a racially diverse student population (Achienstien, 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2019).

Socio-Economic Status of the Student Body. Prior research also points to the role of societal privileges such as socio-economic status in teacher turnover. School funding in the US is dependent on local and state taxes, in addition to federal funds that some programs may receive. Because of variable property taxes, the neighborhood in which a school is located may determine the funding a school will receive and consequently how a district will be able to support their teachers, and who (teacher demographics) will stay in or leave these districts. As a result of stressors of funding, many under-funded districts find themselves short of teachers and consequently resort to alternative methods of licensing, which as discussed under certification pathway earlier in this literature synthesis may not adequately prepare teachers for the realities of a classroom (Fuller & Pendola, 2019; Redding & Smith, 2016; Sutcher et al., 2019). Redding and Smith (2016) reported that AC teachers were more likely to teach in urban high schools, which tend to have fewer resources compared to their suburban counterparts as well. These schools also had between 4% and 9% more students receiving free or reduced-price lunch (Redding & Smith, 2016). Students who attend schools in low-income neighborhoods are also more likely to suffer the consequences of teacher attrition. In their study, Borman and Dowling (2008) also found that low SES schools where students from low-income families attended were 1.05 times more likely to lose teachers than schools attended primarily by students from high-income families.

Racial Identity of the Students. Aspects that control funding also intersect with racial composition of neighborhoods. This intersection is a slow-to-remedy product of the racial history of the United States of America. Earlier research shows that when students' experience with poverty and race intersect, these factors become a major predictor of what teacher demographic

stays, moves, or leaves the schools the students attend (Ingersoll 2001). Through a regression analysis of nationwide data acquired from *SASS* and *TFS* surveys from 1987-1994, Ingersoll (2001) found the overall rate of teacher turnover in urban high-poverty public school to be 14.4%, which was above average. Student discipline issues and lack of influence over decision making were cited as the most common reason for teacher dissatisfaction. Considering the overrepresentation of BIPOC students in major disciplinary referrals in nationwide studies, this is especially a finding of interest because high teacher dissatisfaction and attrition in schools serving BIPOC students may be indicative of bias, which in light of prior studies further emphasizes the need to create systems that recruit and retain BIPOC teachers.

Some years later, Borman and Dowling's (2008) metanalysis of nationwide quantitative studies suggests that a higher percentage of teachers who work in schools with high numbers of BIPOC students reported less positive organizational support. They received lower salaries, experienced higher numbers of student disciplinary issues, inadequate support from leadership, inadequate resources, low decision-making influence, and low classroom autonomy. Schools serving predominantly BIPOC communities were three times more likely to lose teachers than schools with a majority of White students (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Sharkey (2009) used the Family Identification and Mapping System (FIMS) data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) to construct identifiers for families by race and socio-economic status. From an analysis of these database, Sharkey (2009) reported that over the course of childhood, 66% of Black children were raised in neighborhoods with a 20% poverty rate, compared to 6% of White children.

Urban public schools in the United States are generally more racially diverse and economically disadvantaged as compared to rural public schools (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017).

These disparities in attrition of teachers in urban and suburban schools may indicate that race might be a consideration for the manifestation of these factors in low-income, urban schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

District Characteristics. Teacher attrition literature points to many workplace characteristics that may contribute to uplifting or degrading employee morale, which may, in turn, influence attrition. As mentioned earlier, in their occupational health study, Mack et al. (2019) found that every unit increase in organizational commitment decreased the odds of teachers leaving by 28%. Additionally, every unit increase in perceived job control decreased the chances of quitting by 14% (Mack et al., 2019). District characteristics include variables such as location of the school (urban/rural/suburban), ability to collaborate and build relationships with peers (mentorship), school climate and culture as projected through interactions with administrators, and availability of resources. These district characteristics are the most discussed in teacher attrition literature as contributors to teachers staying or leaving a school.

Funding. An examination of the teacher labor market in the context of variations of urbanicity demonstrates that teacher attrition is not uniform across different settings (Nguyen, 2020a). Public schools depend on state and local taxes for their funding. Because of this, low-income neighborhood schools in urban areas which also are racially and ethnically diverse receive less funding compared to higher-income neighborhood schools in suburban areas (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). This disparity in funding creates under-resourced schools in some areas (Wright, 2012). Perhaps related to this disparity in funding, teachers in urban areas are proportionately more likely to leave their school compared to their peers in suburban areas ($p < 0.05$) (Mack et al., 2019). Additionally, teachers in less-funded schools are 5.88 times more likely to leave compared to teachers in better-funded schools. Although the odds of attrition for

teachers from urban and suburban schools was only slightly greater than those for teachers from rural locations (1.13), the effect size was statistically significant (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, beginning STEM teachers in high-poverty schools (where 50.1% or more of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch) who graduated from ACPs were more likely to leave the profession of teaching and leave their initial school within five years (Fuller & Pendola, 2019).

Administrator Support. Positive communication from administrators and opportunities for professional advancements for teachers were associated with lower attrition rates (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Teachers who reported higher levels of administrator support were 3.2% less likely to leave compared to those who reported lower levels of administrator support (Nguyen, 2020b). In a mixed methods case study of a high-poverty elementary public school in a southern state, teachers who stayed at their initial placement for less than five years (short term stayers) reported inadequate support from the administrators as a primary contributor to their decision to leave (Kamrath & Bradforth, 2020). Although administrator support is pivotal in persistence of teachers, it is noteworthy that 11 of the 18 teachers in this group who were short term stayers in a school were White women; 100% of the student population in this setting qualified for free and reduced lunches, and 90% of students were Black. This finding further emphasizes the influence of race and socio-economic status of the student body in schools with high teacher attrition as discussed in earlier sections.

As indicated in Ingersoll (2001) and Borman and Dowling (2008), schools having an unclear approach to student discipline was also cited as a major factor in this group of teachers' decision to leave school. Kamrath and Bradforth (2020), further emphasized the existence of perception of adverse disciplinary needs in schools serving a high number of BIPOC students.

Lack of recognition was cited by 61% of the respondents (short term stayers) as a factor in their decision to leave (Kamrath & Bradforth, 2020) as well. The workplace condition most predictive of teacher turnover was a perceived lack of administrator support, a construct that measures how teachers rate an administrator's ability to encourage and acknowledge staff, communicate a clear vision, and generally run a school well. Furthermore, logistic regression analysis of data obtained from *SASS* (2011-2012) and subsequent *TFS* (2012-13) illustrates that when teachers *strongly disagree* that their administration is supportive, they are more than twice as likely to move schools or leave teaching than when they *strongly agree* that their administration is supportive (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Compensation and Bargaining Ability. Among the organizational aspects that influence a teacher's decision to stay, move, or leave, salary and union membership are also discussed in prior research. Private schools tend not to offer union membership. Ingersoll (2001) reported the overall rate of teacher attrition in private schools at 22.8%, as significantly higher than in public schools, at 14.4%. Availability of membership in a union was further positively associated with teacher retention. Teachers who worked in unionized districts received higher wages compared to their non-unionized peers; these gains increased with years of experience by between 18% and 28% (Cowen & Strunk, 2015). Union membership increased the likelihood that a teacher would stay by 4.4% (Nguyen, 2020b).

Better compensation and benefits are associated with lower attrition as well. The 2015 *Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study* (BLTS) that evaluated the percentage of teachers who continued to teach after the first five years, organized by the level of their beginning salary, reported that 97% of teachers whose beginning salary was above $40,000 continued to teach after the first five years. In contrast, only 87% of teachers whose beginning salary was below

$40,000 continued to teach after the first five years (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2015). Additionally, teachers who fell in the top quintile of salary schedule of $78,000, annually, had a predicted turnover rate that was 31% lower than teachers in the bottom quintile of $60,000, annually (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Using the Annualized Cost of Living (ACOL) model to estimate the effect of earnings on retention, Hansen et al. (2004) estimated that a 1% increase in teacher salary decreased turnover by 0.7%.

Promising Supports to Address Attrition

As prior research suggests, the occupation of teaching is multilayered; the factors that might lead teachers to leave the profession are complex. That said, research in what works as a retention measure is limited and, often, region specific. Most promising practices in retention as suggested in policy briefs, however, are derivatives that seek to counter aspects linked to attrition through compensatory language. This section discusses some of these promising practices in both improving ways to enter the profession (recruitment) and measures to keep people from leaving the workforce (retention).

Teacher Pathways

Growing Your Own. Although little research exists about Grow Your Own (GYO) programs, program evaluations of implemented programs that seek to help continuous improvement point to such programs as a promising practice in helping recruit more teachers. Grow your own programs, such as Teacher Cadet, are designed to inspire high school students to consider teaching as a career. According to a 2022 report by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement [CERRA], 41% of the students who attended a Teacher Cadet course in South Carolina high schools were likely to choose teaching as a career. Additionally, 32% of students who attended a course like this were racially and ethnically

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diverse, and 48% of the teacher cadet programs were offered at schools considered high-risk. Hunt et al. (2012), however, reported concerning findings regarding attrition in their program evaluation of twelve statewide GYO consortia focused on recruiting adults in Illinois for the 2011-2012 school year. Of the 700 candidates who were recruited by the program in the first two years, more than half left after receiving some funding, only 68 graduated from a teacher education program, and only slightly more than half of this number were teaching full time or part time two years after they were originally recruited. Aligning with prior research on alternative teacher pathway, some of Hunt et al.'s recommendations to improve the program include better field experience and supports for new teachers.

Collaborating with Local Teacher Preparation Programs. Since 2012, more program evaluations have led to continuous improvement and guidance to designing and implementing GYO programs. Most teacher preparation programs rely upon an alliance of school districts and local teacher preparation programs to communicate specific needs and provide field experiences to aspiring educators (Motamedi et al., 2017). Among the strategies recommended by Motamedi et al. (2017), providing financial and social supports seems especially important beyond recruitment of candidates due to prior research finding these as a predictor of attrition as well.

Financial Aid. Many states require candidates to hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree for non-Career Tech Education (CTE) subjects. Some states like Oregon even require a master's degree. For many people, attending a four-year program results in school loans that they may be unable to pay due to low teaching salaries. Offering robust financial aid to incentivize more people to enter the teaching profession is gaining strength among recommendations within program evaluations (Hunt et al, 2012; Motamedi et al., 2017). Recently, some state licensing bodies such as the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission in the state of Oregon, have

also begun offering financial support to culturally and linguistically diverse candidates seeking enrollment in a teaching program. Grants to fund Grow Your Own (GYO) programs that specifically recruit BIPOC candidates are also offered by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE, 2022). Financial supports are being refined at the federal level as well. Recently, many teachers benefited from the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program's offering to discharge, forgive, or cancel student loans for qualifying educators. Additionally, through an act of Congress, the Biden-Harris administration was able to offer up to $20,000 in student loan debt relief to eligible borrows working as teachers.

Forming Collaborative Networks as an Approach to Retaining Teachers

Social supports are also important to retaining teachers (Motamedi et al., 2017). Research in urban high-poverty schools points to teacher connectedness as a significant predictor in new teachers' decision to remain in teaching (Schnaidman, 2020). Among many different forms of teaming opportunities, such as collaboration within professional learning communities (PLC) and instructional coaching, two that specifically allow teachers to lead the teaming process are gaining popularity as a means of retention: mentorship opportunities and ability to form and associate within affinity groups.

Mentorship Opportunities. Mentorship is a promising practice because it may help create non-evaluative relationships among new and more experienced teachers. Teacher attrition literature documents that districts that offered mentorship programs had fewer teachers leaving. Mentoring programs provide networking and collaboration opportunities, both associated with lower attrition rates (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Mentorship opportunities rely on community and prior institutional knowledge to thrive. In New York City, the results of the application of a mentorship program following a policy initiative showed that of the new teachers who were

paired with mentors, 90% returned to teach the next school year and 80% returned to the same school. Participation in a mentorship program has been found to have a statistically significant positive effect on retention (Rockoff, 2008).

Affinity Groups. Humans often rely on each other for comfort and emotional support. Research suggests that informal social support may offset the isolation new teachers may experience and promote a sense of belonging (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014). A qualitative analysis of experiences of Special Education Teachers of Color (SETOC) from California's Bay Area concluded that participation in affinity spaces helped SETOC by positioning them as "smart, good and wise" (p. 56) by rendering their racial identities and contributions visible (Kulkarni et al., 20222). Similarly, the South Carolina Center for the Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Educators (2021), reported social-emotional support, professional support, and ability to share experiences in a safe and comfortable environment as aspects of affinity groups from which participants may benefit. Warren-Grice (2021) reported that affinity groups provide holistic time and space for community building and racial wellness support. Affinity groups may be instrumental in identifying the needs of specific teacher groups and improving retention by transforming educational spaces (Mosely, 2018).

Administrator Supports

Appropriate support from administrators is another promising practice in new policy recommendations. Shuls and Flores (2020) conducted semi-structured interviews of three key central office figures of Missouri's top retaining school districts. After vertically and horizontally analyzing data from these interviews, they concluded that supportive administration, encouraging teacher leadership, and cultivating a culture of trust, openness, and academic freedom along with differentiated professional development and mentorship programs were vital to teacher retention

(Shuls & Flores 2020). Promoting a culture of trust may involve allowing a voice and providing culturally responsive training through which employees can be aware of each other's values. In the same article, Shuls and Flores (2020) noted that inclusion of teacher voice in decision making was associated with the perception of administration as supportive.

Promoting CRT for staff that focuses on peer-to-peer interactions holds promise for the improvement of workplace culture as well. In a study assessing the role of leadership in creating an inclusive work environment, Szymańska (2017) surveyed 115 employees in an organization at various levels to analyze the importance of diversity issues and identify the most effective strategies that could be adopted. By running comparisons through an ANVOA, Szymańska (2017) concluded that "generally the respondents believe that reducing prejudices and use of stereotypes, improving communication among diverse people and helping to build professional relationships in the workplace among diverse people" (p. 66) would help increase awareness of diversity of peer and peer needs among employees. Similar to culturally responsive teaching that may help teachers assess the needs of their students as discussed earlier, use of culturally responsive training to improve peer to peer interactions may help create culturally affirming school environments and serve as a promising practice in retention of BIPOC teachers.

Other Incentives and Policy Initiatives

Recent amendments to House Bill 4030 (2022) allow Oregon school districts to take new steps towards recruitment and retention of teachers. Section 2 amendments allow teachers from out of state to become licensed in the state of Oregon. Since Oregon is not a very racially diverse state, this change has the potential to diversify the teacher workforce and is also important because it might allow professionals to start employment without significant initial financial investment. Amendments to Section 7 of HB4030 provide Oregon school districts with grant

money that can be used to recruit and retain teachers as well. Many local school districts that have received this grant are investing in paying employees a raise in salary, retention bonus, hiring more teachers, and hiring instructional coaches to provide professional supports to teachers. Although the initiative is new, it provides the school districts with financial resources, lack of which is reported as a predictor of attrition.

The Intersection of the Context in which BIPOC Teachers Work and Teacher Attrition

Attrition rates are especially concerning when we look at specific teacher groups. Nationally, 19% of BIPOC teachers move schools or leave teaching each year, which is higher than the 15% rate of their White peers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Although the rates for leaving the profession altogether are similar between BIPOC teachers and White teachers, the rate at which BIPOC teachers move to different schools is significantly higher (11%) compared to that of White teachers (7%) (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Because of the existing disproportionality in number of White teachers in all geographical areas, although it may seem like more White teachers are lost through any form of turnover, the loss of BIPOC teachers at the same rate for *leaving* and even higher rates for *moving* continues to feed the disproportionality despite recruitment efforts (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Moreover, the impact of teacher movement on students within the schools from which they moved is potentially the same as if they left the profession.

When describing his theory of human motivation, Maslow (1943) explained how people must have their basic physiological needs met and a general sense of safety in their environments before they can attain self-actualization. BIPOC teachers, like all humans, also experience a disruption in self-actualization with the disruption of sense of safety within their workspaces. Jacobs' (2019) qualitative analysis of sources and impacts of occupational stress from interviews

of nine participants revealed that stress arising from perceived ineffective leadership was associated with diminished organizational and individual outcomes, including negative employee health outcomes at the psychological and physiological levels. Though this research did not specifically consider teachers as the participants, Fleming et al. (2013) previously discussed the importance of supporting positive social-emotional health in teachers. Within their analysis, they found that occupational stress may reduce teacher availability and may even impair teachers' ability to model social and emotional competence, which may have direct and negative impact on their students. Mental health outcomes for teachers were also associated with teacher burnout and depression. In their quantitative study, Capone and Petrillo (2018) found negative correlations between teacher mental well-being, burnout, and depression. Teachers with better mental well-being were flourishing compared to those whose mental well being was compromised. In the context of BIPOC teachers, Smith (2004) described this phenomenon in Black faculty and graduate students who experience continuous microaggressions as a continuous stressor that may impact their psychological well-being as Racial Battle Fatigue [RBF]. Racial Battle Fatigue compromises BIPOC teachers' basic needs of safety and prevents them from attaining self-actualization by adding unique experiential occupational stressors. RBF as psychological, emotional and physiological toll of confronting racism is a common experience for BIPOC teachers in Oregon who work within a predominantly White profession (Pizarro & Kohli, 2018).

Niemann's (2011) literature review explains the personal, psychological, and career damaging impacts of tokenism on faculty of color. Within their analysis, Niemann (2011) explains that BIPOC teachers often experience isolation, loneliness and alienation within their workplace due to lack of representative staffing within that bargaining group. Moreover, BIPOC

teachers' distinctiveness at work also makes them more visible. When BIPOC teachers who are often tokenized enter work environments where they experience stereotype threats, they also experience attributional ambiguity of intentions due to past experiences. Developing trust and attaining trustworthiness is reported in prior literature as pivotal to forming lasting relationships with employees in business models (Blois, 1999). Additionally, the impact of language of emotion is also reported to evoke emotional response from human subjects in prior studies (Brooks et al., 2017). Teaching is not an exception to human interactions such as trust and emotions even within a capitalist culture; building trust through trustworthy interactions, therefore, may be an important key to reducing BIPOC teacher attrition.

Systems-Level Characteristics Associated with Where BIPOC Teachers Work

As the literature discussed in prior sections suggests, nationwide, more BIPOC teachers enter the profession through AC pathways, and they tend to work in schools classified as high needs (Achinstein et al., 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Typically, high needs schools also are eligible for Title 1 funding under the Every Students Succeeds Act (2015). This means that the student demographics of the schools in which BIPOC teachers work include historically marginalized students and students experiencing poverty. Prior research also indicates these schools may also lack adequate funding for appropriately resourcing programs, which might be connected with low performance, disciplinary referrals, and lower graduation rates– factors that are associated with high attrition rates and influencing perception of administrator supports by teachers (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll 2001; Fuller & Pendola, 2019; Mack et al., 2019; Wright, 2012).

Gaps in the Literature

Despite a robust literature on teacher retention, gaps still exist.

Measurement Gaps

Some of the most reliable measures commonly used in prior research to evaluate patterns of teacher attrition are the SASS and TFS surveys conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) from 1987-2012. In 2015, NCES redesigned the SASS and renamed it the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS). Although these measures have been important in investigating this area, they are not appropriate for my particular study. A closer look at recent NTPS (2021-22), SASS (2011-12) and TFS (2012-13) questionnaires shows that the questions in each of these measures are too generalized to fit my study well. These national surveys are also conducted in a paper-pencil medium. Though one may think that this may make a survey more accessible, the likelihood of it being lost with the many demands teachers face on a daily basis may be higher. Additionally, teacher racial identity questions for SASS do not appear until page 43, and although the NTPS is somewhat shortened, demographic questions appear at the end. When surveys are long, participants tend not to finish them, leading to additional data loss.

Investigating the impact of teacher racial identity on the reasons they stay in or leave a school requires a nuanced approach. Although placing demographic questions at the end of a survey may help protect responses from being influenced by teacher identity, the explicit purpose of my study is to analyze the influence of teacher racial identity on their experience in the schools in which they work. Providing a way for participants to share their experiences requires a qualitative element. Limiting my data to that available from existing NCES surveys would be a detriment to my study, so I developed my own measures, which I discuss in the method section.

The Need for the Current Study

As mentioned in the promising practices section, many strategy suggestions have evolved from evaluation of programs implemented in different states which may have varying cultural and geographical needs and therefore may not generalize to every state. Although many policies and programs focused on improving the recruitment and retention of teachers exist, empirical research on effective recruitment and retention strategies is lacking. Empirical articles that document the experiences of BIPOC teachers are also significantly limited. This is especially true for educators in predominately White states, such as Oregon.

Considering many school districts' commitment to making educational representation more equitable, loss of BIPOC teachers through attrition is an issue that goes beyond the monetary costs. Just as with teachers in general, there are nuances of environment, people, and institutions with which BIPOC teachers are faced that increase or decrease their likelihood of staying, moving or leaving the profession. Although we know quite a bit about the factors associated with teacher attrition in general, less is known about the degree to which these same factors might impact the decision of BIPOC teachers to remain working at their school or in the profession. Over the past few years, Oregon school districts have placed considerable emphasis on recruiting and retaining BIPOC teachers.

In this mixed-methods study, I used quantitative and qualitative methods to gather perspectives around retention efforts from BIPOC educators as well as their White colleagues with the goal of using this information to inform efforts to diversify the teacher workforce in Oregon. My hope is that this study will provide actionable insights into person- and systems-level characteristics that might positively impact the desire of BIPOC teachers to remain in

teaching positions. Such insights might help inform school and district policies and practices which, in turn, might improve the educational experience of BIPOC students.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influence teacher job satisfaction?

2. To what extent do these factors differ for teachers of color and white teachers?

3. What systems-level characteristics do teachers identify as encouraging them to remain in the profession?

4. What systems-level characteristics do teachers identify as impacting their decision to change schools or leave the teaching profession?

5. To what extent do these characteristics differ for teachers of color and white teachers?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

In this mixed methods study, I explored the influence of person- and systems-level variables on teacher attrition, with an emphasis on the attrition of teachers of color. I chose a 2-Phase mixed-methods sequential explanatory QUAN→QUAL design because this form of mixed-methods design allows a researcher to collect and integrate both quantitative data and qualitative data for their inquiry to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A sequential mixed methods design also allows a researcher to answer confirmatory and exploratory questions in a predetermined order (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). In keeping with Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2006) description of a mixed methods multi-strand design framework, I used the seven-step process depicted in Figure 1 to select the design from available typologies.

Figure 1

Sequential Mixed Method Design, Adapted from Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006).

Participant Recruitment

The focus of my research is on systems-level variables that draw teachers of color into education or conversely push them out of education. In addition to an online survey, I also rely on focus groups and interviews to gather information about how teachers' racial affiliation may be impacting their experiences of satisfaction with their work. Due to the focus of my study, it is important to have access to teachers of color. However, in the Pacific Northwest where I am located, it is unlikely that any single district would yield an adequate number of teachers of color to provide adequate statistical power for my design. Thus, participants were recruited in two waves. The first wave, a convenience sample of participants, was recruited from a school district near where I live that was exploring ways to improve their recruitment and retention of BIPOC teachers. The topic was addressed within their school board meetings. I reached out to them and offered to collaborate with various stakeholders within the district to create, distribute, and analyze the results of a survey of their teachers. The participating district sent a link to the online survey through their listserve to all their teachers.

Because many Oregon school districts lack a large number of BIPOC teachers, a second wave of participant recruitment was needed to expand the BIPOC participant pool. I reached out to BIPOC teachers in the Pacific Northwest through two different networks: the Western Regional Educator Network (WREN), an educator-led and improvement-focused network spanning Lane, Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties in Oregon, and the Oregon Educators of Color Network (OECN), a moderated Facebook group for Oregon BIPOC teachers. By expanding participant recruitment in these ways, I attained a larger sample of BIPOC teachers. Sample characteristic for participants recruited from this second wave are combined and presented in Table 1.

Participating District Characteristics

The participating school district is a midsized school district in the Pacific Northwest. The district serves approximately 16,000 students, housed in nineteen elementary schools, eight middle schools, four comprehensive high schools and two alternative programs. Like many school districts, the participating district offers a variety of programs in their comprehensive high schools such as International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP) courses in various content areas, Career Tech Education, English Language Development, and language immersion to name a few. Similarly, support services for behavior and social-emotional needs are also offered within the school district. There are differences in program and support services offered at individual schools, and a number of students apply to attend "choice schools" rather than their neighborhood schools, based on their individual interests and needs.

Student Characteristics. Of the student body in the district, 47% qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on income, 7% are identified as Ever Language Learners, 11% identified as Mobile students and 14% are students with disabilities. Students in the participating district are racially and relatively ethnically diverse for Oregon. According to the Oregon Department of Education (O.D.E.), 16% of students in this district identified as Latine, 11% identified as Multiracial, 3% Asian, 1% Black, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, less than 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and the remaining 68% White.

Teacher Characteristics. In contrast, the teachers are less diverse. Of the approximately 850 teachers who work in this district, 8% identify as Latine and 4% identify as Multiracial, 3% Asian, 1% Black, less than 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, less than 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and the remaining 83% White. Although certain racial groups may be

represented by proportionate number of teachers within the district, the disparity may be more apparent at the school level. In particular, district-level data suggest disproportionality exists in the underrepresentation of Latine teachers when compared to the student population density for the same racial/ethnic group. Similarly, with 68% of the student population identifying as White, compared to 83% of the teachers, White teachers are disproportionally represented among the teaching staff. Table 1 provides more specific participant characteristics for the cooperating school district.

Research Design

The research took place in two phases. In *Phase 1,* all teachers from the participating school district and from WREN and OECN were sent an invitation to participate in the Qualtrics survey through their district email (District), a network listserv (WREN), or a posting in the Facebook group (OECN). Teachers were allowed thirty days to finish the survey. Based on the responses from the survey, I purposively selected participants for *Phase 2* focus groups or interviews. Participants who elected to participate in one of the focus groups were placed in a race-alike group setting to control for race as a variable. Interviews were set up after I contacted all potential participants to check for their availabilities and preferred location. Responses from interviews and focus groups were recorded for analysis with permission from the participants.

Phase 1: Survey

In this phase, I explored the first two research questions: (a) *What are the factors that influence teacher job satisfaction?* And (b) *To what extent do these factors differ for teachers of color and White teachers?* For this phase, I used a researcher-generated survey instrument comprised primarily of selected response Likert-scale type questions as well as a few constructed response questions.

Phase 2: Focus Groups and Interviews

In this phase, I explored the remaining research questions: (a) *What systems-level characteristics do teachers identify as encouraging them to remain in the profession?* (b) *What systems-level characteristics do teachers identify as impacting their decision to change schools or leave the teaching profession?* and (c) *To what extent do these characteristics differ for teachers of color and white teachers?*
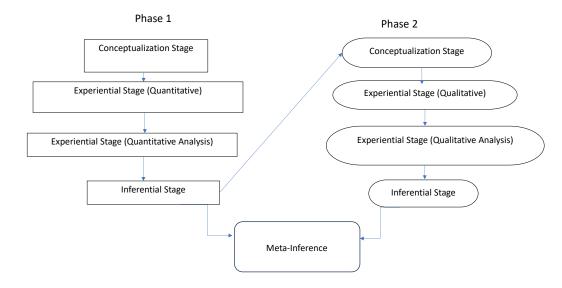
Phase 2 relied on qualitative methods that involved either a one-on-one interview or race-alike focus group. In addition, participants' responses to the open-ended questions on the survey were analyzed along with the other qualitative data. Potential participants for Phase 2 were identified through a question on the survey that asked respondents to indicate if they were (a) interested in participating in a focus group/interview and (b) if so, would they prefer an individual or group modality. To draw credible conclusions, I purposively sampled participants for Phase 2 of my study. In this approach, I carefully read the survey responses of all the people who indicated they were willing to participate in Phase 2 and sorted them by their responses into categories to decide which ones might yield most robust results. Specifically, I was seeking participants who appeared to provide responses on the survey that resembled the "average" response of White teachers and BIPOC teachers, as well as participants whose responses suggested they might be more outliers. In all cases, though, I tried to match my selection of White teachers to my selection of BIPOC teachers (in terms of years of experience and responses to the other survey questions) to help provide clear comparators.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Characteristics from Teacher Survey Data

Teacher Characteristic		*n*	%
Race	Latine	5	4.17
	Black or African American	1	0.83
	Native American	4	3.33
	Multiracial	17	14.17
	Asian	4	3.33
	White	84	70.00
	Prefer not to say	5	4.17
Ethnicity	Latine	8	6.70
	Non-Latine	105	87.50
	Other	7	5.80
Age	22-25	4	3.30
	26-30	6	5.00
	31-35	17	14.20
	36-40	11	9.20
	41-45	21	17.50
	46-50	24	20.00
	51-60	32	26.70
	61+	5	4.20
Years of Experience	0-3	7	5.80
	4-5	12	10.00
	6-10	27	22.50
	11-15	23	19.20
	16-20	19	15.80
	21-25	21	17.50
	26-30	7	5.80
	31+	4	3.30
Union Membership	Yes	116	96.70
	No	3	2.50
	Unsure	1	0.80

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Characteristics from Teacher Survey Data (Continued)

Teacher Characteristic		*n*	%
Contract Status	Contract/Tenured	91	75.80
	Probationary 1	11	9.20
	Probationary 2	7	5.80
	Probationary 3	4	3.30
	Temporary Full Time	6	5.0
	Temporary Part Time	1	0.80
Grade Level	Elementary	58	48.30
	Elementary/Middle	4	3.30
	Middle	15	12.50
	Middle/High	4	3.30
	High	31	25.80
	Elementary/Middle/High	2	1.70
	Alternative	6	5.00
Area of Specialization	General Education	97	80.83
	Special Education	19	15.83
	Interventionist	4	3.33
Gender	Male	23	19.2
	Female	95	79.2
	Non-binary (Prefer not to say)	2	1.70

Measures

I used two instruments to collect data for this study: an online survey and a semi-structured interview protocol, which was delivered either individually in one-on-one interviews or to a group of participants in focus groups.

Teacher Survey

An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all teachers employed in the cooperating school district. In addition, all teacher members of WREN received an email invitation to participate through the WREN listserve. An invitation to participate in the survey

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was also shared via the OECN Facebook group. The *Teacher Survey* (see Appendix A) was intended to explore reasons why teachers stay or leave their teaching position. I developed the survey in 2021-2022 in collaboration with the participating district's human resources personnel, equity director, union leaders, and school board representatives.

The survey consists of 55 questions sorted into 10 thematic segments. These segments range from questions collecting demographic data such as teacher race, gender, age, years of service, and teacher prep program attended, to questions that use a Likert scale where 1 indicates *Strong Disagreement* with a given statement and 5 indicates *Strong Agreement* with the given statement. The survey also includes three constructed-response questions, one of which is an open-ended question asking participants for suggestions on how the teaching workplace experience could be improved. Additionally, the survey also asked participants to indicate their interest in participating in a focus group or interview and—if they indicated they were interested—whether they preferred an individual or group setting for that part of their participation.

Focus Groups

Based on responses to the survey question where participants indicated their preference and desire to participate in a focus group interview, participants were selected for and assigned to a race-alike focus group or individual interview. In this way four race-alike focus groups were conducted—one focus group of Latine teachers, one of Black teachers, one of Asian teachers, and one of White teachers. The focus groups followed a written protocol (see Appendix B), approved by the University of Oregon's IRB. Following the group agreements presented, participants took turns answering the following questions:

1. Think about your first year of teaching. What were some highs and lows of that year? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

2. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you immense satisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

3. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you dissatisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

4. In what ways/to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

Focus group responses were transcribed for later analysis.

Individual Interviews

Participants who indicated a willingness to participate in an individual interview were contacted individually after the initial analysis as well. The rationale for giving participants a choice between participating in a focus group or individual interview was in recognition that talking about racial experiences that may lead to professional dissatisfaction may arouse feelings that some participants may not be willing to share in a group setting. Some people may even decline to participate in a focus group due to fear and distrust they may have developed from negative experiences in their schools. To expand participation and accommodate individual needs, the option of one-on-one interviews was provided to those participants who indicated they would prefer that modality. I asked the same questions of both interview and focus group participants (Appendix C) to provide consistency. Like the focus groups, the interviews were transcribed for later analysis.

Data Preparation and Cleaning

Both quantitative and qualitative data were prepared prior to analysis.

Phase 1: Quantitative Data

Deleted Columns. I first cleaned the survey output Excel sheet to retain relevant information and deidentify data before data were imported to SPSS. The following columns were deleted during this process: (a) the originating IP address through which the respondent accessed the online survey, (b) progress made by participants, (c) the time it took for participants to finish the survey, (d) finished status, (e) participant phone number and email (provided by those who indicated they wanted to be contacted for a follow-up interview), and (f) participant location. Additionally, because very few participants used the "other" specialization category, information from that column was consolidated with information in the Specialization column. Because no participants reported their gender as *other* with a preferred descriptor, the Gender - Other column was removed as well.

Deleted Entries. Incomplete survey responses from 52 participants were also deleted from the data set. Of these, 25 participants did not attempt the survey after having filled out the consent form, and the remaining 27 did not finish the survey to the point where they indicated their intention to stay or leave teaching. Because this variable was central to my research, the rest of their responses were uninterpretable without that particular information. Other deleted entries included data from ten participants who were not teachers. These deleted entries in the data set included eight counselors, one social worker and one student success coordinator. It is likely these people received the survey because many Oregon school districts have teachers and other certified positions within the same bargaining unit and therefore on the same listserv. Thus, a total of 62 survey entries were deleted prior to analysis. Once the data file was clean, I duplicated it and retained the original in case I needed to go back to it. After the file was duplicated, participant contact information and constructed responses within the survey were moved to

another file for later qualitative analysis, and I imported the remaining data into SPSS for quantitative analysis.

Recoding Variables. Prior to analysis, variables were changed to numeric values to make computing of means and comparisons between groups possible. The following values were assigned to each variable using the recode command. *Extremely Disagree* was assigned a value of 1; *Disagree* was assigned a value of 2; *Neither Agree nor Disagree* was assigned a value of 3; *Agree* was assigned a value of 4; and *Extremely Agree* was assigned a value of 5. Responses that were answered with a *Yes* were recoded to a 1 and responses that were answered with a *No* were recoded to 0. *Female* participants were recoded to 1 and *male* participants were recoded 0. Race responses that included any racial category other than White were recoded as BIPOC with a numeric value 1, and White was recoded as 0

Computing Variables to Generate Combined Variables of Interest. Using the SPSS command "compute into new variable," I consolidated participant responses from each of the survey segments into combined variables of interest. In this process, nine questions were combined to form a *School Connectedness* variable. Five questions were combined to form an *Administrator Supports* variable. Another five questions were combined to form a *Professional Development* variable. Five questions were combined to form a *Student Processes* variable. Five questions were combined to form a *Resources* variable, and seven questions were combined to form a *School Diversity* variable. The full survey is made available in Appendix A, and each of these combined variables are discussed below.

Participant response to the question *In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered moving to a different site or district, but staying in K-12 education,* illustrating teacher intention to leave school, was computed to a score of 1 if the teacher selected *Agree* or

Extremely Agree and a score of 0 if they selected *Disagree* or *Extremely Disagree*. Participant entries indicating neither agreement nor disagreement were not included in the analysis.

Similarly, participant response to the question *In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered leaving K-12 education as a profession,* illustrating teacher intention to leave the profession, was computed to a score of 1 if the teacher selected *Agree* or *Extremely Agree* and a score of 0 if they selected *Disagree* or *Extremely Disagree*. Participant entries indicating neither agreement nor disagreement were not included in the analysis.

School Connectedness. School connectedness (School CON) is defined as the level of comfort a teacher may feel with dealing with everyday activities of their workplace due to the systems, structures, and procedures that may be in place that prioritize school climate and culture. In Phase 1, participants were asked a total of nine questions related to this variable (see Table 2).

Table 2
Survey Questions Combined to Form the School Connectedness Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
I have a person at work with whom I feel comfortable sharing my day-to-day experiences.	1-5
My site has a process to resolve disputes/disagreements with peers.	1-5
There is a predictable structure to PLC and other activities in which I am expected to participate at my school.	1-5
I am encouraged to observe other staff's instructional practices at my site.	1-5
I am able to observe other's instructional practices without giving up my prep time.	1-5
When I bring an issue to my administrator, I am sure I will be heard.	1-5
My site has systems to celebrate staff accomplishments.	1-5
There is a dedicated time during the work day for me to collaborate with my grade level teams.	1-5
My site has consistent expectations of all staff.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**9-45**

Administrator Supports. Teachers' relationship with the administrators and their perceived comfort in approaching and asking for clarification on policies and initiatives without a fear of retaliation was assessed through five questions on the survey. Their responses were consolidated into a single computed variable identified as *Administrator Supports* (see Table 3).

Table 3

Survey Questions Combined to Form the Administrator Supports Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
My administrator is warm and welcoming with everyone in the building.	1-5
If I have a strong disagreement with a policy, I know I can speak my mind to my administrator individually and freely (in a civil way).	1-5
When I am observed, I can count on receiving compliments as well as suggestions for improvement.	1-5
Substantial efforts are made to explain reasons for new initiatives and their purpose at my school.	1-5
Administration at my school is compassionate and kind.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**5-25**

Professional Development. The *Professional Development* (PD) variable was constituted of teachers' perception of which professional development opportunities were offered, how they were presented, and opportunities that the teachers were offered to lead these professional trainings. Their responses were consolidated into a single computed variable identified as *Professional Development* (PD). In Phase 1, participants were asked a total of five questions related to this variable (see Table 4).

Table 4

Survey Questions Combined to Form the Professional Development Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
My school based professional development has a clear agenda and starts and ends on time.	1-5
I have a choice about the professional development I attend to advance my skills as a teacher.	1-5
If I want to attend a professional training that is relevant to my position, I know that adequate funding will be made available to me in a timely manner.	1-5
I have adequate opportunities to engage in professional development.	1-5
At my site, I have adequate access to leadership opportunities.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**5-25**

Student Processes. The variable *Student Processes* included participants' responses to the questions that focused on presence and effectiveness of systems that would benefit students' non-academic needs. These systems include access to services that aid in meeting physical and mental need outside of school, services provided within the school, disciplinary practices, and teachers' self-reported efficacy at optimizing these systems (see Table 5).

Table 5

Survey Questions Combined to Form the Student Processes Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
A vast majority of the students at my school are economically disadvantaged.	1-5
Students at my school have adequate access to physical and mental health resources through school, insurance, or community affiliates.	1-5
At my school, student behavior is managed fairly and productively.	1-5
At my school, we have established a restorative system of disciplinary practices.	1-5
I have received adequate trainings to enable me to be comfortable applying restorative discipline practices in my classroom.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**5-25**

Resources. Questions regarding teachers' perception of availability and accessibility of resources to adequately teach within the program in which they were hired to work were listed in the *Resources* segment of the Phase 1 Survey (see Table 6).

Table 6

Survey Questions Combined to Form the Resources Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
I have adequate resources to execute my lesson plans.	1-5
When I need NON-PERISHABLE resources for my classroom, I know the process to ask for these.	1-5
There is an efficient process for me to acquire PERISHABLE materials for my lesson plans.	1-5
I am adequately compensated for my time at work.	1-5
I am able to finish my lesson planning and grading during my work day.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**5-25**

School Diversity. Teachers' perception of racial diversity within staffing and the student body was evaluated through their responses on the questions in the *School Diversity* segment. This segment included seven questions asking teachers to evaluate the level of inclusion and positive representation of BIPOC persons within their workspace on a Likert type scale. The possible score range and the questions are listed in Table 7.

Table 7

Survey Questions Combined to Form the School Diversity Variable

Survey Question	Score Range
The certified staff at my school is racially and culturally diverse.	1-5
The student body at my school is racially and culturally diverse.	1-5
We celebrate diverse holidays at my school.	1-5
If I walk around my school, I see positive representation of people of color.	1-5
At my school, I often get unsolicited questions about my race/ethnicity.	1-5
At my school, my appearance and/or way of speaking influences my peers' perception of me.	1-5
At my school, my appearance and/or way of speaking influences the leadership opportunities available to me.	1-5
Total Possible Score	**7-35**

Phase 2: Qualitative Data

After the initial data cleaning process, I retained an Excel file with participants' responses to the constructed-response items on the survey. In preparation for using this data set to help select participants for Phase 2 of my study, I first deleted participant responses expressing disinterest in further participation with interviews or focus groups. I then sorted the file by race to group people interested in focus groups and/or interviews within race-alike categories. I deleted participants who had indicated that they were not willing to share racial identifiers or who expressed interest but did not provide contact information.

Selecting White Participants. Not surprisingly given the fact that Oregon has a disproportionate representation of White teachers compared to BIPOC teachers, the data also revealed the same imbalance within representation of participants. I selected my White participants from those who had indicated they were willing to be interviewed/participate in focus groups, and who also selected *Extremely Agree* or *Extremely Disagree* within either of the

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Satisfaction questions (see Table 8). This selection process was intended to identify teachers who had seriously considered leaving the teaching profession or their school as well as those who indicated that they had not seriously considered doing so. I purposively selected extreme cases in this variable of interest in hope of discovering important differences between those teachers who were quite satisfied with their work as teachers and those who were quite dis-satisfied with their work as teachers. The questions and possible scores are shown in Table 8; only participants scoring a response of 1 or 5 on either question were selected to participate in the interviews.

Table 8

Survey Questions Used to Purposively Select Extreme Cases for Inclusion in Phase 2

Survey Question	Score Range
In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered moving to a different site or district, but staying in K-12 education.	1-5
In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered leaving K-12 education as a profession.	1-5

All of the White participants who met the qualifying criteria and who had indicated a desire to participate in a focus group were contacted. Of these eight people who initially expressed interest in participating in a race-alike focus group, only three responded to phone calls and emails that were sent out to coordinate times. After four separate attempts to contact all eight potential participants, I proceeded to schedule the three who had responded in a single focus group.

Selecting BIPOC Participants. After deleting entries for participants not interested in any further participation, 11 of the remaining BIPOC participants indicated they were interested in participating in a Focus Group; the remaining 7 indicated they were interested in one-on-one interviews. Due to low numbers of participation within specific racial categories, all BIPOC participants were selected for participation in Phase 2.

Final Sample for Phase 2. Ultimately, seven White participants and nine BIPOC teachers participated in interviews. Two of the BIPOC participants who initially wanted to participate in focus groups were unable to meet at the time originally agreed upon and requested and were granted permission to move to individual participation. One Native American participant who initially requested a focus group interview was moved to an individual interview due to inadequate interest in focus group participation in that race-alike category. A focus group was conducted for each of the following groups: White (3 participants), Black (3 participants), Asian (3 participants), and Latine (2 participants). Table 9 lists all of the participants from Phase 2 interviews and focus groups.

Data Analysis

Phase 1: Quantitative Data Analysis from Teacher Survey. I report descriptive statistics for all eight recoded variables and use *t*-tests to check for statistically significant differences between BIPOC and White teachers. In this analysis, the teacher characteristic *of Race* is the independent variable under consideration, whereas teacher experiences coded as *School Connectedness, Admin Support, Professional Development, Student Processes, Resources, Racial Experiences, Sense of Satisfaction, and Personal Factors* are the dependent variables. I used the Bonferroni correction to account for the multiple analyses.

In an effort to estimate a desirable sample size, I used an online power analysis tool to check how many participants would yield a power of 0.8 with an $\alpha = 0.05$, and an effect size of 0.25. Results of my power analysis suggest that a sample size of 158 participants would produce results that may accurately inform statistical analysis (*Statistics Online*, n.d.). Despite my best efforts to recruit participants using three different outreach efforts (participation from the local school district, WREN, and OECN), however, I was unable to recruit a sufficiently large and

Table 9

Demographic Information for All Phase 2 Interview and Focus Group Participants

Code #	Race	White passing	Gender	Area of expertise	Level taught	Years teaching	Have Considered Leaving School	Have Considered Leaving Profession
2	Asian	N	F	Reading Specialist	Elementary	11-15	Disagree	Agree
3	Asian	N	F	Science	Middle	6-10	Disagree	Extremely Disagree
4	Asian	N	M	Special Education	TOSA	16-20	Agree	Disagree
5	Asian	N	M	English, Social Studies	Middle	0-3	Agree	Disagree
6	Black	N	F	Special Education	Elementary	11-15	Agree	Agree
7	Black, Native Am, White	N	F	Social Studies	High	11-15	Agree	Extremely Agree
8	Black, White	N	F	Science	Middle	0-3	Agree	Agree
10	Latine	N	F	Social Studies/Other Spanish LA	Middle	4-5	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
11	Latine/ Latino, White	N	F	English, Math, World Language/Other	Elementary	0-3	Agree	Disagree
12	Latine/ White	Y	M	Social Studies	Middle	21-25	Agree	Agree
13	Native Am	N	F	Social Studies, World Language, Fine Arts	Elementary/ Middle/High	6-10	Agree	Agree
16	White	Y	F	Special Education	Elementary	11-15	Disagree	Extremely Disagree
17	White	Y	F	English, Math, Science	Elementary	4-5	Extremely Disagree	Extremely Agree
21	White	Y	M	English, Social Studies, Special Education	High	26-30	Agree	Extremely Disagree
22	Black, White	Y	M	Social Studies, Special Education	Middle/High	6-10	Extremely Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
23	Latine	N	F	Special Education	Elementary /Middle/High	6-10	Extremely Agree	Agree
25	Native Am	N	M	English, Social Studies	Middle	6-10	Agree	Extremely Agree
26	Native	N	F	Math, Special Education	Elementary	11-15	Extremely Agree	Extremely Agree
28	Two or More	N	F	Other (K-8)	Elementary	31+	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Extremely Agree
36	White	Y	F	Special Education	Elementary	26-30	Extremely Agree	Extremely Agree
38	White	Y	F	Reading Specialist (Small Group)	Elementary	26-30	Extremely Disagree	Extremely Disagree
43	White	Y	F	English, Math, Reading intervention	Elementary/ Middle	21-25	Extremely Agree	Extremely Agree
51	White	Y	F	English	Middle	16-20	Extremely Agree	Extremely Agree
56	White	Y	M	PE	Elementary	4-5	Extremely Agree	Agree
59	White	Y	M	Career & Technical Education	High	4-5	Extremely Disagree	Extremely Disagree

diverse sample. Thus, I use descriptive statistics and under-powered *t*-tests to provide some exploratory results and lean more heavily on Phase 2 analysis.

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Analysis. The following steps were taken to clean, code, triangulate and analyze qualitative data collected from participant interviews and focus groups. In addition to the Likert-scale questions, the Phase 1 survey also had short answer questions that I analyzed qualitatively to provide insights into what teachers perceive as the most satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of their profession, in addition to ideas they listed that might help bring about changes for the better in the teaching profession. I analyzed the qualitative data from these constructed-responses using the same techniques I used when analyzing transcripts from focus groups and interviews. As mentioned earlier, teacher responses on the survey suggesting interest in further participation in focus group or individual interviews contributed to sampling decisions for Phase 2.

Coding Qualitative Data. Interviews and focus groups were scheduled based on participants' convenience. During the interview, as per confidentiality agreements, permission was obtained to record using the Zoom application, which has a live transcription service. After interviewing all participants and transcribing via Zoom, I worked with one specific group of participants at a time. I worked with the qualitative interview/focus group data for White participants first to avoid forming an opinion of one group or considering one group's experience as more important than another's. To limit contamination of data analysis in this way, I completed the following steps for all White participants and then proceeded using the same steps for all BIPOC participants.

To analyze qualitative data from the focus groups and individual interviews, I followed the qualitative data analysis process described by Creswell and Creswell (2018). Because my

goal was to explain teacher experiences by race, once I transcribed the interviews/focus group recordings, I organized and consolidated data by racial groups. I then re-read the transcript and reviewed the data to begin coding. I generated a deductive list to create thematic categories which I then used to compare experiences and explicate results.

First, I listened to the recordings again, proofreading the transcripts and making changes so each transcript accurately reflected the words that were said but might have been mis-identified by the artificial intelligence transcription feature on Zoom. I simultaneously de-identified the data by removing all people's names and replacing them with an alphanumeric code. I also removed any school, school district, and staff names that had been mentioned by the participants. As I deidentified the data, I also annotated the narratives for themes and preliminary reflections about points brought up that may have been important to the overall experiences of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, feelings of highs or lows in the first year, and the racial experiences of each of the participants. I conducted member checking to verify accuracy in the transcript in situations where the word choice of the participant or the reduction in volume when a participant explained certain events led to ambiguity, to help understand and review what was said during the interview/focus group.

Later, I created a data spreadsheet, starting with data from White participants and transitioning to data from BIPOC participants, working with one group at a time. I placed key quotations from the annotated files in a column that I labeled "quotation" and notes in a column that I labeled "notes." The columns identifying sources of highs, lows, satisfaction and dissatisfaction helped me deduce themes later. In this step, I added participants' responses to the last question to a separate sheet within that data file to allow for comparison of race-related experiences separately for BIPOC and White teachers.

Finally, I developed an outline to present results in a way that illustrated these themes, with both commonalities and key differences between experiences that contributed to satisfaction and dissatisfaction for BIPOC teachers and their White peers identified. After I had organized the results, I changed all participant alphanumeric codes to numeric codes to remove any possibility of identification.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Phase 1: Quantitative

Within Phase 1, I sought answers to the following research questions from the responses of 120 participating teachers.

1. What are the factors that influence teacher job satisfaction?

2. To what extent do these factors differ for teachers of color and white teachers?

To answer these questions, I ran a total of six analyses to determine to what degree the variables of interest influenced teachers' experience AND their willingness to stay or to leave either their school or the teaching profession itself. I ran these analyses using *t*-tests to compare experiences of BIPOC teachers to those of their White peers and for all participants as a group. I analyzed the following combinations for the variables *School Connectedness*, *Administrator Supports*, *Professional Development*, *Student Processes*, *Resources*, and *School Diversity* using independent samples *t*-tests.

1. BIPOC vs White for each of the six variables of interest

2. BIPOC vs White for each of the six variables of interest by intent to leave school

3. BIPOC vs White for each of the six variables of interest by intent to leave the profession

4. All teachers (BIPOC and White combined) for each of the six variables of interest by intent to leave school

5. All teachers (BIPOC and White combined) for each of the six variables of interest by intent to leave profession.

Satisfaction with School Connectedness and Decision to Stay or Leave a School

Table 10 presents descriptive statistics for the *School Connectedness* variable. My first analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay at a school or leave the worksite was influenced by a teacher's connectedness to the school itself and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had not considered leaving their school reported significantly greater feelings of school connectedness ($M = 30.31$, $SD = 6.19$) than their peers who reported that they had considered leaving their school ($M = 25.38$, $SD = 7.25$), $t(112) = -3.85$ $p < .001$ with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -7.47 to -2.40, Cohen's $d = -.73$.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics: School Connectedness

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	n	M	SD
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	29.66	7.77
		White	84	27.15	6.80
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	33.45	6.67
		White - Not considering	28	30.50	7.01
		BIPOC - Considering	20	26.85	6.91
		White - Considering	55	25.49	6.14
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	35.30	5.56
		White - Not considering	40	28.95	5.76
		BIPOC - Considering	20	26.10	6.75
		White - Considering	40	25.18	7.55
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	25.75	6.37
		Not considering leaving	40	31.43	6.89
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	25.38	7.25
		Not considering leaving	51	30.31	6.19

When I split the sample to analyze whether BIPOC teachers who had not considered leaving their schools reported feeling more school connectedness than their White peers who also had not considered leaving their schools, I found a statistically significant difference. BIPOC teachers who had not considered leaving their schools reported feeling significantly

greater school connectedness (M =35.30, SD = 5.56) than their White peers who had not

considered leaving their schools (M =28.95, SD = 5.76). The 95% confidence interval for the

difference in means ranged from 2.28 to 10.42, Cohen's d = 1.11

Satisfaction with School Connectedness and Decision to Stay or Leave the Profession

My second analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay in teaching or leave the teaching

profession was influenced by a teacher's connectedness to the school itself for all teachers. When

all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving the profession

reported significantly lesser feelings of school connectedness (M =25.75, SD =6.37) than their

peers who reported that they had considered staying at their school (M =31.43; SD =6.89),

t(116)= -4.45 p =.001 with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The

95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -8.19 to -3.14, Cohen's d= -

.865. When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the

decision to stay in or leave the profession for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers

based on their connectedness to school itself (see Table 11).

Table 11
T-stats for Satisfaction with School Connectedness Comparisons

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	t	df	p	Alpha[b]	Confidence Interval		Cohen's d
						Lower	Upper	
BIPOC vs White	Leave School	3.14	48	.003	.004	2.28	10.42	1.11
All Teachers	Leave Profession	-4.45	116	.001	.008	-8.19	-3.14	-.865
	Leave School	-3.85	112	<.001	.008	-7.47	-2.40	-0.73

Alpha[b] : Adjusted alpha for concurrent analysis after Bonferroni correction.

Satisfaction with Administrator Supports and Decision to Stay or Leave a School

      My third analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay at a school or leave the worksite was influenced by a teacher's perception of administrator supports and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving their school reported significantly less administrator support ($M = 17.11$, $SD = 4.51$) than their peers who reported that they had not considered leaving their school ($M = 19.84$, $SD = 3.78$), $t(112) = -3.45$ $p < .001$ with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -4.30 to -1.16, Cohen's $d = -.65$. When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the decision to stay at, or leave the worksite for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers based on the perception of administrator support (see Table 12).

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics: Administrator Supports

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	*n*	*M*	*SD*
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	19.28	4.24
		White	84	18.27	4.14
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	20.64	3.01
		White - Not considering	28	19.64	3.56
		BIPOC - Considering	20	18.25	4.55
		White - Considering	55	17.53	4.68
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	21.90	3.03
		White - Not considering	40	19.28	3.82
		BIPOC - Considering	20	17.80	4.14
		White - Considering	40	16.93	4.58
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	17.62	4.70
		Not considering leaving	40	19.98	3.38
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	17.11	4.51
		Not considering leaving	51	19.84	3.78

Satisfaction with Administrator Supports and Decision to Stay or Leave the Profession

My fourth analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay at or leave the teaching profession was influenced by a teacher's perception of administrator supports and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers (see Table 13). When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving the profession reported significantly less administrator support (M = 17.62; SD = 4.70) than their peers who reported that they had not considered leaving the profession (M = 19.98; SD = 3.38), t(116) = -2.82 p =.006, with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -4.02 to -.70, Cohen's d= -.549. When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the decision to stay in or leave the profession for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers based on the perception of administrator support.

Table 13
T-stats for Satisfaction with Administrator Supports Comparisons

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	t	df	p	Alpha[b]	Confidence Interval		Cohen's d
						Lower	Upper	
All Teachers	Leave Profession	-2.82	116	.006	.008	-4.02	-.70	-.549
	Leave School	-3.45	112	<.001	.008	-4.30	-1.16	-.65

Alpha[b] : Adjusted alpha for concurrent analysis after Bonferroni correction.

Satisfaction with Professional Development by Teacher Racial Group

My fifth analysis evaluated whether satisfaction with professional development varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. Table 14 presents the descriptive statistics, and Table 15 presents the results of the *t*-tests. BIPOC teachers reported feeling significantly greater

satisfaction with professional development ($M = 16.81$, $SD = 3.77$) than their White peers ($M = 14.88$, $SD = 3.21$), $t(114) = 2.39$ $p = .018$, with an alpha of .05. However, after applying the Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis, the alpha was adjusted to 0.008, and the test was no longer statistically significant. Prior to the alpha adjustment, the 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from .330 to 3.53, Cohen's $d = .496$.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics: Professional Development

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	n	M	SD
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	16.81	3.77
		White	84	14.88	3.21
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	17.73	3.17
		White - Not considering	28	15.86	3.67
		BIPOC - Considering	20	15.90	4.67
		White - Considering	55	14.29	3.56
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	20.10	2.38
		White - Not considering	40	15.73	3.66
		BIPOC - Considering	20	14.90	4.28
		White - Considering	40	14.13	3.62
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	14.58	3.99
		Not considering leaving	40	16.33	3.57
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	14.22	3.92
		Not considering leaving	51	16.55	3.83

Satisfaction with Professional Development and Decision to Stay or Leave a School

My sixth analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay at a school or leave the worksite was influenced by satisfaction with professional development and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving their school reported significantly less satisfaction with professional development ($M = 14.22$, $SD = 3.92$) than their peers who reported that they had not considered leaving their school ($M = 16.55$, $SD = 3.83$), $t(112) = -3.19$ $p = .002$ with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -3.77 to -.88, Cohen's $d = -.60$.

When I split the sample to analyze whether BIPOC teachers who had not considered leaving their schools reported more satisfaction with professional development than their White peers who also had not considered leaving their schools, I found a statistically significant difference. BIPOC teachers who had not considered leaving their schools reported feeling significantly greater satisfaction with professional development ($M = 20.10$, $SD = 2.38$) than their White peers who had not considered leaving their schools ($M = 15.73$, $SD = 3.66$), $t(48) = 3.58$ $p < .001$, with an alpha of .004 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from 1.92 to 6.83, Cohen's $d = 1.27$

Satisfaction with Professional Development and Decision to Stay or Leave the Profession

My seventh analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay in or leave the teaching profession was influenced by satisfaction with professional development and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving the profession reported significantly less satisfaction with professional development ($M = 14.58$, $SD = 3.99$) than their peers who reported that they had not considered leaving the profession ($M = 16.33$, $SD = 3.57$), $t(116) = -2.33$ $p = .021$ with an alpha of .05. However, after applying the Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis, the alpha was adjusted to 0.008, and the test was no longer statistically significant. Prior to the alpha adjustment, the 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -3.23 to -.26, Cohen's $d = -.45$. When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the decision to stay in or leave the profession for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers based on their perceived satisfaction with professional development (see Table 15).

Table 15

T-stats for Satisfaction with Professional Development Comparisons

| Criterion 1 | Criterion 2 | t | df | p | Alpha[b] | Confidence Interval | | Cohen's d |
						Lower	Upper	
BIPOC vs White		2.39	114	.018[a]	.008	.330	3.53	.496
	Leave School	3.58	48	<.001	.004	1.92	6.83	1.27
All Teachers	Leave Profession	-2.33	116	.021[a]	.008	-3.23	-.26	-.45
	Leave School	-3.19	112	.002	.008	-3.77	-.88	-.60

[a:] Variable was statistically significant until I adjusted my alpha for Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis

Alpha[b] : Adjusted alpha for concurrent analysis after Bonferroni correction.

Satisfaction with Student Processes and Decision to Stay or Leave the Profession

My eighth analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay in or leave the teaching profession was influenced by satisfaction with student processes and whether it varied for BIPOC teachers and White teachers. Table 16 presents descriptive statistics. When all teachers in the sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving the profession reported significantly less satisfaction with student processes ($M = 12.68$, $SD = 2.70$) than their peers who reported that they had not considered leaving the profession ($M = 16.08$, $SD = 3.06$), $t(116) = -6.18$ $p < .001$, with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -4.48 to -.2.31, Cohen's $d = -1.20$. When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the decision to stay in or leave the profession for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers based on the perceived satisfaction with student processes.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics: Student Processes

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	*n*	*M*	*SD*
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	14.31	3.77
		White	84	13.76	3.21
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	15.55	3.59
		White - Not considering	28	16.25	2.93
		BIPOC - Considering	20	13.20	3.21
		White - Considering	55	12.45	2.56
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	17.00	3.06
		White - Not considering	40	14.10	2.93
		BIPOC - Considering	20	12.70	3.37
		White - Considering	40	13.43	3.48
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	12.68	2.70
		Not considering leaving	40	16.08	3.06
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	13.19	3.35
		Not considering leaving	51	14.73	3.14

Table 17

T-stats for Satisfaction with Student Processes Comparisons

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	*t*	*df*	*p*	Alpha[b]	Confidence Interval		Cohen's *d*
						Lower	Upper	
All Teachers	Leave Profession	-6.18	116	<.001	.008	-4.48	-2.31	-1.20

Alpha[b] : Adjusted alpha for concurrent analysis after Bonferroni correction.

Satisfaction with Resources and Decision to Stay or Leave the Profession

My ninth analysis evaluated whether the decision to stay in or leave the teaching

profession was influenced by satisfaction with resources and whether it varied for BIPOC

teachers and White teachers. Table 18 presents the descriptive statistics. When all teachers in the

sample were combined, teachers who had considered leaving the profession reported

significantly less satisfaction with resources ($M = 13.56$, $SD = 3.57$) than their peers who

reported that they had not considered leaving the profession ($M = 15.68$, $SD = 3.70$), $t(116) = $ -

3.01 *p* =.003, with an alpha of .008 (Bonferroni correction for concurrent analysis). The 95%

confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -3.50 to -.72, Cohen's *d* = -.581.

When I split the sample by race, no statistically significant difference was found in the decision

to stay in or leave the profession for BIPOC teachers compared to their White peers based on the

perceived satisfaction with resources.

Table 18
Descriptive Statistics: Resources

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	*n*	*M*	*SD*
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	14.91	4.18
		White	84	14.32	3.63
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	14.73	3.41
		White - Not considering	28	16.36	3.44
		BIPOC - Considering	20	14.50	4.10
		White - Considering	55	13.33	3.32
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	17.40	3.44
		White - Not considering	40	14.73	2.75
		BIPOC - Considering	20	13.55	4.17
		White - Considering	40	13.88	4.19
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	13.56	3.57
		Not considering leaving	40	15.68	3.70
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	13.67	4.14
		Not considering leaving	51	15.10	3.25

Table 19
T-stats for Satisfaction with Resources Comparisons

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	*t*	*df*	*p*	Alpha[b]	Confidence Interval Lower	Confidence Interval Upper	Cohen's *d*
All Teachers	Leave Profession	-3.01	116	.003	.008	-3.50	-.72	-.581

Alpha[b] : Adjusted alpha for concurrent analysis after Bonferroni correction.

Satisfaction with School Diversity and Teacher Experience

None of the comparisons were significant for school diversity. Table 20 provides the

descriptive statistics for the comparisons.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics: School Diversity

Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Descriptor	*n*	*M*	*SD*
BIPOC vs White	--	BIPOC	32	19.88	3.45
		White	84	19.06	3.46
	Leave Profession	BIPOC - Not considering	11	19.36	2.94
		White - Not considering	28	19.79	3.97
		BIPOC - Considering	20	20.45	3.55
		White - Considering	55	18.71	3.18
	Leave School	BIPOC - Not considering	10	18.80	4.29
		White - Not considering	40	18.93	3.74
		BIPOC - Considering	20	20.30	3.13
		White - Considering	40	19.25	3.31
All Teachers	Leave Profession	Considering Leaving	78	19.10	3.36
		Not considering leaving	40	19.57	3.67
	Leave School	Considering Leaving	63	19.49	3.31
		Not considering leaving	51	18.84	3.79

Phase 2 Results

To answer research questions 3, 4, and 5, I conducted interviews and focus groups. As mentioned earlier, I interviewed 9 BIPOC teachers and 6 White teachers; one BIPOC participant who was interviewed later withdrew from the study. Additionally, I conducted one focus group with race-alike participants for each of the following groups – Asian (3 participants), White (3 participants), Black (3 participants), Latine teachers (2 participants). Therefore, in total 25 teachers participated in either a focus group or an interview in Phase 2 of my study. Through an in-depth analysis of data gathered from these interviews and focus groups, several themes emerged that summarized the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for teachers in Oregon. Although some of the themes were common for all teachers regardless of their race, several were spoken of only by BIPOC teachers.

Research Question 3

The third research question sought answer to the question *What systems-level characteristics do teachers identify as encouraging them to remain in the profession?* The following section discusses teachers' self-reported sources of satisfaction from the interviews and focus groups.

Themes Illustrating Satisfaction: All Teachers

Student Accomplishments. All participants reported some form of student accomplishment—whether it was of academic or non-academic consequence—as a source of joy (see Figure 2). Participants reported feeling satisfied about what they perceived as student accomplishment as a result of the relationships they fostered with students that positively influenced the students' academic and social-emotional outcomes. Some teachers, such as Participant 6, a Black, mid-career, elementary, special education teacher, described the experience as having the ability "to kind of unlock that puzzle piece of what makes the child able to learn or find another way" to learn something. Others cited a sense of contribution to student academic growth as "fascinating" (Participant 16, White).

White Teachers   BIPOC Teachers

Contributing to BIPOC Student Success

Student Accomplishment

Peer Connectedness

Foster BIPOC Community Connections

Professional Freedom with Curriculum

Anti-Racist Administrators

Inculcating a sense of belonging in students was another accomplishment related to students of which many teachers spoke fondly. Similarly, a sense of contribution to positively influencing students' mental health by "pull[ing] them a little bit up for the day" (Participant 51, White) through one's presence and active listening while connecting them with resources was also a source of joy and, consequently, satisfaction for all teachers. Teachers reported that this form of active listening helped students feel seen and heard so they felt comfortable reaching out to them for intervention. They reflected that feeling needed in that way was a source of fulfillment and contributed joy for many service-oriented teachers. Thinking of a student who had a sent her a note expressing suicidal ideations, Participant 13, a Native American teacher, expressed gratitude for the fact that "that student felt connected enough….that she could tell *her* something like that."

Although a sense of service towards students was frequently spoken of by all participating teachers, White teachers reported this as "social and emotional and physical welfare

for kids…fill[ing] their cup" (Participant 17, White) as a source of satisfaction. The participant self-reported this as a "White savior" mentality that they found was pervasive in teaching "those" historically marginalized students. For BIPOC teachers, on the other hand, the sense of service towards BIPOC students came from the place of sense of oneness with the community. That said, service orientation as a means to student accomplishment gave both BIPOC teachers and their White peers a sense of purpose and hope. Overall, "seeing changes in their development, changes in the academic realm, changes in the emotional realm, and sometimes changes with family dynamics" along with procuring "services and things that are helpful to them" (Participant 28, Multiracial-Asian) was a source of satisfaction for most teachers who participated in this study.

     Peer Connectedness. The opportunity to work with a peer mentor was shared as one of the most influential motivators to persevere in the first year of teaching. This included guidance coming from other peers whose position description within the districts was perceived in a mentorship role such as consultants, teachers on special assignment (TOSA), and instructional coaches who helped teachers navigate processes when an administrator was not accessible. In addition to positions that were designed to support teachers as peers, encouragement from fellow teachers was also cited as a source of satisfaction by BIPOC and White teachers alike. Thinking fondly of her first year of teaching, Participant 51, a White female who at the time of my study was a mid-career, middle school English teacher, reflected it brought them joy when they "received an accolade [in a staff meeting] from the Spanish teacher" about their work when they had put a lot of work into preparation of documents for a certain unit as a first-year teacher. Just as positive reinforcement from a peer in public was reported as a source of satisfaction for some, for others private conversation and guidance in the form of advice "to maintain one's sanity"

(Participant 43, White) and setting up work-home boundaries helped teachers feel seen. Some teachers, such as Participant 5 who was an Asian, early-career (probationary), middle school English/Social-Studies teacher, cited the simply generous presence and availability of other teachers as supportive people who were willing to listen as something that "really helped *them* out" which led them to feeling like they "really did have a lot of support."

Professional Freedom with Curriculum. Some participants who taught their first year in an alternative school setting reported professional freedom with curriculum design as a source of satisfaction. These participants also perceived lack of administrator interference in the pacing and push for alignment to other teachers as something that allowed them to be creative and bring more into their classrooms than they were allowed in subsequent positions they moved to. Although the move from alternative setting to public school setting had different reasons for different people, bargaining ability was a factor for most. The professional freedom that these teachers enjoyed while working in the alternative school setting was perceived as a "beautiful opportunity" (Participant 12, Multiracial-White presenting).

Themes Illustrating Satisfaction: BIPOC Teachers

Contributing to BIPOC Student Success. BIPOC teachers self-reported a sense of responsibility towards BIPOC students' success from a place of love and care as a source of satisfaction. BIPOC teachers' pride and ownership was visible in their reported roles in serving as a role model for BIPOC students, elevating BIPOC students' voice and overall improving BIPOC students' academic and social outcomes as a contributor to BIPOC student success.

Reminiscing about a BIPOC student who showed academic and social emotional growth within the program in which she served, Participant 28, an Asian, late-career, elementary teacher, explained the pride she felt in serving as a positive role model to a BIPOC newcomer student in a

summer program. This student who had begun fearful and feeling alone felt comfortable in the BIPOC teacher's classroom where her heritage and culture was celebrated. This helped the student transition her attitude and sense of self. Expressing the satisfaction it brought her as a teacher to see this growth, the emotionally overcome teacher used words such as "phenomenal" and described the student as a changed human being in response to being able to "see themselves in educators and learn about their culture" (Participant 28)

The passion with which BIPOC teachers narrated their experiences around BIPOC students' success illustrates the pride and joy BIPOC teachers take in contributing to the academic and social success of BIPOC students. Being a role model was also reported as a motivational aspect that worked just as well with passive representation. For example, Participant 25, a Native American, mid-career, middle school, English/Social-Studies teacher, reported an influence on his BIPOC students because his presence ensured that "the multicultural kids have somebody that they can see and talk to" (Participant 25), indicating that BIPOC students' comfort around teachers of shared BIPOC identities may be a source of comfort for the students as well.

Elevating BIPOC students' voice as a means of contributing to BIPOC student success was another source of satisfaction reported by BIPOC teachers. Although many BIPOC teachers reported misrepresentation/disparaging representation of BIPOC students as problematic within their schools, they reported that the success BIPOC students experienced as a result of their encouragement and training to speak up and seek justice as a source of great satisfaction. Empowering BIPOC students to identify and address unintentional harm and feel empowered in that also helped BIPOC teachers elevate BIPOC students' voice, adding to the sense of contribution to students' success. Such experiences were reported as a source of satisfaction.

Some BIPOC teachers also saw an extension of themselves without allies in their BIPOC students and reported that this feeling of being lost by themselves without a race-alike guide who understood their experiences as a child compelled them to go above and beyond to empower BIPOC students. This deep sense of cognitive empathy came through in Participant 8, a Multiracial (Black/White), early-career, middle school, Science teacher in her reflection on her experiences as a student. She said that for her

> "finding that voice and being able to do it really confidently for other students is …
> satisfying to see that it has an impact, and to know that it matters for those students to
> have somebody that can speak for them but also *the* satisfaction to know that I do have
> that strength inside me"

Other BIPOC teachers, such as Participant 11 a Multiracial (Latine/White) early career, elementary dual immersion teacher, reported the ability to work with BIPOC students within their programs, knowing that because of their shared identity and skills, they were providing true inclusion, a sense of community, and experiential connection that contributed to BIPOC student success as a source of satisfaction. In discussing this, Participant 11 shared,

> "… kids *were* making connections with people that look like them, that can speak their
> language, that they can joke with, and they can... understand them. So, without having to
> explain this tradition from home, or explain this, *they can* just talk about it, and
> somebody understands them already."

Fostering BIPOC Community Connections. Ability to foster community connections with BIPOC students, families, and peers was also stated as a source of satisfaction for BIPOC teachers. For BIPOC students, this connection came in the form of advocacy and a sense of familial relationship, especially in early grades. Participant 13, a Native American, mid-career,

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elementary-middle-high, social-studies teacher, for example, fondly narrated the story of a second grader who calls her "auntie" because the student is aware of her presence within the culturally important community events, and he has seen her at those events with his family often.

Other BIPOC teachers, such as Participant 23, a Latine, mid-career, elementary/mid/high SPED teacher, spoke of fostering community connections for BIPOC teachers as a source of satisfaction. In her interview, Participant 23 expressed concern about the lack of inclusion of BIPOC teacher voices in school-wide decision making and the need to stand up for inclusion. Reflecting on her own experiences, she said that she feels the "need to be more of an activist and an advocate for the BIPOC ... being courageous and being able to stand up" and persuade those in power to take into consideration the question of "who was at the table?" when making decisions. BIPOC teachers also reported obtaining services through advocacy for BIPOC students and families experiencing adversities like lack of housing, food, or healthcare as a source of satisfaction and a way to build community connections.

Anti-Racist Administrators. Many late-career BIPOC teachers reported some administrators with a visionary leadership for anti-racist teaching as people who contributed to their personal growth and therefore satisfaction. These administrators were considered visionary by the teachers because they communicated a clear plan of action, included teacher voice in the execution of the plan, and when disagreements arose, they addressed teacher concerns about the need for anti-racist curriculum in a manner that seemed to come from a place of problem solving. For some, this problem solving came in the form of protecting BIPOC teachers from retaliation of community members who may have had ideological disagreements with the need or means of anti-racist teaching. For example, reflecting on years past, Participant 12 a Multiracial White presenting (Latine-White) late career, middle school, social-Studies teacher who explicitly

teaches anti-racist curriculum, spoke of an administrator who would "specifically run interference for" him and "pulled conversations that *he didn't* even know about." This support enabled Participant 12 to continue teaching the classes with joy because they knew that "this person's gonna protect *them*." A sense of personal and professional safety provided in subtle ways by administrators helped participants engage in anti-racist teaching without fear of losing their job over something the school district *said* they valued, but did not stand up for when others pushed back.

Research Question 4

With the fourth research question, I sought to explore systems-level characteristics that teachers identify as impacting their decision to change schools or leave the teaching profession. The following themes emerged from teachers' responses in the interviews and focus groups.

Themes Illustrating Dissatisfaction: All Teachers

Feeling Unprepared. General unfamiliarity with the curriculum and inexperience with classroom management were perceived as a common reason behind low-points and dissatisfaction in teachers' first year of teaching because it impacted student academic and behavioral outcomes. As discussed earlier, all teachers cited the sense of pride they felt from student accomplishment in these domains as a source of satisfaction. Conversely, the inability to help students accomplish their individual goals brought all teachers great dissatisfaction especially in the early years because many teachers perceived student accomplishment as their responsibility and lack of growth in which was perceived as a reflection on their professional abilities (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

A Comparison of Teachers' Self-Reported Sources of Dissatisfaction

White Teachers   BIPOC Teachers

Tokenism

Feeling Unprepared

Feeling Isolated

Resources

Racial Microaggressions

Professional Development

Bias within Administrator Supports

Administration Asking More of Teachers in Already Difficult Times

Student Processes

Administrator Supports

Exhaustion from Systemic Barriers and Need for Continuous Advocacy

District Administrator Support: Policy, Procedures and Funding

Other Workplace Inequities

Participant 17, a White elementary school teacher described this as "disappointing," adding that observing other teachers she co-taught with further enhanced the sense of inadequacy because she "never felt good enough." Inexperience along with sub-conscious comparisons to more experienced team members contributed to low moments for other teachers as well. Some tied this inexperience back to their comfort managing classroom behavior as well reporting that "I just didn't know how to talk to the kids" (Participant 59). Similar lack of experience with student interactions, redirections and management was reported by BIPOC teachers as well who reported that "I was used to dealing with adults"(Participant 6, Black).

Having "very little understanding of the mechanics of teaching, the pedagogy of teaching, the systems of classroom management and behavior management" (Participant 36, White) was also connected by BIPOC and White participants to inadequate preparation within the teacher

preparation programs they attended prior to obtaining employment. Some White teachers reported being "really overwhelmed," because their "student-teaching in grad school did not involve [the] elementary grade level" (Participant 56, White). Other White teachers, such as Participant 16, a special education teacher, stated that at the time safe rooms were a prat of special education service provision and within the program they attended they "never discussed anything about safe rooms or how to keep kids safe when they were tantruming… *and* how to de-escalate kids," which, paired with unfamiliarity with curriculum, made their first year of teaching extremely difficult as a special education teacher. Special education teachers also reported unfamiliarity and lack of training in writing IEP reports on their own as something they felt inadequately prepared for and a contributor to their dissatisfaction.

For BIPOC teachers, this was further complicated by virtue of their identity and the programs in which they found themselves employed. For example, both Participant 10 and Participant 11 who identify as Latine teachers and serve in a dual-immersion program, reported that within their teacher preparation they received no training for dual-immersion methods. In their perception, just because they were bilingual in Spanish, they were hired to teach in the dual-immersion programs in their district. Although neither wanted to be a dual-immersion teacher and both reported finding satisfaction in including BIPOC students, their self-reported unpreparedness for teaching in a dual-immersion program and lack of training made available for that added to their dissatisfaction because not only did it take more time from their lives, it also made them feel tokenized within their districts. Both reflected on their dissatisfaction with not being hired to teach the subjects for which they prepared and entered the teaching profession.

Resources. All participating teachers reported dissatisfaction with the perceived inadequacy of resourcing of the programs for which they were hired. Of these resources, the

minimal time allowed to prepare to teach the expected content materials, and the insufficient number of staff (program support staff or number of teachers) were reported as a common contributor to dissatisfaction.

The amount of time it took teachers to prepare for their classes in comparison to the amount of time for which they were compensated was cited by participating early career teachers, mid-career teachers, and late career teachers alike as a source of dissatisfaction which "took a toll on one's mental and emotional health" (Participant 26, Native American). Because all teachers drew satisfaction from student accomplishments, teachers perceived the limited time allotted to them at work to prepare for creating engaging and relevant lessons for students as something that inherently prevented them from accomplishing that satisfaction. It also contributed to feeling a lack of ability to create a work life balance because of how much work the teachers perceived needed to be done in a limited amount of time. In the words of Participant 17, a White, early career elementary school teacher,

> "I want to make boundaries, so that I'm not at school till 6 o' clock, and I'm not working on the couch when it could be playing my own family. And those asks…it just feels like coded with if you don't do it, then you don't care enough."

Others, such as Participant 43, a White teacher in her late career teaching English, Math, and working as a reading interventionist in her district at the elementary/middle school level, described her day at work as filled with guilt because if she is not catching up on work, she feels guilty that she is not doing enough, and if she comes home and decides to catch up on work, she feels guilty, because she is neglecting her children. The lack of time was often tied to compensation as well. For example, in districts where teachers were hired on partial FTE, the perception that teachers still had to prepare the same amount for a lower wage was apparent.

Explaining the low point in their first year of teaching, Participant 17 added that at 0.49 FTE, which is less than a full time equivalent, her district's bargaining agreement made it so that people working less than half time like her got paid hourly, and "it also meant that *they* did not get benefits for point 0.01 difference of FTE" further adding to teachers' dissatisfaction.

A lack of appropriate preparation time was reported to inherently create inequities for BIPOC teachers who served in dual-immersion programs that were perceived to require twice as much preparation time as programs that were in English only. Latine, Spanish bilingual immersion teachers reported that because of the way their days were structured in their districts, they never had time to collaborate and align with grade-alike non-dual-language teachers. They also reported feeling wronged within their school districts. Because there was not a curriculum that had been vetted yet, these were left to create the Spanish curriculum, find time outside of prep time to collaborate with grade-level non-dual-immersion teachers, in addition to doing the job that their White peers were doing without any additional preparation time or compensation. This inequitable working conditions and expectations of extra work without extra compensation added to their dissatisfaction. Latine Spanish dual-immersion teachers also reported that because their position was regarded as a "hard to fill" position, they felt stuck because they feared they wouldn't be allowed to voluntarily transfer within the restrictions of their contract.

Adequate staffing as a form of resourcing of programs was the second most cited reason behind teacher dissatisfaction within their work site. Most special education teachers, whether they were in their early career, mid-career, or late career, reported lack of adequate staffing. This lack left them to fend for themselves, a source of frustration that added hours to their day. In addition to insufficient program staffing with classified educational assistants, lack of adequate staffing was also reported with absence of knowledgeable program administrators after return to

in-person instruction once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted because "everybody's so damn busy putting out the fires everywhere else" (Participant 17, White). Participant 6, a Black, mid-career, elementary, special education teacher, summarized the overall experience of BIPOC and White special education teachers with inadequate staffing within their programs as receiving "a lot of direction…about how we must do certain things, and without the support or the understanding…you're asking a lot but you're not giving a lot" making one feel like tasks "just keep adding on" without "listening to… our voices." Clearly, asking teachers to implement programs or program changes without clarity of resourcing contributed to their dissatisfaction.

Professional Development. The quality and relevance of professional development opportunities provided by their districts was also a source of dissatisfaction for BIPOC and White teachers. White teachers reported a general inadequacy of professional development around new initiatives, such as the implementation of new curriculum after curriculum adoption, as a source of dissatisfaction. When recounting her frustration around the suggested pacing of an activity during a professional development session as "5 minutes in an elementary classroom", Participant 17 (White) showed her annoyance with the disconnectedness of the presenters with the classroom realities of elementary-aged students in her tone of voice. She reported that within this curriculum, teachers were expected to "Distribute books, have the students flip up in the book, and write on a post it note a question they have about the ocean, *and* then have the class answer said question" and then have the students write the correct answer within a 5-minute time span. This teacher shared that this task did not seem "possible" because it was not developmentally appropriate.

BIPOC teachers reported inappropriate use of professional development time by White leaders during equity trainings as a source of dissatisfaction. Reflecting on a specific professional

development session she attended, Participant 23 a Latine, mid-career, elementary/mid/high special education teacher who had also reported microaggressions and denial of leadership opportunities to her as a BIPOC teacher in her interview, said that in this specific equity training she attended the presenter did not seem ready, which showed her the work was not seen as valuable by them. In her words,

> "We set up for 20 minutes, what was supposed to be 2 h training, and he had no materials to hand out. ...You have a full-time release. Get on there, make a website, link it to where all of us can go through ....I feel so awful when I see my calendar, filled with my job and other equity stuff, and there's nothing in their calendar to do things." (Participant 23)

As a BIPOC attendee, the leaders asking people to come to a supposedly important professional development for a period of time that is not clearly planned out and did not use that time appropriately contributed to their dissatisfaction by showing disrespect for the time for which teachers were already hard pressed. Lack of preparation in such ways by leaders was also perceived as incompetency of the people who got release time to plan those professional development sessions.

Lastly, having to attend professional development that in a teacher's perception did not add immediate value to their classroom was also a source of dissatisfaction for teachers. Spending already limited time on "explaining the theory behind" curriculum changes was considered a waste of precious time that could be used for planning, especially when teachers did not consider those changes relevant because they felt like they knew "what *their* students need" (Participant 26 Native American, mid-career, elementary, math/special education teacher)

Student Processes. After resources, perceived administrator inadequacies around systems that are supposed to improve student behaviors were cited as a source of dissatisfaction

by many BIPOC and White teachers. When recalling outrageous student behaviors and administrators' methods of handling those behaviors, many White teachers thought that administrator interventions did more harm than good, especially when the behavior was a manifestation of students' needs within their IEP (Individualized Educational Plan), and the teachers' classroom space was not adequately staffed to meet that IEP as a source of dissatisfaction.

This was especially problematic for early career physical education teachers such as Participant 56, a White teacher who reported that when the gym, a larger space, was not adequately staffed in this way, the administrators "threw *them* under the bus" with the community as a "new teacher." It led to resentment. Furthermore, in such incidents a lack of communication back to the teacher about what action might have been taken when the student went to the office prevented teachers from restoring peace between students in their classroom where peer-to-peer student conflict may have happened.

Participant 56 shared their frustration about the time when a student who was physically violent to another in the classroom was returned to the classroom that very day without closing of that communication loop, and the violating student reported to the student that they had previously punched that they sat in the office and colored a picture. When the student who had been attacked asked the teacher, "Why did he get to punch me and get to go to the office and color?" it left the teacher at a loss of words and a feeling of a lack of support leading to dissatisfaction. The disconnect between teachers and administrators in disciplinary procedures was also evident from other teachers with more experience. Similar dissatisfaction due to lack of clear follow-up communication was reported by participants with reports of bullying incidents as well. This lack of communication in matters of bullying based on identity traits was perceived as

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a lack of equity priorities in righting the wrongs for students who were harmed and often left teachers dissatisfied with the student processes such as handling of disciplinary referrals by administrators.

Interestingly the inadequacy of implementation of systems of behavior support and these systems' ability to positively influence student behaviors left some teachers at odds with expectations and the practices they were indulging in due to the despair from their dissatisfaction. Participant 3, an Asian, mid-career, middle school science teacher, for example reported not using the school's disciplinary system because in their opinion the system "didn't *have* any teeth in it" and was "just wasting *their* time," further indicating that perhaps the time (something teachers were already pressed for) it took teachers to follow the process and yet not obtain clarity or follow up added to their dissatisfaction with student processes.

Administrator Supports. A perception of lack of professional supports, professional boundaries, and personal safety from administrators was also reported as a source of teachers' dissatisfaction. Lack of professional supports was reported in different areas by all teachers. One example in which this was apparent was in the context of antiracist work in which many Oregon districts and administrators want teachers to engage. White teachers in this circumstance reported that even though administrators *said* they wanted them to use anti-racist curriculum, when they received push-back from community members, they did not feel their administrator's protection. To early career teachers, this felt like the "talk about supporting our kids" without tangible supports was a "tiring rhetoric" which made them "feel taken advantage of" (Participant 17).

Other teachers reported incidents of lack of professional boundaries by administrators as the source of their dissatisfaction. For example, Participant 21, a White, late-career special education teacher spoke of their experience working with an administrator whose child also was

receiving services within the school. Participant 21 described the administrator interaction of asking them questions about their student without delineating professional boundaries between their roles as parent and administrator as "extremely overbearing," and "without a knowledge of special education" as "the most egregious example of administrative malfeasance."

In some cases, participants described their administrator's word choice and mannerisms as contributors to a sense of distrust, further adding to their dissatisfaction. Remembering his first day in the school where he worked at as a PE teacher, Participant 56 (White) stated that his administrator thoughtlessly saying that his "job here is to provide the other teachers prep time" made him feel unimportant and "took away any sort of trust" he had in that administrator on his first day of teaching and "made *him* be careful with any admin that *he* comes across."

For BIPOC teachers, that lack of professional boundaries and poor word choice that led to a breach of trust also reportedly made teachers feel unsafe within the workplace. Participant 23, a Latine, mid-career, mixed grade level special education teacher, reported that her administrator disclosed protected information such as her disability and her husband's problematic immigration status to others, making her feel unsafe and severely impacting her ability to work because it caused irreparable harm in a professional relationship.

Others teachers used phrases such as "*I* couldn't breathe under her leadership" (Participant 26, Native American), "*I felt* worthless" (Participant 10, Latine), and "I was seen as a difficult person" because "anybody who is a person of color that does start voicing concerns you are considered difficult or problematic" (Participant 28, Multiracial-Asian) in connection to describing their interactions with the administrators within their worksite. Such stories indicated that the words and actions of the administrators within schools contributed to the teachers'

feeling of worthlessness, instead of building their capacity, and contributed to their dissatisfaction.

Voicing one's disagreement and receiving retaliation was summed up by Participant 12, a Multiracial (Latine-White) late career, middle school, social-studies and White presenting teacher. He told about an incident with a specific administrator that he had in the past when teachers would ask questions regarding a new policy they "…would find out that it was not safe to voice dissent, and it was not safe to say something and that would be honored … professionals, with differences of opinion" which was "not *a* safe feeling." Administrators not engaging in civil discourse during staff meetings around policies and answering questions pertaining to those in an objective way was perceived by teachers as being singled out because they sought answers. They reported that administrators' actions could make staff feel unsafe to voice differences, contributing to their dissatisfaction.

Inefficiency of the administrator supports when asked for in times of need within the first year of teaching was also reported to be a source of dissatisfaction for new teachers. For example, Participant 36 (White), now a late career teacher, had entered teaching without having attended a teacher preparation program. She reported that when she struggled with teaching in her first year and asked for supports, it led to administrators meeting and speaking with her on three different occasions, which provided her no strategies to use other than an agreement that she needed guidance. As her frustration grew, she reported that she was talked to in a way that made her feel that she was being pushed out of teaching. She recalls this attitude as telling her that "I've met with you 3 times and that's what I had to do. So now let's agree that you …you shouldn't be teaching." As she quit that job and pursued a teacher preparation program, she

recounted the decision to quit as a product of an inefficient support, but her decision to pursue a teacher preparation program as personal resilience.

District Administrator Support: Policy, Procedures and Resourcing of Initiatives. The district as an administrative body was often cited as a source of dissatisfaction by late career teachers, as the teachers perceived them as holding responsibility for creation, interpretation, and implementation of policy at the local (district) level. Therefore, the lack of adequate resourcing of the programs and positions was often correlated to the districts' lack of awareness of realities of student needs in teachers' classroom and schools in general. Reflecting on general lack of resources for initiatives, Participant 36, a White, late career special education teacher expressed her dissatisfaction, saying, "very rarely do these laws come with funding to actually provide the professionals to do the extra work."

Some BIPOC teachers who worked in a special program that was not available at every district school, such as dual-immersion, associated lack of resources for that program with their school district's choices with budgeting. In her description of her dissatisfaction in the program, Participant 11, a Multiracial (Latine/White) early career teacher said that although their district touted the work that single teachers in different buildings did, as "wonderful," when these teachers asked for support such as making time for targeted reading, it was declined without an explanation. She explained that in the past and within non-dual-immersion models, targeting reading time was built within schedules, so denial of that time for BIPOC students added to her dissatisfaction. Later, they added that although the district denied them resources in private correspondence, publicly they say, "Oh, we thank you so much for the hard work you're doing in the dual program...we don't feel it…just not feeling appreciated." Participant 11 clearly illustrated that accolades without adequate supports or clear communication of why the supports

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cannot be made available makes the compliments seem disingenuous and added to dissatisfaction.

Other teachers also reported removal of resources from programs that were functioning well as a district choice that added to their dissatisfaction. Speaking of their district level administrators' vision, Participant 12 a Multiracial (Latine-White) late career, middle school, social-studies, White presenting male, expressed his dissatisfaction in the following words:

> "In a controlled way, and I feel like our district has switched to more of like...try this, do that, different little things that don't seem a part of a bigger vision… it doesn't seem to have context attached to anything else that makes it something I believe will be systemic and sustainable."

Teachers frequently explained that teachers may see removal of resources such as funding and personnel from programs that were supporting anti-racist work as a lack of vision or even a lack of commitment towards equity work that needs to be systematically sustained.

Some teachers also perceived the districts' implementation of certain policies as restrictive to their program goals. For example, one participant who teaches business and marketing strategy reported that his school district forbidding students in his program from selling food during lunch hour was detrimental to the student store and a source of dissatisfaction because he was not told why that could not be done. This lack of clarity in communication made him feel like the district does not "have the same goals that I do for students or maybe they say they do, and they just kind of mess up what I try to do as a teacher" (Participant 59, White). Some policies, by the virtue of their phrasing and the way in which they were bargained into teachers' contracts, were also reported to impact BIPOC teachers only. An example was shared that dual-immersion teachers were restricted from voluntary transfers because the district had

determined that they had special skills in hard to fill positions. Dual immersion teachers experiencing dissatisfaction at their worksite reported this as further limiting because not only did the policy prevent them from pursuing another position within the district, it seemed "downright unfair for BIPOC" teachers, who often work in Spanish-immersion models in Oregon.

Additional Themes of Dissatisfaction. In addition to the themes that emerged from interviews and focus groups, class size and compensation were more commonly (over 50% of the participants in Phase 1 data set) and explicitly mentioned in the constructed response questions of the Phase 1 survey responses by BIPOC and White teachers alike. These themes that directly tie to resources as a systems-level characteristic had a cumulative effect, along with other aspects of the school district that depend on program funding in general. Within the survey, one White teacher's dissatisfaction was evident when they shared that a source of dissatisfaction was, "Working this hard and never feeling appreciated… working this hard and not feeling like we have adequate compensation." Another White teacher reported, "Last year I turned in 30 hours for IEPs and was compensated for 2 hours." Compensation was also tied to class size and low staffing within constructed response survey questions by many participants, drawing the connection between increase in class size and an increase in work-load.

Compensation not showing a corresponding increase therefore became a source of dissatisfaction. Conversely, in interviews and focus groups, both BIPOC and White participants who had served in alternative programs reported a smaller class size as a source of satisfaction because there was "not a whole lot of disciplining that had to happen" (Participant 38, White) and teachers were "able to connect with young people" (Participant 2, Asian), thereby increasing student accomplishment which, as mentioned earlier, was reported as the most fulfilling aspect

of the profession for all teachers. Interestingly, in the interviews of people who served in alternative programs in their career, compensation was not mentioned as a source of dissatisfaction while they served in those positions, which may indicate that when work-load is manageable and consistent, teachers may not perceive compensation as a source of dissatisfaction.

Themes Illustrating Dissatisfaction: BIPOC teachers

Tokenism. BIPOC teachers reported White staff members and administrators looking to a BIPOC teacher for any answers around racial inequity as source of dissatisfaction regardless of their years of experience. In fact, this manner of tokenism as a form of stereotyping behavior was cited as one of the common reasons behind dissatisfaction of BIPOC teachers. Reflecting upon her first year, Participant 23 a Latine, mid-career, elementary/mid/high special education teacher, reported that when she began working, her school district at the time was also in the early stages of racial equity work which was starting to happen around Oregon public schools. For her as a BIPOC person this became "uncomfortable, because… everybody in our district was asked to take some equity training, and they all wanted to turn to *her* like *she* had all the answers for it." Participant 25, a Native American, mid-career, middle school, English/social-studies teacher, also shared similar experiences from his second day of teaching when he reported that his administrator asked him to be "the Equity Coordinator." Given that he was new to the profession, this request was quite shocking to him because the administrator did not have prior knowledge of his abilities. To Participant 25 this felt like a tokenizing behavior because he was the only BIPOC teacher on staff and even though he had not demonstrated any skills, he was being asked to take up equity work in that building, which felt to him like a perfunctory measure. Within the interview, Participant 25 reported that besides appointing them as an equity

coordinator, their administrator's unwillingness to share any learning they brought back with the staff to build collective efficacy made them feel as if the administrators were not committed to equity work and just chose them to fulfill a requirement, which added to their dissatisfaction.

Other BIPOC teachers also reported similar sentiment around being turned to for answers for problems as if they were the spokesperson for all races. Another manner in which feelings of tokenism contributed to dissatisfaction showed up within experiences of BIPOC teachers who questioned some of the structural aspects of the programs where BIPOC teachers were hired more often. For example, in her interview, Participant 10, a Latine, early career, middle school, social-studies/Spanish language arts teacher reported that when she transitioned into teaching after having served as a bilingual educational assistant for years within the school she worked at she wanted to teach social studies. In her first position, although she got hired for that discipline, she did not find supports and often felt hassled more by her administrator than her peers. She reported being pushed out of this high school as a social studies teacher and being hired as a dual immersion teacher in the following years. Although she had not observed any changes in her teaching practice, she found more acceptance teaching in Spanish because she felt like that is where people who held systemic power wanted to see her. Her dissatisfaction was apparent in her tone of voice as she reported on the assumptions made of bilingual teachers who are pushed out of teaching core subjects and hired as dual-immersion teachers even though they may not have received dual-immersion training when she said, "It's like (animated) you speak Spanish! You should do it. You should know. You should not have Yeah, because (sarcastically) it's in our genes right? (laughs)," indicating that recruitment without supports just by virtue of one's identity or language skills is seen as tokenism and contributes to dissatisfaction of BIPOC teachers.

Feeling of Isolation. Just as peer connectedness or the ability to connect with people with shared interests or expertise was a source of satisfaction to many teachers, absence of peers with shared racial identity was found to be a source of dissatisfaction for BIPOC teachers and was reported to compound their dissatisfaction. A lack of presence of other BIPOC peers or opportunities to collaborate with other people of shared identities was also reported by BIPOC teachers as a contributor to dissatisfaction in their first year that left them with a feeling of isolation. Late-care BIPOC teachers, however, reported that although their districts may not have made those collaborative shared identity spaces for them available, they learned to advocate for them through their teacher union or in other ways.

A lack of race-alike peers to whom they could turn when needing support coping with work, microaggressions in the workplace, or even just to connect with others who might share interests by virtue of their identity without needing to explain every cultural nuance was reported to add to dissatisfaction for BIPOC teachers. BIPOC participants reported having worked in "a town of less than 1,000 people" or a school that "never had a person of color in their town" (Participant 3, Asian) and that it "felt like if there was somebody else" (Participant 7, Multiracial-Black) it would have helped them. The feeling of isolation was especially dissatisfying to BIPOC teachers in the early years of teaching because they felt like there was no one to whom they could talk who would understand their experiences. This lack of a support network, added to their experience of tokenism from peers and administrators, further alienated them and led to despair. One example of this was shared by Participant 23, a Latine, mid-career, elementary/mid/high special education teacher, who described this experience as "very lonely considering *that she* was the only Latine or BIPOC person on the school site at that time."

Racial Microaggressions. BIPOC teachers also reported racial microaggressions, or words and actions that subtly or even unintentionally make a person feel like they do not belong in a space by virtue of their racial identity, as a source of dissatisfaction. BIPOC teachers recounted times when they were a recipient of these microaggressions from administrators and peers; they also reported as a source of dissatisfaction their perception that they were some of the only teachers who would question such behaviors towards students.

BIPOC teachers reported racial microaggressions from their administrators as a source of dissatisfaction. For some, these involved administrators asking a Native American teacher such as Participant 25 "Can you do a rain dance," and for others like Participant 23, a Latine teacher, it involved their administrator ignoring their presence and voice in work groups, talking only to White staff "on different occasions and acting like *the BIPOC teacher* was not there." When questioned, participants reported that the administrator's reaction was that of surprise that their words and actions were seen as "racist" and then the administrator "stopped talking" to them entirely (Participant 25). Words and actions like these made BIPOC participants feel targeted and excluded; reportedly they often did not speak up in situations such as these for fear of retaliation and professional safety.

BIPOC teachers also reported accusations of reverse racism by administrators, when discussing another form of racial encounter that left them dissatisfied. One example of this was shared by Participant 13, a Native American, mid-career, elementary-middle-high, social-studies/world language/fine arts teacher. She works in a school that serves a majority native student population and all staff other than herself in that school are White. She reported that on one occasion when she took an opportunity to address a peer's deficit-based language toward BIPOC students and family privately, the peer was offended and later complained to the

administrator. The administrator then "asked *Participant 13* if *she* had made that complaint because the person who said it was a White woman." This encounter left Participant 13 at a loss for words because all her peers were White women. It also contributed to her dissatisfaction because the administrator did not take care to ask her about her perspective before taking sides with a person from a racially advantaged group and accusing her, a Native person, of racism against a White person. Participant 13 reported that this interaction broke her trust in that administrator and made her uncomfortable.

BIPOC teachers also reported racial microaggressions from White peers as a source of dissatisfaction. Such instances involved White teachers suggesting to BIPOC teachers "you must be the new teacher assistant" (Participant 23, Latine) or questioning their credibility in other ways by commenting on their choice of teacher preparation program (Participant 10, Latine). Reflecting on how she finds herself defending her always questioned status as a as a lead teacher because her peers, "can't think I might have a masters due to the skin color" Participant 23, a Latine, mid-career, elementary/mid/high special education teacher, exclaimed, "I don't know how much more professionally to dress for people to understand that… based on my looks I can and have a master's degree. It's very disheartening ... that's the only part that I dislike about my job."

Other forms of racial microaggressions reported by BIPOC teachers involved teachers targeting BIPOC students. In these cases, generally, these racial microaggressions were present within curriculum materials and the means of presentation, and were a source of dissatisfaction for BIPOC teachers. Commenting on the ways unthoughtful vetting of curriculum and text choices wrong BIPOC students, Participant 28, an Asian, late-career, elementary teacher said, that when teaching an indigenous story, "You do not go and tell a story- an indigenous story, and

then add a little bit from this nation's tribe from this tribe, and then call it good." Earlier in her interview, she also spoke of how BIPOC voices were excluded from the curriculum adoption process in her district, indicating that when means to acquire curriculum is not thoughtful, it has the potential to contribute to unintentional harm for both BIPOC teachers and BIPOC students.

Participant 28 also reported running into White peers' damaging text choices and misrepresentations within lessons and then having to make decisions to address them knowing that she may lack administrator support as a source of dissatisfaction. In her interview she said that since her students often feel comfortable bringing matters of racial significance to her attention, one time a student who checked out a book from their library brought it to her attention that the book misrepresented black people through the means of illustrations. Reportedly the student said, "If a child checks this book out of the library, they're going to read it to their little siblings. Their brothers and sisters are gonna think we Black people are evil," after seeing disparaging representation of Black people in a book he had procured from that elementary school's library. Participant 28 reported that even though she pursued seeking resolution for this situation on the student's behalf, the process was tedious, and no solutions were given. In this circumstance, having to constantly draw people's attention and receiving no resolution when the district and schools promoted the idea that they sought to be anti-racist became a source of dissatisfaction for Participant 28. In her interview, other instances of microaggressions toward students included a White teacher casting a BIPOC student in a negative light in a play. Participant 28 said,

> " *the student* was the beast and *he is* darker than I am and he was the beast…And then, when Bell kissed him, there was all this smoke that came on stage, and suddenly a blonde White student with a white suit… *the student who played beast* was in black wig, dark

kid, with a black suit, black nails. He was the beast the whole play! He couldn't have

pulled the wig off and changed a suit. No, they had someone else in the wing come up

and he laid down as if he was kissed. And now he's the Prince. It blew my mind! Nobody

else thought it was a problem"

indicating that students receiving microaggressions and White peers not seeing that as a problem

was a source of dissatisfaction.

Participant 10, a Latine, early career, middle school, social-studies/Spanish language arts

teacher, similarly reported discovering use of derogatory language toward Native-American

people in a peer's shared lesson as a source of dissatisfaction. In her interview she said that when

looking over 8th grade lessons to incorporate the goals into her dual-immersion classes, she came

across the question, "who made the red men red?" Because this question was supposed to be

asked of students and had already been shown in non-dual language classes, the experience

contributed to her dissatisfaction because the materials portrayed damaging words and images of

culturally diverse identities; a lack of mutual collaboration time where the BIPOC teacher could

help avoid this "ignorant" (Participant 10) representation added to the frustrations.

Bias within Administrator Supports. Perceived administrator incompetence in

appropriately correcting or addressing racially motivated student behaviors targeting Black

students was reported by Black teachers as a source of dissatisfaction. For example, Participant

8, a Multiracial (Black/White), early-career, middle school, science teacher who works in a

school that serves a predominantly White population with some Latine students, reported

students' behaviors that were "really severe" with "lots of incidents" of "blatant racism"

happening in her class. These involved students using dehumanizing language (the N-word) in

general, in addition to words such as "monkey" to refer to BIPOC students and randomly blurting "cotton" during lessons on flowering plants.

Participant 8 reported it being "extremely difficult for me to get on top of" because every time she tried to "follow through with either discipline, or even support, or even what is the next intervention for this student, or what is the follow up with the family, or what is the follow up with admin about what is acceptable for the student to say in the middle of class, with an audience," the student would be returned to the classroom almost immediately without any consequence, or communication of a behavior plan or expectations following the incident. Instead, her "principal would come by" during passing period, while her class was coming in and question her with statements like, "I read this referral you wrote, and I really just I think that he probably didn't mean it that way," and then "nothing would happen." Participant 8 added that this lack of administrator support contributed to her dissatisfaction because having heard such hurtful language growing up as a child and now as an adult from children she worked with, was a continuous reminder of how she was thought of as less than human herself by people with whom she worked. She said it made it so difficult to provide unconditional positive regard to students who did not understand the gravity of their words. To her, the inaction from the administrator did not help students develop an understanding of the impacts of their word choice and added to her sense of isolation, alienation, and the consequent dissatisfaction.

Other Black teachers, such as Participant 6, who works in a school with predominantly White students, also reported people, including her elementary school students, having put "the N word on *her* door." She said that the administrator's inaction made it so that she had to deal with students' use of N-word around her on her own, in addition to speaking to White families because the administration did not take steps to educate the students. This added to her

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dissatisfaction because she lacked the social power in that interaction. These interactions further illustrate that a lack of systematized responses to hate speech may leave BIPOC teachers, especially those who are Black presenting, to address racist language on their own and contribute to their dissatisfaction.

In addition to administrators' inaction around racist behaviors by students, some BIPOC teachers reported having to cater to or tiptoe around "White fragility" of their peers to maintain peace at work as a source of dissatisfaction (Participant 28, Multiracial-Asian). In her report of the conversation she had with her peer regarding the peer's word choice about BIPOC students, Participant 13 (Native American) also reported that after that incident she,

> ".. felt like *she* had to be really careful with whatever *she* said, and how I worded it just to make sure I didn't offend anyone, but nobody took my feelings into consideration, or, had done anything to try to not offend me."

Participant 13 called this, "the worst moment in dealing with administration." Pressing BIPOC teachers to be mindful of the comfort of their White peers and not offending the White peers by standing up against microaggressions for BIPOC teachers was regarded as catering more to maintaining status-quo of racial bias within interactions rather than promote anti-racist teaching and was a source of dissatisfaction to BIPOC teachers. This feeling of dissatisfaction around the expectation of catering to the comfort of White peers did not change with more years of experience, even when White allies were available to help navigate racial issues at work, as was evident in another incident shared by Participant 28 a late-career, Asian elementary teacher. Reflecting on the experience navigating derogatory representation of Black people on a peer's bulletin board, she said that she chose to seek assistance of a "White colleague, who is an ally" but even with the race-alikeness of this ally, the reaction of the offending White teacher "was a

nightmare...*she* stomped off, cried …was hurt." Although this story communicated the

dissatisfaction because the participant had internalized the need to consider comfort for White

peers, it also emphasizes the need for White allies to step into such circumstances.

Exhaustion. Although advocacy brought them satisfaction, BIPOC teachers indicated

that the continuous need for advocacy to circumvent systemic racial barriers for their students,

themselves, and their peers was exhausting and consequently a source of dissatisfaction. One

example of this came from BIPOC teachers who took the initiative to address the

microaggressions they witnessed at their worksite. For them, a lack of systems to report and seek

resolution to racial issues when they come up was cited as a source of exhaustion and

dissatisfaction.

In her response to sources of dissatisfaction, after explaining how her administrator had

shared her protected information with others at work, in her interview, Participant 23 a Latine,

mid-career, elementary/mid/high special education teacher said that "when racial things do

happen there isn't a clear person to go to, a safe person to go to," adding, "we don't have that

safety net. We don't have that connection to other BIPOC to say how did you handle this when

you went through it?" but to go through that affected her and her family because she was the

main source of income.

Other BIPOC teachers also said that the lack of structure for resolution of racial conflict

between peers or from administrator towards BIPOC teachers was something that added to this

exhaustion and dissatisfaction. For Participant 25, a Native American, mid-career, middle school,

English/social-studies teacher, when he "went to the Union" in response to receiving

microaggressions from his administrator, the union response communicated to him that they

"really like the superintendent and the principal" and because he had only been there for one

year, the union was "not gonna be able to support" him, indicating a general lack of systems to address racial targeting when it happens. Similarly, advocacy for lack of representation in curriculum and staffing of teachers and administrators was reported as exhausting by Participant 28 (Multiracial-Asian) and Participant 12 (Multiracial-Latine; White presenting).

Although BIPOC teachers prided themselves on their advocacy for BIPOC students, they also reported the need for them to continuously advocate for BIPOC students to ensure that they did not draw any negative attention based on people's implicit biases of the students as a contributor to their exhaustion and dissatisfaction. Participant 11, a Multiracial (Latine/White) early career, elementary dual-immersion teacher, communicated this dichotomy when she said that though advocacy makes her happy, when she sees what "happens to so many of our especially brown and Black boys" in our society, the advocacy is on her "mind and heart" a lot. Within the interview she indicated that as one of the only dual-immersion teachers at her school, she felt that if she did not take up this advocacy, no one else would.

For Participant 6, a Black, mid-career, elementary, special education teacher, this looked different when she indicated mixed-feelings she had toward the part she, as a Black teacher, has to play in continuous advocacy when she expresses concern with elementary-aged BIPOC students "who want to crawl on the floor" adding "and they wanna say that they are monkeys." For her, to help elementary school aged students to understand the connotations of the word that may be used against them or they may have internalized from microaggressions around them was a continuous task that she found herself responsible for inculcating in her BIPOC students. Knowing that no other adult saw a problem with that made her feel that if she did not advocate for changing this behavior, no one else would, adding to her dissatisfaction.

For some like Participant 26 (Native American), this meant the need for continuous advocacy to circumvent the criminalization of young Black and Brown students as well. Reflecting on an incident involving breaking of classroom supplies by a Black student with whom she worked, the Native American, mid-career, elementary, math/special education teacher reported that when a school resource officer (SRO) got involved in the problem solving of this incident the SRO said, "We gotta get them when they're young. We gotta get in the system." This statement was shocking to Participant 26 because as the student's case worker, she was aware of the recent loss and trauma in that elementary aged child's life, and she saw that if she did not stand up for her student, no one else would. In that way, the need for continuous advocacy for supports for BIPOC students' social emotional needs to seek safe space when frustrated instead of criminalizing Black students at an early age was a source of dissatisfaction to BIPOC teachers.

Other inequities. Workplace inequities such as a perception of not being allotted adequate or comparable worktime as one's White peers was also cited as a source of dissatisfaction by dual-immersion teachers who were expected to teach the same curriculum and had to plan it in two different languages and make it culturally relevant. Lack of materials such as textbooks in the heritage language also made preparation harder and made the allotted preparation time seem inequitable because then one had to be "responsible for teaching the same amount of content more…in the same day, and in the same hours" (Participant 11, Multiracial-Latine), adding to the dissatisfaction of BIPOC teachers.

Several BIPOC teachers also reported changing of their assignments after the school year began as a source of dissatisfaction in their first year of teaching. Participant 3, an Asian, mid-career, middle school science teacher also reported that when she was "moved from eighth grade

to sixth grade after like only about a week," it added stress to an already stressful year because as a first-year teacher she was learning classroom management on the job with the added burden posed in schools in Oregon that were reopening to in-person instruction after initial suspension of in-person instruction for COVID-19.

Themes Illustrating Dissatisfaction: White Teachers Only

Asking more in difficult times. White teachers reported the districts asking teachers to take on extra responsibilities right after return to in-person instruction after the initial COVID-19 induced closures as a source of dissatisfaction that showed a disconnect at the district level from the on-the-ground realities of schools. In this time period when schools were already asking their teachers to fill in for other teachers due to pandemic-related staffing shortages, mandating professional tasks such as book studies were reported to add to teacher stress and contribute to dissatisfaction. Reflecting on one such district requirement, Participant 38, a late-career reading interventionist said that "When you're spending all your time on that, it's very hard to do extra work."

Research Question 5

The last research question sought to compare the systemic sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for BIPOC and White teachers that compelled them to stay at their worksite or in the profession, and/or leave their worksite or the profession with the phrasing *To what extent do these characteristics differ for teachers of color and White teachers?* Although some of the responses illustrating the comparison of the experiences of BIPOC and White teachers has already been mentioned in the results for Phase 1 and for research questions 3 and 4, the following section compares participants' responses to the interview question*: In what ways or to*

what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

Overall, although most participating White teachers were aware and accepting of the need for anti-racist work to improve student outcomes, not many saw themselves as part of the system that perpetuated systems of racial inequities for BIPOC students and peers. In contrast, BIPOC teachers reported experiencing incidents at the workplace that were informed by their racial presentation themselves and for their BIPOC students throughout all interview questions. Many participating White teachers also indicated that they felt inadequately trained, inadequately resourced, or insufficiently supported by the school and district administration to do the work expected of them to engage in racial conversations within their classroom and therefore felt some degree of discomfort around it. BIPOC teachers, on the other hand, felt that they were more often asked to shoulder this burden and lead the way in this area, particularly as compared to their White peers (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

A Comparison of Teachers' Responses to "In What Ways or To What Degree Does Your Racial Identity Influence Your Experiences as a Teacher?"

White Teachers / BIPOC Teachers

Others perception of my race does not impact me as an individual

I am aware of my racial differences

I am blind to how my White privilege impacts my students

I use deficit based language around race

I recognize my societal racial privilege; I intentionally seek racial awareness trainings

I feel unprepared to engage in antiracist work

I feel unsupported to engage in antiracist work

Others Perception of my race contributes to me being treated as a token

I am always aware of my racial differences

My peers, administrators and students have used racially insensitive language around me

When I try to address racial conflict, my feelings are invalidated by my administrator

I recognize racial microaggressions because I intentionally seek racial awareness trainings and/or have lived experiences

I feel prepared and courageous to engage in antiracist work

The diversity of BIPOC and White teachers' experiences in their response to the last

interview/focus group question that explored research question 5 explicitly can be sorted in the

following sections in regards to how the question was interpreted by the participants.

How Does the Perception of My Racial Identity by Others Impact Me?

All teachers to a degree saw how they may be perceived racially by the outward

appearance of their skin. Teachers' racial perceptions were evident in ways they spoke of their

own identity. For White teachers, personal perceptions around race ranged from unawareness of

bias, to a deep knowledge of how a person in White skin may benefit from society's perception

and preference of Whiteness. For example, when explaining his own origins, Participant 21, a

White male teacher, described his heritage as "not terribly highfalutin," adding details such as,

"not Paris, and Irish, Dutch and German. So *I am* pretty, you know, bland and Northern

European mutt kind of thing." Though not outwardly apparent, their word choice around their

own racial identity may show an inherent preference or sense of desirability and superiority; yet

a denial that one may gain in some form from that. Similarly, in their response, Participant 56 an

early career teacher, explained that as a White male, "racial stuff… hasn't really … been an issue

at all for me," implying that systemic racism did not prevent him individually from the pursuit of

happiness. Other White participants who had reported investing their time in pursuing equity

trainings identified themselves as part of the systems steeped in Eurocentric ideals for BIPOC

students that continuously perpetrate injustice within schools. In the words of Participant 36, "I

am the system and just understanding that, that is what I represent when I walk into a room for

some of my students, that's not a great representation."

Unlike White teachers, for whom their personal racial presentation did not make an

impact on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction at work, perception of one's racial identity by

others consistently contributed to BIPOC teachers' dissatisfaction. BIPOC teachers reported that their fellow White staff's perceptions of their identity as a BIPOC individual and the way the White staff chose to interact (words and actions) with them had an influence on their awareness of their own influence within that space, how they were tokenized in situations, the microaggressions they faced, and the constant burden they felt with all that to be a symbolic, positive, ideal spokesperson for people of shared identity. These experiences were more complex for BIPOC teachers who could be White passing.

BIPOC Teachers Were More Aware of the Perception of their Racial Presentation. BIPOC teachers were aware of their identities and the impact their racial presentation had on others' behaviors/perceptions around them. For example, Participant 13, a Native American teacher, was aware that in her school where 60% of the students shared her identity as a Native American, students looked up to her as if she were family. She identified this as a source of "comfort," "respect," and "familial relationships" for BIPOC students within her interview.

Participant 4, a Multiracial (Asian-White) teacher, spoke of his racial awareness as skills he acquired as a result of being in his skin (his multiracial identity) along with trainings he pursued during his years of experience when he described himself as, "more sensitive to things" and as "a lot more likely than some of *his* peers" to not just let racial inequities slide "just because it's easier to ignore it."

For others, such as Participant 6, a Black teacher, this awareness of one's own racial presentation came with a different kind of trauma. In her interview, she reported that she was made aware that some of her White peers behaved differently in their presence than in their absence. She said, "I've heard from some of my coworkers that some of my people that I work with are saying things that they would never say in front of me."

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BIPOC Teachers Felt Tokenized by White Staff's Words and Actions. Facing stereotyping

in the form of tokenism was another way in which BIPOC teachers reported the perception of

their racial identity by others impacted them. Some of these forms of tokenism were explicitly

identified by BIPOC teachers and were discussed earlier under the themes illustrating sources of

dissatisfaction effecting BIPOC teachers only. Other self-reported incidents of tokenism by

BIPOC teachers that came up in this interview question involved BIPOC teachers' awareness

that they may be in that space as an employee because of some policy requiring a number of

BIPOC teachers in staffing. For example, explaining her discontent with the way many equity

initiatives in their school have been handed over to her as the only BIPOC teacher even if she is

in the early years of her career, Participant 8, a Multiracial (Black/White) teacher said, "I feel

like I'm often the token staff member that's recommended for this new Equity group, or you

know, recommended for this equity training."

In a different form of tokenizing behavior, Participant 23 a Latine teacher's, experiences

within her school led her to a feeling that her recruitment was an effort to check a box to meet

some form of a quota requirement so her district could be in compliance. Thinking of the reasons

why she moved to her current district and expressing disappointment she said that when she

switched to her current role she felt like this district would be "more equitable;" however,

through her administrator's words and actions she soon realized that, "they're only going through

the check box… We got a person of color- check."

The perception that one may have been hired to be in a particular position because of

policy requirements was reported by Black, Latine, Asian, and Multiracial teachers alike,

illustrating how pervasive this perception of self through the eyes of others from their words and

actions was. Participant 5, an Asian teacher, shared the feeling of being a token hire when he

explained that although he works hard, shares his cultural heritage to educate students and promote sensibility to perspectives within his school, in the back of his mind he always ha*s* this thought

> "Am I here just because my racial identity? Like...like token hire?...And it really doesn't matter how strong you are as a person. You can still feel that dent… that heavy air of thinking that maybe it's not your ability that they hire… they have to hire one"

The pervasiveness of feeling tokenized was also complicated by the minimal number of BIPOC teachers who were seen in staff demographics. This was mentioned by Participant 28 (Latine), when she spoke for advocacy for representation in staffing; Participant 10 when she said, "That's why I got hired because I am a Latina Spanish speaker;" and Participant 6 (Black), when she said that in addition to always being asked to be on racial equity panels in her district she thinks "that's the reason why I was hired…because of *her* color."

BIPOC Teachers Felt the Burden of Always Being Aware and On Their Best. BIPOC teachers also reported that being in their skin came with its own sets of expectations, one of which was being the ideal representative for one's race. For most, this expectation weighed on them in a way that they felt that they always had to be on guard lest they let their White peers confirm the negative stereotypes about the racial group with which they identified. This stereotype threat as an added burden was spoken of in different ways by BIPOC teachers in all racial groups interviewed. Participant 5, an Asian teacher, put this feeling as a "personal responsibility, but also personal burden to be like this beacon" who cannot let other Asians down. For some, this burden was reportedly imposed through the words and actions of others who perceived them through their own lens. For example, when describing her experiences with race, Participant 13, a Native American teacher, said that in an interaction with an administrator,

she felt that she was being held to a standard that may not be expected of all of her White peers when she narrated the incident where she was spoken to in a way that to her meant that, "he was telling me watch what you say and watch what you do, because you're speaking on behalf of all of your people." This interaction left her confused and wondering if the reverse were also true for White people. This was evident when she said,

> "are they speaking on behalf of all of their people? Because there was never that pressure put on them, but that pressure was put on me, and so…I really felt like I had to watch what I said and watch how I acted and tried to tiptoe around other people's feelings"

This burden to be a responsible for a positive representation for their entire race regardless of the situation was also spoken of by Black teachers. After being questioned about why her students did better than theirs' by another peer in a way that made her feel like her integrity was being questioned, Participant 6, a Black special education teacher, reported having to be extra watchful of her own action lest she makes a mistake. Reminiscing she said,

> "from then it's taken years for me to be able to show that I am a person of character, and that my students work hard" and "It has made…me feel like I have something to prove, and that I represent."

Burdens like these pose an unfair amount of stress on any BIPOC teacher and may be attributed to lack of respect for individuality of BIPOC persons.

BIPOC Teachers Felt Microaggressions Towards Themselves, and Invalidation of Their Feelings Around Those Experiences. Many BIPOC teachers also spoke of interactions at workplace with peers, administrators, students, and community members who questioned their professional efficacy because of their racial identity. Some BIPOC teachers also reported their

concerns being dismissed as a possible misunderstanding on their part as recipient of a microaggression by their administrators.

Speaking of her experiences with race, Participant 6, a Black elementary special education teacher, recounted an incident with a first-grade student who, "said (*he)* didn't want to take my hand because he said people…that look like you are only bad guys on TV." She called this incident "eye-opening" because it was within her first year of teaching. Continuing to talk about her experiences throughout her career, Participant 6 also shared moments in which her peers questioned her integrity by suggesting that she must have cheated for her students to have done better than theirs on the state test:

> "because he didn't think that they could do that well, and then I must have to have had cheated for them or provided them answers" Adding that it was clear that the only reason why the White peer would think of that was "because I don't look quite like *them*."

Later within her interview she added that when she reported such microaggressions to people in authority they often responded with dismissal of her experience with comments such as, "'Oh, you …you…. you really didn't feel that way.'" Dismissal of experiences and consequent feelings for BIPOC teachers was also reported to be communicated in other ways, such as the experience of Participant 7, a Multiracial (Black/Native/White) participant who is Black presenting. After not showing up to an out-of-school gathering which people were expected to fund on their own, she was approached by an administrator who showed concern for her absence at this social event by saying, "'You feel more comfortable at a different school?'" As the participant expressed her shock at this statement, she added that the administrator, "would never think to say that to a White teacher."

BIPOC participants also mentioned not being picked to fulfill leadership roles they desired as a something that was informed by the perception of their race by those who held the power to grant that role and were White. For example, within her interview, Participant 26, a Native American teacher, also reported that her racial identity plays a part in the opportunities that were denied to her and "have been given to other people who have less experience, who have less education, and who have less favorable results" than herself. Participant 4, a Multiracial (Asian/White) teacher, shared similar experiences when he reported that although it is "hard to draw direct correlation" it is not hard to see that BIPOC teachers are not being selected for leadership toles in the district because "you don't ever get invited to do any PDs in your district when you're doing them for other organizations all across the state," which attests to subtle ways in which administrators may have perpetuated a lack of belief in one's ability to lead by virtue of their race—a microaggression.

Experiences of White Presenting BIPOC-identifying Teachers. Many Multiracial BIPOC participants who appeared White in their skins and were aware of that appearance observed other nuances of their outward identity. Participant 12, for example, who identifies as Multiracial (Latine-White) acknowledged his White presentation and explained how he uses that to create awareness. As he explained how he encourages students to explore their own identities and be self-accepting he enthusiastically explained,

> "I would mention that I was Mexican American I had so many of my students say 'you're Mexican,' and to me I think that that reflected I did not fit a stereotype that they probably had, and so I was giving them more information about what a Mexican American in Oregon can look like and be like."

Although White presenting participants who self-identified as BIPOC individuals were able to step in and out of their racial presentation as circumstantially needed, other BIPOC teachers did not always enjoy that liberty. For some, comfort came from the invisibility that an outward White appearance afforded them. This comfort in being unidentifiable as a BIPOC person was also expressed by Participant 22, a White presenting, Multiracial (Black/White) teacher, when he said, "But nobody can usually tell what I am, so maybe that's part of the advantage that I've had in avoiding...(long pause)… mis-treatment," implying his awareness of the privileges that may come with appearing White.

How Does My Awareness of Existence of Racism and Systems that Support Oppressive Practices Impacts Our Students?

White teachers' awareness of ways in which systems within school might support oppressive practices and therefore impact students was varied. For example, some White teachers believed that it was perfectly acceptable to read the dehumanizing words that may be written in texts such as the N-word out loud in class. For example, within her interview, Participant 38, a White female teacher, recalled an incident where she read that word out loud, and a Black elementary student called her out on it. Her self-reported reaction was, "that was extremely offensive to my student, and my response to him was, we're only saying that because it's written" with the addition that "I actually I had no prep for him, because I didn't know he was coming to group that day" illustrates the general lack of racial-awareness for White teachers who may have not attended racial equity training beyond the basics.

For Participant 38, who indicated that she realized that thoughtful preparation is needed for race-related conversation when reading texts with language that may perpetrate unintentional harm, yet had not engaged in that preparation because the only offended 5th grade Black student

was not expected that day shows a lack of understanding of how racial conversations need preparation for both White and BIPOC students. Later, when she was reflecting back on the incident with another Black student, Participant 38 also said that she often wonders how it may be to never have a race-alike teacher, yet added a qualifier saying, "he's lucky in the fact that there are authors who look like him, there's actors who look like him, and they're sports people." This statement further illustrated that although there is an understanding of how positive representation may help students, this understanding may often be limited to subliminal messaging from popular media.

Participant 38 was not unique in identifying their role in systems that support oppressive practices within schools. In his interview, Participant 21 a White male, late career special education teacher, recounted his experiences with reading aloud the same loaded words in the context of reading *Of Mice and Men* in their classroom just a few years ago. He said,

> "I had always been pretty much a literature and just art purist. If a word is in a book, I
> will read it, and I had done that for years… I had a young African American kid in the
> class, and he asked that we not read the N. word out loud. It doesn't come up very often
> in the book, but it does kind of a few times."

Just like Participant 38, Participant 21 did not see why any student would take issue with him reading what is written out loud.

The lack of awareness of how systems of racism may work through one's implicit bias was also evident in the responses of other White participants. For example, when asked the question about how their race influences their experiences as a teacher, Participant 43, a White teacher who earlier in the interview self-reported that she prides herself in teaching students who may be considered very difficult by other teachers and gave multiple examples of how she

empowered many students and gave them choices over her career, said, "I had a disruptive middle school student who happened to be Black" adding that arguing with him "was a constant" and "if he could get me to engage and argue then there was less time for math, and he was good at arguing (laughs)… he wasn't good at math."

Participant 43 explained that the disruption in which this student was engaging involved bantering with her about wanting to work in a group when the task was individual or wanting to do more questions when asked to do a certain number. Because the participant indicated that she prides herself on having behavior breakthroughs with students, her unawareness of her use of deficit-based language for the only Black student she mentioned was telling. This lack of awareness may be perpetuating oppressive practices through their implicit biases. Participant 43 also reported that when she gave corrective feedback to this student the student "would immediately say that I was addressing him because he was Black," and she, "would have to call for backup to come and have, you know, escort the student from my class and the rest of the class never sees any of that get resolved. So, I don't know if all of the students in my math class believed that I was a racist. I doubt it." The lack of awareness where White participants were not receiving explicit training in anti-racist practices was not unique to Participant 43.

In another interview, Participant 36 (White), as she reflected on a behavior incident in her classroom from years ago where she had written a referral for assault for an elementary aged Black student, reported that at that time she, "didn't even consider what race he was, which is my privilege as a White woman." Years since that incident, Participant 36 was able to recognize the impact of her color blindness in the classroom and how that perpetuates racism by negating the experiences of BIPOC students as she added, that she now saw, that with

"...the skin they're in, and how the system that we're using to track behavior may, in fact, be a racist system that we are perpetuating and perhaps we could look at how we're dealing with referrals and it is a conversation that has been started and came from that situation... I have to be willing to be called racist. I have to be okay with digging into that what that means for that person and what that means for me to inform and change my practice."

Her awareness and comfort with accepting that her actions were racially-insensitive and her willingness to accept her role in promotion of systems perpetuating racism without shame and guilt, and with an approach to problem solving was made possible through years of pursuit of equity trainings that she took on her own time.

Although for White teachers the awareness of the existence of racism and systems that support oppressive practices came with intentional training, for BIPOC teachers this knowledge came from their own experiences supplemented with intentional trainings. Some BIPOC teachers' awareness of racial incidents that their students faced was informed by their personal experiences, which helped them better identify and address such issues at schools. Though their experiences and their role in problem solving were different, early career, mid-career and late career BIPOC teachers all reported ways in which their presence benefited students through interruption of systems that were oppressive. Early career BIPOC teachers such as Participant 11, a Multiracial (Latine/White) dual-immersion teacher, saw her racial identity as something that "brings value currently to my team" because within the dual-immersion program she was able to share more experiential knowledge with her peers. Mid-career BIPOC teachers such as Participant 26, a Native American, saw themselves in BIPOC students:

" like the struggles they go through either I've been through them, or I know somebody

that has been doing them (*teary eyed and affected voice*). And so, I try to be an example

for them. I try to show them that it's like possible to do a lot of things."

Mid-career BIPOC teachers' shared identity also was reported to provide a close knowledge of

struggles faced by students. Reflecting upon ways in which she herself may have experienced

those shared struggles, Participant 26 added that through her own experiences she knows how it

feels to not be picked for opportunities for which she may be better qualified because no one

believed in her, even though she demonstrated competence. Because she was passed by for

opportunities that were given to her peers, Participant 26 intentionally chooses to empower

BIPOC students by choosing them to lead first. Similarly, Participant 13, a Native American

teacher, explained her influence on students by virtue of her identity when she fondly told the

story of a student perceived as difficult choosing to come to her, as a familial person, when they

needed a calm down space (a finding that suggests that BIPOC students may perceive race-alike

BIPOC teachers with more trust because they may understand their experiences and needs).

A perception of being more in tune with student needs by virtue of shared identity was

also evident in responses of late-career BIPOC teachers. For example, Participant 12, a

Multiracial (Latine-White) White-presenting teacher said that for him it meant that he

intentionally shares his multiracial identity with his students to prevent people perceiving all

BIPOC people with a stereotypical view. He said that sharing his story with students along with

teaching in anti-racist ways meant that students,

"… knew that perhaps there was someone here who might know what it's like to walk

down the hall and hear the racial slurs, and then have to go into a classroom and do

learning or that they knew there was someone they could talk to about that, and they

would feel heard or supported…if they needed and wanted to take some actions about some things."

For other BIPOC teachers such as Participant 28 the awareness of racism and systems that support oppressive practices meant active dismantling and interruption of oppressive practices where they were witnessed. Within her interview, she shared multiple incidents where she stood up for students. In one incident, she ended up speaking to an administrator about a peer's plan to instate a shower chart just for her Mong and Laotian students because "their culture doesn't let them." In another reported incident, she ended up standing up to a peer who was giving out combs to students to help with school pictures, "and when she got to a black boy, she didn't give him a comb… *(when the student asked)* 'so why don't I get a comb?', *(the teacher responded)* cause you don't need it." For Participant 28, interrupting racist and oppressive practices like this was a vital part of her identity as a teacher.

How Prepared Do I Feel Teaching About or Engaging in Anti-Racist Work?

Most White teachers communicated their discomfort around racial conversations that emanated from perceived lack of experiential knowledge and the feeling that a BIPOC person may be more apt at handling a conversation like that. Early career White teachers such as Participant 59 (White) perceived his identity as a possible hinderance to accessing BIPOC students. Reflecting on the question pertaining to race, he said that although he does not feel disadvantaged at his position, as a straight White male he wonders, "if these students would benefit from …having someone that looks more like them," pondering if that would make the students feel more "comfortable" and "underst*ood* where they came from." This reflection that he might not completely understand students by virtue of their identity, along with a realization of a lack of connectedness with students also reflects on Participant 59's discomfort with cultural

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understanding. This discomfort and reflection were especially telling when coupled with their recounting of behavioral problems they faced in a linguistically and culturally diverse school as an early career teacher earlier in the interview.

Participant 17 (White), another early career teacher who finds satisfaction in service to families, recognized her sense of service as a "White Savior" complex and reported that facilitating a conversation about racial matters sometimes seems, "difficult to facilitate when you don't have as much background." She worried that, "the important part about talking about races that you probably will make a mistake... like you've got…You gotta try." However, she also cited lack of administrator supports following race conversations in class when community members pushed back as a source of dissatisfaction in her interview. Collectively, new teachers' inexperience and lack of protection from the community when engaging in racial conversation may make it difficult for them to include racial topics within curriculum, especially if they do not feel well educated in the domain, making the task especially harder for early career White teachers.

Early career BIPOC teachers such as Participant 11, a Multiracial (Latine/White) teacher, recognized the influence of her own identity in her work with BIPOC students when she said that her goal is to help them not just find spaces, "where they're going to find accept*ance*…but to create those spaces themselves and to feel free." Recognition of an issue for BIPOC teachers, however, also often added the burden of change to the person aware of the issue. BIPOC teachers for that reason found themselves in a spot where they were engaging in anti-racist work to empower others, but faced resistance from administrators who defined policies and held power.

For example, Participant 5, an early career Asian teacher, reported that "to gain *the* affinity groups has been kind of a struggle, and really slow going." Others, like Participant 8, a

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Multiracial (Black/White) teacher, reported that even though she felt comfortable teaching about racism and its impact, others in positions of power like her administrators often did not support the need for that work. In response to her suggestion that continuous use of racial slurs by students around school called for a lesson, she said that her administrator's response to that suggestion was asking her if she, "really *felt* like it's that serious to have a whole lesson?" adding that he thought it was just "something Kids say," and "a joke." To Participant 8, not only was the principal's response in this circumstance dismissive, it also illustrated a lack of comfort or understanding of the impact racism had on the lives of the people who were at the receiving end.

Mid-career White teachers, like Participant 51, shared early-career teachers' sentiment around discomfort and lack of preparedness for teaching topics where the role of racism should be a point of discussion. In her interview she said, "I teach American slavery, and it feels awkward being a White woman teaching eighth graders about American slavery," adding that "it seems like it would be richer coming from someone who is an African American." Her statement illustrates that although she says that a Black teacher might have been more equipped at teaching the unit, the word choice of "awkward" may indicate a sense of lack of preparation and comfort teaching the unit or even personal discomfort around racial conversations.

Mid-career BIPOC teachers, such as Participant 13, a Native American who worked in a school with a large Native American student population, reported that some of her peers valued her as a someone who had knowledge and asked questions in a way that did not make the participant feel tokenized. In the words of Participant 13, one of her fellow teachers would, "ask questions and…just says that 'well I don't want to… to sound ignorant but I'm ignorant', and she'll ask questions, and …I appreciate that." This interaction may illustrate that Participant 13,

as a BIPOC teacher, has developed efficacy and relationships to educate her peers in ways that they find mutually acceptable.

However, although many BIPOC teachers felt prepared to engage in anti-racist work, not every BIPOC person encountered the same level of respect in the curiosities of their peers. Participant 25, another Native American teacher who works at a school with a majority White student demographic, finds himself in a different spot with his ability to educate when put in contrast with others' willingness to listen. In his interview, Participant 25 said that in his workplace his peers will, "ask me questions, but they just do what they want," and then, "they become …really cautious around me." This illustrates that although the participant was approached for answers, he does not feel like his responses are heard because of the people's actions following those conversations. Instead, he felt that the responses were used as a means to avoid having a racial conversation with them in the future. This may imply that although BIPOC teachers may be willing to share their experiences and skills with fellow White staff, the White staffs' willingness to listen is equally important to making progress in anti-racist work.

Late career teachers, such as Participant 38, also found themselves inadequately prepared to intervene when students received racial microaggressions. In her interview, Participant 38 self-reported her discomfort saying that what "has always been hardest for me is talking to kids about, if they've had microaggressions," because "I don't have that experience." Later, she added that at one of the schools at which she worked in her career both of her "administrators were BIPOC. So that was probably one of the best experiences of my life, because I knew that they had my back, and they could help me." This statement illustrates that even when late career White teachers may feel unprepared to handle anti-racist work at school, BIPOC administrators

may be in a unique position to support them and guide them in ways to help BIPOC students navigate racial trauma at school.

Late-career BIPOC teachers displayed more confidence in pushing for anti-racist work within their districts and even sustaining training outside on their own time when trainings were not provided from the school districts where they were employed. Both Participant 28 and Participant 12, who have worked in their districts for over 25 years, reported that they pursue equity trainings on their own time. Participant 28, an Asian elementary teacher in this context, said that because she has learned to include the identities of her students to build these critical relationships, she has to put aside the pacing and the guidance of her district's recommendation in order to implement what she has learned as the desirable practice in the first few weeks of school to build cross-cultural bridges within her classroom so students can feel valued in that space. Speaking of why she chooses to set the mandated curriculum aside, she said it was because these were "always again stories by White people" in the vetting of which BIPOC voices were not included so, "because of my racial identity I made a choice to say no" and instead starts the year, "with picture books of different cultures."

Participant 12, a White presenting late career Multiracial (Latine-White) teacher explains that he believes he experiences race differently by virtue of his racial presentation. Because he shares his Multiracial identity explicitly with people with whom he interacts, he finds that many White peers feel more comfortable asking him questions about being Latine than they would of a person who was not White passing. Although he feel very adept at engaging in anti-racist work and leads some of this through the teachers' union, in his interview he wondered if, "for some of my colleagues, that I might have been an accessible Mexican American … someone who maybe they could engage in conversations with," noting that perhaps their familiarity, "lowered some

inhibitions or barriers that they might have had in other conversations with someone who looked or sounded more Mexican." Although Participant 12 considered his ability to step into and out of racial conversations with ease an asset, his awareness of him passing as White adds another layer to his experiences, as he often is left wondering why White peers ask him what they ask him. Pondering on a circumstance where a White peer asked him if he thought it would be okay for his child to dress like Moana for Halloween, in his interview he said,

> "and there's this part of me that's like why are you asking me this? Like… Are you looking for permission from me and are you feeling like I'm accessible because there were other people and brown skin that we know that this person didn't ask to my knowledge and so I have to inside of me go like– Well, why…. why is this question happening here with me?"

He said that in his identity where he is camouflaged in White skin, he often wonders if "the same people go to other people in darker skin, and ask those same things." This may illustrate that even when a BIPOC teacher is White passing, if they choose to embrace other non-White aspects of their racial identity as they try to educate people, they might not escape the trauma of tokenism. Participant 12 summarized his experiences as a White Passing Multiracial (Latine-White) teacher in Oregon in his profound reflection when he said,

> "… that's what our growing up in Oregon does is makes you question everything...Did I really see this? Did this really happen? Am I really like you know… maybe I'm jumping to conclusions. But that's part of what it means to… to live in this place right now is to… to live with doubt and second guessing, and that burden of not really knowing like where I'm at where… where I stand."

Overall, most BIPOC teachers reported engaging in anti-racist work routinely, whereas many White teachers idealized the need for it. White teachers also expressed discomfort with and lack of preparedness for taking up anti-racist work on their own.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Limitations

In quantitative traditions, researchers are expected to address threats to internal validity. In qualitative traditions, it is more common to refer to the trustworthiness of a study's findings and to use triangulation of data sources to increase the trustworthiness of a study. Because my study uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches, I address both threats to validity and ways in which my design addresses trustworthiness.

Changing Landscape of Education Due to COVID-19

In the last two years, our realities have changed drastically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The interference of a once-in-a-lifetime event has the potential to acutely influence teachers' stress level and the challenges they face in terms of working conditions. In addition, racial tensions and increasing national focus on systemic racism have drawn more attention to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) marches and other protests against police brutality in the past few years. Portland, Oregon, received national attention for such protests, and it is likely that the pandemic, BLM movement, and focus on systemic racism in American society has had an impact on teachers' work environment. In this context, studying teacher attrition, its patterns and influences of policy decisions on teacher satisfaction in general and the experiences of BIPOC teachers in particular becomes increasingly important. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the potential that events outside the normal realm of teaching may have had an impact on the findings from this study. That said, recording teacher experiences from this time period also provides valuable information on evolving teacher and school needs within the changing landscape of teaching.

Sample Acquisition

Before I began my work with the participating school district, the district was already having conversations about the need for this type of research. In this way, participants from this district comprise a convenience sample; however, due to the size and demographics of the participating school district, most participants from this wave of recruitment were White. Although it is possible that the results from the White participants sampled in this manner may not be generalizable, the commonalities of experiences aligning with prior research suggest otherwise.

In addition, the Pacific Northwest in comparison to school districts in more diverse states presented a particular challenge to assessing teacher experience by race because of the low population density of teachers from different racial groups. To boost participation and have a representative group of BIPOC teachers, I expanded my sample through direct recruitment using my connections with the WREN and OECN communities. Although, my sample remained one of convenience, with teachers self-selecting into responding to the survey and volunteering to participate in a focus group or an interview, I was able to gather data from Latine, Black, Asian, and White subgroups through outreach to Oregon BIPOC teacher networks and collaboration with the participating school district.

Instrumentation: Researcher Context

In designing the survey, I worked closely with personnel from the participating district. Each question was reviewed by a variety of district stakeholders, and wording was revised for clarity. Additional feedback from a doctoral-level survey design course was used to further refine the survey instrument. Although such expert-panel review does not guarantee a technically adequate survey instrument, it does provide some measure of quality control in the area of

instrumentation. One concern in the area of instrumentation is the perception of the word *satisfaction*. What individuals may describe as satisfaction may vary from participant to participant, and this may impact both their perception of the construct and their responses to the question, especially on a quantitative measure such as a survey. To gain a deeper insight into what participants perceived as satisfactory, Phase 2 of this study was crucial as it provided deeper insight into what **all** teachers, White and BIPOC alike, found to be sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within their work.

By providing Phase 2 participants with the option to select either a one-on-one interview or race-alike focus group to share their insights, I was able to increase the comfort of the participants so they could share in an environment of their choice. Additionally, by offering a choice between a group or an individual interview, cultural nuances around sharing experiences were also accounted for; depending on participants' collectivist or individualist tendencies, they could share their truth in a format with which they were comfortable.

In addition, bias can be introduced in qualitative research because the researcher is the instrument for both data collection and analysis. To minimize the risk that my own context as a first-generation immigrant, South-East Asian female in brown skin would impact my interpretation, I worked with the data by groups. Though I interviewed and recorded data for all participants as their schedules allowed, when cleaning, annotating scripts, analyzing data and writing results, I worked with data from one racial group at a time, beginning with White participants and taking approximately a week-long break from data analysis in-between groups. This process helped make sure that as I deduced the results, I methodically and consciously worked with what was said within the interviews. Additionally, my positionality as a BIPOC

teacher may have encouraged BIPOC teachers to share their experiences more openly and comfortably while perhaps limiting White teachers' willingness to share as openly.

Summary of Key Findings

Consistent with predictors of teacher attrition in prior research on the topic, it was evident in the teacher interviews that both BIPOC teachers and White teachers in Oregon had many reasons to stay or to leave the profession or the schools where they worked. Oregon teachers drew satisfaction from many aspects of their work.

Phase 1 analyses for the six variables of interest– *School Connectedness*, *Administrator Supports*, *Professional Development*, *Student Processes*, *Resources* and *School Diversity*– revealed interesting findings. Teachers in this sample who had considered leaving their worksite reported significantly less satisfaction with *Administrator Supports* and *Professional Development* compared to their peers; however, teachers who reported having considered leaving the profession reported significantly less satisfaction with *School Connectedness*, *Administrator Supports*, *Professional Development*, *Student Processes* and *Resources*. Interestingly, when looking at intent to leave the profession, the results were significant for all but one variable: *School Diversity*.

It was also evident from Phase 2 analysis of teacher interviews that contributors to dissatisfaction were commonly aspects of teachers' experiences at work that prevented the accomplishment of satisfaction. For example, most teachers cited student growth in social emotional learning as a source of satisfaction; however, where the systems of behavioral supports were perceived to be inadequate, student behavior became a source of dissatisfaction. Because the number of sources of dissatisfaction cited by participants exceed the overlapping sources of satisfaction, in this section I first discuss the sources of dissatisfaction that both

BIPOC and White teachers cited and then discuss the sources of dissatisfaction shared by BIPOC

teachers only, to derive policy recommendations for improving teacher experiences.

Overall, within Phase 2, both White and BIPOC teachers reported satisfaction when

students met their goals, the teachers felt connected with their peers, or if the supports that were

needed from their administrators were provided. Common sources of dissatisfaction included not

feeling prepared for the realities of classroom teaching, particularly in the first few years; feeling

inadequate administrator supports; a general lack of resource provision for the programs in

which teachers worked; inefficient or inadequate professional development; and a general

dissatisfaction with student processes.

BIPOC teachers, unlike their White peers, also reported the ability to serve BIPOC

students and families as a source of satisfaction. Some BIPOC participants also reported

administrators with a vision for anti-racist work as a source of satisfaction within their career.

Some of the key sources of dissatisfaction that emerged only from the interviews and focus

groups of BIPOC teachers included feeling *tokenized* within their schools, a feeling of isolation,

the cumulative impact of experiencing microaggressions, a sense of alienation due to the bias

experienced based on the ways in which administrators interacted with them, and a general sense

of exhaustion from the need to stand up against systemic inequities to support BIPOC students

(Niemann, 2011).

Interestingly, only White teachers reported administrators asking more of them the year

when schools returned to in-person instruction after the initial COVID-19 related distance

learning model as a source of dissatisfaction. Although BIPOC teachers shared a variety of other

sources of dissatisfaction, none of them mentioned feeling dissatisfied that they were being asked

to do more when they returned to in-person instruction. In contrast, over half of the selected

White teachers brought this topic up. As one teacher expressed it, "there's all these asks…it just feels like coded with if you don't do it, then you don't care enough."

BIPOC teachers and White teachers also answered the last interview/focus group question differently. When asked, "*In what ways or to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel,*" the responses were remarkably different. An analysis of the responses from all participants revealed that BIPOC and White teachers' perception of race, their racial identity, and its impact on themselves, their students and within school was varied. White teachers who sought equity trainings even when they were not offered within their districts reported being more prepared to engage in anti-racist teaching compared to White teachers for whom these district priorities were only communicated during staff meetings. Most participating BIPOC teachers, on the other hand, reported seeking out these trainings outside the school districts on their own and where they did not, they self-reported not shying away from race-related conversations. In fact, for many BIPOC teachers, the assumption that that they would have all the answers to racial issues from their administrators or peers was a common source of dissatisfaction. For many of the BIPOC teachers in my study, they identified this as a form of *tokenism* as mentioned before.

Commonalities

When it came to sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, BIPOC teachers and their White peers in Oregon had some commonalities at both the person and systems level, as discussed in prior teacher attrition literature.

Person Level Characteristics

In Phase 2 analyses, at the person level, BIPOC and White teachers' perception of the inadequacy of the training they received through the teacher preparation program they attended, and a subsequent general feeling of unpreparedness for the classroom in the first year was a common source of dissatisfaction. A perception of general lack of preparedness was also reported as a predictor of attrition in prior research (Redding & Smith, 2016). More recently, Fuller and Pendola (2019) found less pre-service exposure to classroom teaching to be associated with teacher attrition as well. Interestingly, satisfaction was reportedly higher for participating teachers during their first year in alternative settings where they reported that the number of disciplinary incidents was low, class size was low, and/or other factors linked to student achievement were present, all attributes linked to teacher retention in prior literature as well (Harrell et al., 2018; Ronfelt et al., 2012). Notably, teachers who reported satisfaction from low disciplinary referrals also identified as White or White presenting, an interesting finding in light of prior research by Bruke and Nishioka (2014), who found disproportionality in disciplinary rates of BIPOC students in the state of Oregon.

Some teachers who reported dissatisfaction due to lack of preparation in the domain in which they ended up teaching (e.g., elementary certified teacher teaching secondary; or bilingual teacher teaching dual-immersion without explicit methodological training) may also be attributed to recent changes in licensure requirements by the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC). In the recent years, within Oregon Administrative Rule Chapter 584 addressing *Teaching License Redesign,* in order to account for teacher staffing shortages in Oregon, TSPC changed all teaching licenses to Pre-K–12 (O.D.E., 2012). Almost all approved local licensing programs, however, continue to design pathways and offer candidates a choice to attend either

elementary or secondary teaching methods. However, TSPC issues all graduating candidates teaching licenses for preK-12, regardless (O.D.E., 2023). Teachers recruited from outside of Oregon state who may be issued a reciprocal license may also find themselves in a spot where they may not feel adequately prepared for student needs in the area they are licensed to teach.

This finding is consistent with Goldhaber and Cowans (2014) report that improving the quality of teacher preparation program helps create effective teachers who are more likely to stay. Alignment of local licensing programs and continued interactions with the needs of local school districts may be pivotal in expanding potential teaching candidates' student teaching experiences to match classroom needs within school districts by providing different teaching methodologies for elementary and secondary level to all graduating candidates. Additionally, developing methods to support professional learning for teachers who may be serving in roles for which they did not receive training in a systematized way that does not add responsibilities without compensation to their existing schedules may be effective in uplifting teacher morale by providing them with what is needed for their professional survival. This approach may also have potential to support the teachers who reported that losing the support of a mentor teacher upon transitioning into their own classroom prompted the realization of how they still needed that guidance.

Systems Level Characteristics

At the systems level, BIPOC and White teachers shared concerns around systems of improving student behaviors, appropriate funding of programs, administrator supports and methods of communication, and compensation for their time—factors that in the prior attrition research are grouped as systems-level characteristics (Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2019; Ingersoll 2011; Mack et al., 2019). The variables of interest in my Phase 1 analysis and the

themes that I deduced during my Phase 2 analysis pointed to these systems-levels characteristics that contributed to the dissatisfaction of BIPOC and White teachers.

School Demographics. Student demographic categories, such as student behavior and student race, were identified as contributing to the way in which teachers in Oregon experienced satisfaction and dissatisfaction in Phase 2 interviews. In Phase 1, results from analysis of *Student Processes,* which covered teachers' perception of students' access to physical and mental health services, socio-economic status of the student body, systemic management of behavior in restorative and productive ways, and adequate training to implement these systems, revealed that teachers who considered leaving the profession also indicated significantly less satisfaction in this domain.

Student Behavior. Students' behavior and the efficacy of systems that district use to correct and manage these behaviors were identified as a source of dissatisfaction to many teachers in Phase 2 of my study. As mentioned before, in their quantitative study Harrell et al. (2018) found that teachers were more likely to leave schools where student disciplinary referrals were higher. Within their interviews White and BIPOC teachers who worked at sites where behavior systems were implemented with fidelity through staff collective efficacy and administrator supports within disciplinary stages, lack of behavioral incidents was a source of satisfaction. Conversely where teachers reported inaction with follow-up after reporting of disciplinary incidents, Oregon teachers also reported dissatisfaction. Although *all* teachers identified that how discipline was dealt with at the administrator level was a contributor to dissatisfaction, White teachers reported general misbehaviors not tied to identities, manifestation of behaviors where students had individualized education plans, and argumentative behaviors of some BIPOC students as a source of dissatisfaction; for BIPOC teachers, students using racially

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disparaging language and administrators' inaction with that behavior added another layer and is discussed further under key differences. The difference in perception of student disciplinary needs between BIPOC and White teachers points to a need for adequate professional trainings around culturally responsive behavior management, especially for White teachers, given prior research supporting the existence of disproportionality in disciplinary referrals. Additionally, it is noteworthy that Ingersoll (2001) reported similar trends linking teacher attrition to student disciplinary issues along with lack of influence over decision making, citing it as the most common reason for teacher dissatisfaction.

Student Race. Although neither BIPOC teachers nor White teachers spoke in diminishing ways of students by virtue of their race, in Phase 2 both participant groups reported on their ability to connect with BIPOC students as an important aspect of their work. White teachers mostly spoke of BIPOC students in response to the question –*In what ways/to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.* Most responses of participating White teachers suggested either discomfort with helping students with racial matters because they did not share the students' identity or they felt that they lacked training to comfortably know what to say and how to adequately assist the BIPOC students.

BIPOC teachers' responses to this question were more personal. BIPOC teachers were sought out by students and (in some cases) peers of BIPOC identity and shared their racial concerns openly and comfortably. BIPOC teachers were also more adept at identifying bias incidents and—depending on the trainings they sought on their own—were also more comfortable interrupting these bias incidents. This is an important finding because even with a relatively less diverse available sample, prior race-match literature from research conducted in

other more diverse states such as Florida also pointed to the effectiveness of race-alike teachers at improving BIPOC student academic and social-emotional outcomes (Bates & Glick, 2013; Egalite et al., 2015). That said, although BIPOC teachers reported being able to support students and peers in this way, continuous need for advocacy was reported as a source of exhaustion and further contributed to the feelings of *tokenism* and isolation for BIPOC teachers. These attributes have been documented to be of consequence for BIPOC teacher well-being in prior research by Niemann (2011) as well. In order to retain BIPOC teachers, it is important that their work-experiences be improved to minimize the feelings of alienation and subsequent dissatisfaction.

District Characteristics. Quantitative analysis of variables of interest in Phase 1 revealed a statistically significant difference in teachers' dissatisfaction with *Professional Development*, *Resources*, and *Administrator Support* when analyzing intent to leave school (PD only) or leave the profession. The findings were substantiated within participant interviews/focus groups as many factors that the teachers regarded as a source of dissatisfaction at their worksite in Phase 2 connected to district characteristics since program funding, FTE allocation in schools, and adequate continuous training to support dissemination of policies and procedures within schools for administrators is often decided by district and school administrators in Oregon schools.

Funding (Time, Staffing and PD). Administrators who cultivate a culture of trust, openness, and academic freedom along with making provisions for differentiated professional development have been found in prior research as vital to teacher retention and being perceived as supportive (Shuls & Flores, 2020). Conversely, absence of these may be associated with attrition. In Phase 2, both BIPOC and White participants reported inadequate resourcing of their programs in terms of allotted time to prepare for classes, support staff needed to adequately run

the program, and professional development needed to train new staff within the program or implement new curriculum. Absence of supports like these that depend on funding were perceived by participants as a source of dissatisfaction that strained their relationship with their administrators. Borman and Dowling (2008) assert that inadequate funding in schools is associated with higher attrition rates. Considering adequate funding of programs to support teachers in attaining program goals may be importance at eliminating the emotional cost lack thereof puts upon teachers.

  Compensation and Bargaining Ability. Oregon BIPOC and White teachers also reported having to work beyond the contracted school day to adequately prepare to deliver curriculum as a source of dissatisfaction which caused strain on them trying to balance their personal lives and feeling of guilt about not doing enough to prepare for their classes if they chose not to work outside of work hours. This finding was prevalent for most of the teachers who participated in Phase 1 of the study, as most of them reported inadequate compensation compared to the work expected of them as a source of dissatisfaction within the survey's constructed response questions. Often these extra hours did not come with compensation, which prior literature points to as a source of dissatisfaction for teachers nationwide (Ingersoll, 2001).

  Administrator Supports: Attitudes and Asks. Administrator communication patterns have also been associated with teacher attrition rates (Borman & Dowling, 2008). In the teacher interviews, aspects of administrator supports that emanate from administrators' communication styles such as tone and attitude of administrators, their word choice, and their actions when communicating with teachers was as source of dissatisfaction for BIPOC and White teachers alike. As mentioned in prior literature, perceived professional autonomy is a predictor of attrition (Mack et al., 2019). Many BIPOC and White teachers who expressed dissatisfaction with

administrator supports also pointed to a sense of administrators micromanaging aspects of their areas of expertise without having served in that role themselves. Conversely, participants who felt seen by their administrators and perceived professional autonomy within their workplace reported administrator support as a source of satisfaction. Furthermore, connected to the perception of micromanagement by administrators who had no program knowledge, the absence of administrators who were knowledgeable and assigned to special programs was also reported to be a source of dissatisfaction by teachers. Recent logistic regression analysis by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond's (2019) supports the idea that teachers are more than twice as likely to move schools when they perceive of their administration as unsupportive.

Key Differences Between Experiences of BIPOC Teachers and White Teachers

Although Phase 1 analysis illustrated differences in experiences of BIPOC and White teachers only in their satisfaction with professional development, where BIPOC teachers who had not considered leaving their schools reported significantly greater satisfaction with the professional development within their schools compared to White teachers. No significant differences were found in experiences with *School Diversity*, but qualitative data from Phase 2 revealed a more nuanced difference in the groups' experiences by racial presentation. Interestingly, the overlap of findings from Phase 2 matched teachers' self-reported experiences more on the *School Connectedness* variable, where BIPOC teachers who had reported more connectedness with their schools reported significantly more satisfaction and less desire to leave compared to their White peers. These quantitative findings are especially revealing considering the small sample size of BIPOC teachers I was able to acquire in Oregon.

The key differences between experiences of BIPOC and White teachers emanated from their experiences with race in the following ways: (a) BIPOC teachers noticed and reported racial

microaggressions more often than their White peers; (b) BIPOC teachers felt a sense of personal responsibility in advocating for BIPOC students and staff, especially when new policies and practices were perceived to impact various racial groups differently; and (c) the frequency at which BIPOC teachers (even in their first year of teaching) were *tokenized* through administrators and peers was reported by all participating BIPOC teachers. The experiences of BIPOC teachers, along with the pressure of constantly being treated as a spokesperson for their race, often coupled with a lack of change in practice even though equity was publicly advocated in their district was reported to make BIPOC teachers feel the weight of the inherent racism within schools. In addition to other factors that were common for BIPOC and White teachers, these experiences compounded their dissatisfaction and the self-reported toll it took on their occupational health, especially in Oregon schools where BIPOC teachers navigate a system sustained by White professionals. This Racial Battle Fatigue [RBF] (Smith 2004) is discussed in prior literature as an additional burden on BIPOC teachers, contributing to BIPOC teacher dissatisfaction and highlighting the psychological and emotional toll of confronting continuous racism (Pizzaro & Kohli, 2018).

Teacher Race as a Person Level Characteristic

Within the interviews and focus groups conducted in Phase 2, many BIPOC teachers' responses inadvertently related to their race/racial presentation. It was clear that although White teachers predominantly mentioned race only for the question that explicitly asked how their racial identity impacted them and their work, connections to racial identity were apparent in response to most questions by *all* but one (White presenting) BIPOC teacher. As mentioned before, when asked the question, *In what ways/to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made*

you feel, although White teachers felt unprepared to take on race-related conversation in their workplace due to lack of training and/or subsequent administrator supports when community members questioned their methods, the responses were more personal for BIPOC teachers. BIPOC teachers often found themselves tokenized as keepers of all answers both by their peers and administrators. Being tokenized in this way was common for Oregon BIPOC teachers, whether they were in their first-year, early-career, mid-career, or late-career of teaching. Where they were not turned to for answers pertaining to the resolution of racial issues, BIPOC teachers also reported experiencing microaggressions themselves. BIPOC teachers indicated they received these microaggressions from fellow teachers, classified support staff, administrators, and even students.

Racial battle fatigue (Smith, 2004) from consistent experiences such as these not only undermine the teacher, but may influence their ability to trust their administrator to support their social well-being at work and contribute to BIPOC teacher dissatisfaction. Blois (1999), in their discussion of contributors to business success, discuss the importance of reputation and trustworthiness as pivotal in forming lasting relationships. Teaching is not an exception to human interactions such as these in a capitalist culture. Additionally, as mentioned before, although advocacy for anti-racist systems of supports for BIPOC students and staff was a source of joy for BIPOC teachers, a feeling that if they did not step up for advocacy no one else would, was a burden that only BIPOC teachers reported. Similarly, by virtue of their identity, BIPOC teachers often found themselves in a position where they had to stand up against injustice towards both staff and students. Continuous needs for advocacy over a period of time was also reported to take a toll on a BIPOC persons' mental well-being. Occupational stress (Jacobs, 2019) has been

attributed to attrition in prior workplace research, as is the negative correlation between mental health and job satisfaction amongst teachers (Capone & Petrillo, 2018).

In prior research, availability of mentorship within schools is also associated with teachers' willingness to stay or leave a school district (Shuls &Flores, 2020). A lack of race-alike mentors and shared affinity spaces within their districts was reported as a source of isolation by BIPOC teachers in Phase 2. When linked to Phase 1 analysis where *School Connectedness* was a statistically significant difference for BIPOC teachers' willingness to stay at their worksite, this finding is especially telling. In Phase 2, although some late-career BIPOC teachers self-reported participation in statewide networks on their own time, early and mid-career teachers who, as illustrated in prior research (Borman & Dowling, 2008) often need the supports the most, found themselves without time and local access within their districts. Teacher collaboration through mentorship and affinity spaces is also discussed in prior research as a promising practice as a non-evaluative and informal social support (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Rockoff, 2008; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Warren-Grice, 2021)

Unlike BIPOC teachers, White teachers reported the added asks of district-level administration post-COVID shut down reinstatement of in-person instruction when they were already spread thin covering for peers within their worksite as a source of frustration. They felt like being requested to do a book study or any additional tasks that were not directly tied to the work they did within their content area as a lack of respect for their time and as a sign of the district's disconnection from the reality of schools as well as a sign of administrator incompetence. As discussed above, such experiences can contribute to dissatisfaction due to damaged trust (Blois, 1999; Jacobs, 2019).

Administrator Support: Systems Level Characteristic Impacting BIPOC Teachers' Experience

Although Phase 1 analysis of the variable *Administrator Supports* revealed statistically significant results for dissatisfaction and intent to leave worksite and profession for all teachers regardless of their race, qualitative analysis of Phase 2 found some key differences in the experiences of BIPOC teachers. BIPOC teachers reported administrators' inability and/or unwillingness to interrupt microaggressions from other staff members as a sign of administrators' incompetence.

Similarly, although *all* teachers in Phase 1 who reported dissatisfaction with *Student Processes* reported a desire to leave the profession, in Phase 2, BIPOC teachers perceived lack of change of student behavior after racial incidents as a sign of administrator insufficiency because the behavior continued and there was no clear communication of actions taken or next steps, commentary that was unique compared to White teachers. Consistent with prior business research, when teachers do not perceive their administrators as trustworthy, it compromises the work-relationship and their desire to stay at the workplace (Blois, 1999). Additionally, inadequate or clearly-defined systems of behavioral supports to mitigate racial language use by students by administrators was perceived as lack of administrator supports by BIPOC teachers, who found themselves overburdened by lack of other supports in the first place, which left them with a feeling of resentment. Feeling resentment within the workplace may also impact employee decisions to leave (Niemann, 2011).

Furthermore, direct behaviors making BIPOC teachers feel unsafe were reported by BIPOC teachers only to have diminished their trust with administrators. This included administrator words and actions that illustrated a bias and were perceived as preference for Whiteness or a direct attack on the BIPOC teachers' identity. Prior research in psychology

discusses the impact of word choice on perceived emotion by the recipient. Brooks et al. (2017) found that within human interactions, emotion words often prompted emotional response whereas affect words did not. Paying attention to one's intention and evaluating word choice may be a promising practice in developing relationships and trust between BIPOC teachers and their often White administrator. BIPOC teachers also reported microaggressions from staff; administrators' response of questioning the intentions of the recipient of microaggressions or asking them for ways to help sort the problem was also regarded by BIPOC teachers as a sign of administrator incompetence, as was not taking action when these solutions were suggested. As discussed in Niemann's (2011) study, BIPOC teachers who constantly navigate a predominantly White workplace may experience feelings of isolation at work when their professional decisions were undermined or their experiences dismissed.

Personal safety is considered as one of the basic human needs within Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and is very important in perception of satisfaction. Just like improving teacher licensure programs to ensure readiness of teachers to take on classroom responsibilities independently, it is tantamount for administrator licensure programs to get a pulse of teacher needs to prepare administrators who are inclusive of staff in decision making, approach racial conversations with tact, and acknowledging people's experiences as they are told as their truth. Helping administrator candidates enhance interpersonal/interracial skills or screening potential candidates seeking administrator licensure for their skills in this domain may help preparation programs produce effective leaders who may be skilled at listening to teacher voice and communicating in a way that promotes trust and satisfaction.

Implications for Practice

Consistent with prior literature, variables like *School Connectedness*, *Administrator Support*, *Professional Development*, *Student Processes*, *Resources* and *School Diversity* were found to be influential in the way BIPOC and White teachers experienced satisfaction and dissatisfaction within their schools. Although quantitative analysis in Phase 1 gives us a general idea of how it may differ for BIPOC and White teachers, qualitative analysis in Phase 2 provided a more nuanced comparison of the lived reality of BIPOC teachers.

Emergent themes from the qualitative analysis revealed that for teachers who experienced a multitude of factors that contributed to their dissatisfaction, the cumulative effect of these factors made their dissatisfaction greater and was evidenced in the stories they shared, their mannerisms, and their tone of voice. This dissatisfaction was further compounded by reportedly not getting feasible solutions from administrators, or a general feeling of a lack of voice. For example, a teacher who just graduated from a licensure program may have felt unprepared to manage a classroom independently; however, when they asked for assistance from their administrators and did not receive it, or when they were not assigned to a mentor within their early years, this dissatisfaction in their narratives was more profound. This complex intersection of contributors to dissatisfaction also pointed to the layered experiences within Oregon schools by their resourced-ness, not just in funding but also stable positioning of socially-conscientious administrators within school buildings and teachers' intersectional identities.

Mental well-being of caregivers is very important to their ability to effectively engage and contribute to the well-being and success of their dependents (Fleming et al., 2013). BIPOC and White teachers are no exceptions. Because of the overlap in sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at a systems level, as reported by teachers in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of this study,

addressing and removing systemic sources of dissatisfaction might help improve teacher

satisfaction in Oregon Public Schools.

Enhancing Sources of Satisfaction to Support Teacher Retention

With the existing teacher retention problems, continuous and active collaboration

between school districts, administrator preparation programs, teacher preparation programs, and

the licensing agencies may be necessary for the local preparation programs to adequately prepare

graduating administrator and teacher candidates for the realities they will face in local school

districts. This practice would ensure that BIPOC and White teachers entering the workforce have

had adequate independent exposure to working with a spectrum of students to set a better

foundation for their own success upon hire. Additionally, it will also ensure that newer

administrators have the skills to make teachers feel heard (teacher-voice) and be able to provide

systemic supports in ways that supports are felt to be effective.

Mentoring in the probationary first three years of teaching in a Oregon public school

districts also holds promise to alleviate teachers' concerns with having to plan alone, having no

one with whom to share feelings of frustration in a non-evaluative way, or at the end of the day

just decompress with. Because teachers also reported dissatisfaction with the time allowed and

time needed to prepare and the inadequacy of associated compensation, assigning mentors in a

systematized way where mentors and mentees are provided compensation and release time could

also help ensure that willing mentors are not overburdened by their other responsibilities as

classroom teachers. Due to the disparities in hiring BIPOC teachers, although it may initially be

hard to pair BIPOC teachers with BIPOC mentors, providing continuous professional learning

opportunities to mentors so they learn how to support their mentees could help make them more

effective mentors who empower their mentees.

Offering differentiated professional development opportunities that connect to a teacher's content area or specific disciplinary teaching practices in addition to professional development that may be more systematized for all teachers may also help alleviate teachers' dissatisfaction with the relevance of professional development. Additionally, clearly communicating the learning outcomes and their connection to site-specific goals may also help alleviate teachers' concerns with the disconnectedness of professional development to their practice. Making the professional learning a collaborative experience in which knowledge is produced through participation of teachers as stakeholders will also help generate a sense of professional autonomy by uplifting teacher voice. Teachers who reportedly are already pressed for time to adequately prepare and deliver curriculum may feel more engaged and respected through a systematized approach like this, which may subsequently help improve collective efficacy; collective buy in may also help initiative success.

Adequate resourcing of initiatives with a clear logic model that delineates resources such as time, staffing of programs, expected short- and long-term outcomes, and roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders may help clarify expectations of teachers given the time and compensation afforded to them. This approach may help alleviate dissatisfaction by clearly describing the expectations within the job description, and clarifying whom to approach for other student needs. Clarifying sources of funding of the programs when program evaluations direct a change and transparency in communication of these needed changes for teachers as key stakeholders may also be instrumental in making teachers feel less burdened by the changes in which they currently perceive they have no voice.

Administrator trainings with clearly defined outcomes regarding communication skills, approaching conflict with the mindset of problem solving and generally expecting best intentions

and projecting so with teachers may also help improve teacher satisfaction by improving trust in administrators. This approach may also help communicate professional trust, cited by many teachers as a source of satisfaction. Intentionally training administrators in promoting transparency and clarity of communication and planning program changes in a way that demonstrates equity between programs may also help build trust with teachers who serve in hard-to-fill positions. Periodic administrator evaluation surveys that gather an overview of staff experiences and provide data to make site-specific, evidence-based decisions may help enhance teachers' satisfaction by providing them with a voice along with a means to illustrate that the voice was heard. Sharing this data with staff in the light of projected improvements may help facilitate discussion, improving relationships and trust in the process.

Observations of implementation of professional development and trainings may provide insights into the value of these trainings within teachers' locus of influence. Observations may also provide data about possible improvements, implementation with fidelity, and tracking improvement of systems while identifying additional site-specific needs.

Additional Ways to Enhance Sources of Satisfaction to Support BIPOC Teacher Retention

Intentionally creating professional development for all staff on topics that help reduction of implicit biases that may lead to tokenizing behaviors, microaggressions, and other words or actions that may communicate that a BIPOC person does not belong in a particular setting may help reduce BIPOC teacher dissatisfaction emanating from such behaviors from staff and administrators. Incorporating practices such as promoting asset-based language and restorative approaches to conflict resolution may also help systematically reduce bias and the weight of letting people of shared identity down that BIPOC teachers are often made to feel through others' words and actions. Training White administrators to approach racial conversations with

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BIPOC subordinates in a way that communicates trust and acknowledges BIPOC experiences as valid can also help reduce BIPOC teacher dissatisfaction and promote a sense of safety at work.

Clarifying and creating processes to select teachers to lead initiatives would create opportunities for teachers to lead in spaces in which they have competency and express interest, instead of always defaulting to selecting a BIPOC person to lead equity work, which promotes a sense of feeling tokenized, may help diminish BIOPC teacher dissatisfaction and improve BIPOC representation in other leadership roles. Creating clear processes for leadership roles may help alleviate the stress BIPOC teachers experience in circumstances when they are asked to take up positions that they may perceive are asked of them by virtue of their identity. Clear processes for professional growth as a practice may also be desirable for teacher satisfaction in general.

Increasing BIPOC teacher representation in all curriculum adoption phases and continuously auditing curriculum for systemic bias may help diminish feelings of lack of voice in such processes. Doing so may also help communicate school districts' commitment to advocacy for BIPOC students at a systemic level and uplift some of the continuous and overwhelming burden and exhaustion from need for advocacy that BIPOC teachers reported within their day-to-day existence in Oregon schools that remain predominantly White spaces.

Better recruitment and retention efforts to intentionally diversify the teaching workforce may help alleviate the feeling of isolation in experiences with no one with shared identity with whom to decompress. Such efforts might reduce the feelings of alienation BIPOC teachers reported due to their colleagues' and administrators' dismissal of their experiences. Sustaining BIPOC teacher numbers through systematized methods such as the creation of safe spaces and clear processes to report incidents of bias may also help increase BIPOC teacher numbers in school districts. Actions that communicate support of racial differences and the creation of safe

affinity spaces in which a person can share freely without having to culturally blend also may be instrumental in relieving the stress and consequent dissatisfaction that may BIPOC teachers reported. Access to meeting in affinity groups and availability of race-alike mentors are promising practices that may help reduce dissatisfaction for Oregon BIPOC teachers. However, in districts where the population of BIPOC teachers is minimal, more work may be needed to increase recruitment efforts and diminish attrition before such shared spaces may be feasible.

Clear reporting processes and structured methods of problem-solving racial conflicts and making these processes known to all bargaining groups may help alleviate dissatisfaction for BIPOC teachers who have been at the receiving end of microaggressions or disparaging comments about their racial identity and found no means to resolution. Improving access to reporting bias incidents may also build a sense of safety and subsequently school connectedness because it may provide a BIPOC teacher the means to seek justice, especially when the incident does not escalate to discrimination, though it contributes to creating a workplace climate where BIPOC teachers may not experience comfort, eliminating continuous trauma.

Continual observations of implementation of equity trainings with fidelity through administrator presence at worksite may help ensure that all teachers are applying the professional development focused on racial equity in their practice. This practice may provide data to inform future professional development trainings, and administrator presence with corrective feedback may also help strengthen trust and improve workplace climate by interrupting the day-to-day microaggressions that BIPOC teachers reported.

BIPOC Resilience, Optimism and Strength

Despite the challenges, BIPOC teachers who participated in the interviews and focus groups demonstrated a drive that communicated that they valued the work they did and saw it as

important to bring about a social change. This BIPOC resiliency, optimism, and strength in some of their circumstances is an important consideration in retention of BIPOC teachers who already work in our schools. Diminishing sources of dissatisfaction and providing opportunities to lead may help grow our exiting BIPOC teachers into leaders who may provide insights into additional improvements within schools, as well as at the district and state level, to strengthen systems that improve educational and social-emotional outcomes for BIPOC students.

Suggestions for Future Research

By virtue of their racial identities, BIPOC teachers reported added layers of experiences that contributed to their dissatisfaction in their workplace. Because societal stereotypes and associated expectations vary for people of various races, a study of individual teachers of individual racial groups may hold potential to provide a more nuanced analysis of each group's needs and thus provide guidance for improving systems of supports within school districts and local licensing programs for teachers and administrators. Additionally, multiracial identities of teachers who may or may not be White presenting seem to add another layer of nuance to how teachers, and people in general, may be perceived in the workplace and may influence their satisfaction by eliminating sources of dissatisfaction that their non-White presenting multiracial peers may experience, a topic ripe for further exploration.

Upon implementation of suggested refinements in practices, an analysis of the impact of these changes would be necessary to evaluate their efficacy. This would necessitate future research, and program evaluations as well.

APPENDIX A

TEACHER SURVEY

Background: This survey is being conducted to help us learn more about ways in which we can improve our support of educators, with the ultimate goal of improving staff satisfaction and retention. Your responses will be used to help inform policy and practice both in our district and beyond.

This survey includes a total of 54 brief questions and is expected to take about 15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you will be given the opportunity to let us know if you are interested in exploring this topic in more depth in a brief (45-60 minute) focus group or individual interview.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer these questions. Your insights matter!

Section I: This section collects data about area of specialization, teacher identity, school level taught, and teacher certification program attended.

1. Area of Specialization (Multiple responses)

2. I teach in a(n)

   o Elementary School

   o Middle School

   o High School

   o Alternative Program

3. Race (select all that apply)

   o Hispanic/Latino

   o Black/African American

- o   Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

- o   Native American

- o   Asian

- o   Two or More Races

- o   White

- o   _____

4. Ethnicity

- o   Hispanic

- o   Non-Hispanic

- o   _____

5. Gender

- o   Man

- o   Woman

- o   Non-Binary

- o   Prefer not to say

- o   _____

6. I obtained my teaching credentials through

- o   University of Oregon

- o   Pacific University

- o   Bushnell University

- o   _____

7. I am a

- o   Contract/tenured teacher

- o Probationary 1 teacher

- o Probationary 2 teacher

- o Probationary 3 teacher

8. Including this year, how many years of teaching experience do you have?

- o 0-3

- o 4-5

- o 6-10

- o 11-15

- o 16-20

- o 21-25

- o 26-30

- o 31+

9. I am a member of the teacher's union

- o Yes

- o No

- o Unsure

10. How old are you?

- o 22-25

- o 26-30

- o 31-35

- o 36-40

- o 41-45

- o 46-50

- 51-60
- 61-65
- 66-70
- 71+

Section II: School Connectedness

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. I have a person at work with whom I feel comfortable sharing my day-to-day experiences.
2. My school site has a process to resolve disputes/disagreements with peers.
3. There is a predictable structure to PLC and other activities in which I am expected to participate at my school.
4. I am encouraged to observe other staff's instructional practices at my site.
5. I am able to observe others' instructional practices without giving up my prep time.
6. When I bring an issue to my administrator, I am sure I will be heard.
7. My school site has systems to celebrate staff accomplishments.
8. There is a dedicated time during the work day for me to collaborate with my grade level team.
9. My school site has consistent expectations of all staff.

Section III Administrator Supports

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong
agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. My administrator is warm and welcoming with everyone in the building.

2. If I have a strong disagreement with a policy, I know I can speak my mind to my administrator individually and freely (in a civil way).

3. When I am observed, I can count on receiving compliments as well as suggestions for improvement.

4. Substantial efforts are made to explain reasons for new initiatives and their purpose at my school.

5. Administration at my school is compassionate and kind.

Section IV: Professional Development

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5 where 5 indicates extremely strong
agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. The school-based professional development in my district has a clear agenda and starts and ends on time.

2. I have a choice about the professional development I attend to advance my skills as a teacher.

3. If I want to attend a professional training that is relevant to my position, I know that adequate funding will be made available to me in a timely manner.

4. I have adequate opportunities to engage in professional development.

5. At my site, I have adequate access to leadership opportunities.

Section V: Processes with Students

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. A vast majority of the students at my school are economically disadvantaged.

2. Students at my school have adequate access to physical and mental health resources through school, insurance, or community affiliates.

3. At my school, student behavior is managed fairly and productively.

4. At my school, we have established a restorative system of disciplinary practices.

5. I have received adequate trainings to enable me to be comfortable applying restorative discipline practices in my classroom.

Section VI: Resources

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. I have adequate resources to execute my lesson plans.

2. When I need NON-PERISHABLE resources for my classroom, I know the process to ask for these.

3. There is an efficient process for me to acquire PERISHABLE materials for my lesson plans.

4. I am adequately compensated for my time at work.

5. I am able to finish my lesson planning and grading during my work day.

Section VII: Race

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. The certified staff at my school is racially and culturally diverse.

2. The student body at my school is racially and culturally diverse.

3. We celebrate diverse holidays at my school.

4. If I walk around my school, I see positive representation of people of color.

5. At my school, I often get unsolicited questions about my race/ethnicity.

6. At my school, my appearance and/or way of speaking influences my peers' perception of me.

7. At my school, my appearance and/or way of speaking influences the leadership opportunities available to me.

Section VIII: Satisfaction

Please respond to these questions on a scale of 1-5, where 5 indicates extremely strong agreement and 1 indicates extremely weak agreement.

1. In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered moving to a different site or district, but staying in K-12 education.

2. In the years that I have worked at my current school, I have considered leaving K-12 education as a profession.

3. *Short Answer:* What aspects of your job bring you great satisfaction?

4. *Short Answer*: What aspects of your job bring you great dissatisfaction?

5. *Short Answer*: There is always opportunity for improvement in any institution. Briefly, describe one or more things that would improve your workplace experiences.

Section IX: Personal Factors

Please select Yes or No.

1. It takes me 30 minutes or more to get to work every day. (Y/N)

2. I have children between the ages of 0-5 who need childcare when I am at work. (Y/N)

3. I am the primary source of income for my family. (Y/N)

Section X: Contact Information - OPTIONAL

As part of our ongoing work to learn more about how to better support our educators, we would like to host individual or group interviews of educators from the same demographic backgrounds. Group interviews will be race matched. Participation in these interviews is entirely voluntary, and we hope you will consider participating. Your experiences could provide valuable information that can help us improve our policies.

If you might be willing to participate in an interview please indicate your preference by selecting one of the following options

1. Individual interview

2. Group interview in a group that has race alike participants

3. I do not wish to participate in an interview

If you are willing to participate in an individual or group, please provide your contact

information below. If you are selected, you will be contacted individually to set up a day and

time that will be most convenient for you. Thank you so much for your participation!

1. Phone number _____

2. Email Address _____

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Logistics:

Room set up: Circle facing each other

Materials: Video recorder, notepads/writing tools for taking notes/asking questions/

> clarifications.

Food/snacks/water: Depending on time of day and day of the week (No one wants to be hungry

> after a long work day).

Music will be playing prior to the start of the focus group to help make people feel comfortable.

Location: Focus groups will be held in a public setting with a private meeting room (such as a

> private meeting room at a local restaurant). The specific location will be determined

> based on where participants live.

Script

My name is Nazia, and I will be facilitating this focus group. Before we begin, I am going to

have you read the Informed Consent Form. [hand out the Informed Consent Form]. *Once you*

have read the form all the way through, please sign it if you consent to participate in this study.

You are not obligated to participate. If you would like to withdraw your participation at this

time, you may do so without any penalty. [pause, while everyone reads the consent form and

either signs it and hands it back to you, or lets you know they would like to withdraw from the

study.]

Thank you. All participants here are part of a research study. Please leave what is said in this

space here to protect the identity and individual stories of all participants. It is very important to

us that we keep this space safe in order to learn more about factors that may impact the retention of teachers of color as well as their employment environments.

In my role as a facilitator, I will ask questions, record responses, ensure that everyone gets a turn to share and participate, and ask clarifying questions.

Group norms

Honor confidentiality

Participating in focus groups and sharing may be a very intimate task for some of us. Please respect each-others' privacy; do not share people's stories outside of this group.

Take Turns

Please take turns while participating. I will start us off with a question, and you will all take turns responding until everyone gets a chance. Please also feel free to connect with others' experience by asking clarifying questions.

Information for the interviewees

You were selected for participating in this focus group because your responses to the initial survey indicated that your racial identification has an influence on your experiences as a teacher. In that survey you also indicated a willingness to participate in a group interview. The following questions are intentionally designed to gather more in-depth information about your experience as a teacher.

Focus group questions:

[After every participant has responded to each question, I will ask if anyone has anything else to add, and will wait for a while to be sure that participants have time to respond if they would like to add to what they shared previously.]

1. Please introduce yourselves to the group.

2. Think about your first year of teaching. What were some highs and lows of that year? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

3. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you immense satisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

4. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you dissatisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

5. In what ways/to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

Closing

I would like to thank you all again for participating in this focus group. I have learned a lot and appreciate the time you've taken to share your stories.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Logistics

Room set up

Depends on the location participant selects

Materials

Video recorder, a copy of the questions, notepads/writing tools for taking notes/asking

questions/clarifications.

Location. Interview will be held in a public setting with a private meeting room (such as a

private meeting room at a local restaurant). The specific location will be determined based on

participant input and accessibility.

Script

Introductions

Thank you for your participation. Before we begin, I am going to have you read the Informed

Consent Form. [hand out the Informed Consent Form]. *Once you have read the form all the*

way through, please sign it if you consent to participate in this study. You are not obligated to

participate. If you would like to withdraw your participation at this time, you may do so without

any penalty. [pause, while the participant reads the consent form and either signs it and hands it

back to you, or lets you know they would like to withdraw from the study.]

You were selected for participating in this interview because your responses to the initial survey

indicated that your racial identification has an influence on your experiences as a teacher.

Additionally, you indicated an interest in participating in an individual, rather than group, interview.

The following questions are intentionally designed to gather more in-depth information about your experience as a teacher. You are a part of a research study that explores factors that may impact the retention of teachers of color as well as their employment environments. Thank you for your participation. As the facilitator, I will be asking you some pre-drafted questions; depending upon your response, I might ask you clarifying questions as well.

Interview questions

1. Please tell me your name and a little bit about your teaching experience.

2. Think about your first year of teaching. What were some highs and lows of that year? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

3. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you immense satisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

4. What are some aspects of your job that have brought you dissatisfaction? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

5. In what ways/to what degree does your racial identity influence your experiences as a teacher? Provide examples to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

Probing questions

1. You said …Tell me more about that…

2. How did you feel when…

3. Umm Hmm.

4. Nodding/ Listening.

5. Summarizing

6. Asking clarifying questions.

Closing

I would like to thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. I have

learned a lot and appreciate the time you've taken to share your stories.

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