Strategies Used By Historically Black Colleges and Universities to Recruit Minority

Teacher Education Candidates

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Abstract

Despite the growing evidence of the benefits of having a teacher of the same race and ethnicity as the student, the educator workforce remains overwhelmingly White, while the K-12 student population is becoming more diverse (Egalite & Kisada, 2018; Gershenson et al., 2016; National Center on Education Statistics, 2019). Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have demonstrated a successful track record of preparing Black teachers. Using a quantitative research methodology, this investigation sought to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment practices that HBCUs implement to attract teacher candidates. The analyses revealed that HBCUs implement practices that are culturally relevant and aimed at reducing barriers that many Black and minority teacher candidates face, such as college affordability and flexible options to licensure and program completion. The difference between the means of the practices was small, and the independent samples *t*-test yielded results that were not statistically significant. Implications for future research, policy and practice to enhance teacher diversity are discussed.

Keywords: teacher recruitment, teacher retention, minority teachers, teacher diversity, Historically Black Colleges and Universities

By 2027, White students are projected to account for 45 percent of students enrolled in public schools, making the nation's schools "majority minority" (National Center on Education Statistics, 2019). While the K-12 student population is becoming increasingly diverse, the teacher workforce remains overwhelmingly homogenous, comprised of majority White teachers. In fall 2015, 80 percent of teachers were White, compared to 49 percent of students (de Brey et al., 2019; NCES, 2019). Although nearly half of all students in public schools are Black and Latinx, teachers of these racial backgrounds represent 16 percent of the entire educator workforce, with Black teachers representing just 7 percent (de Brey et al., 2019). Even more

alarming is the low representation of Black male teachers in the educator workforce at just 2 percent nationally (de Brey et al., 2019). Given the vast disproportionality of Black students in special education identification and discipline (Skiba & Losen, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2014), diversifying the educator workforce is imperative for Black students' academic success. From the 2003-2004 academic year to 2015-2016, most teachers of other races experienced an increase in hiring, whereas Black teachers experienced a decrease from 8 percent to 7 percent nationally (de Brey et al., 2019). As a result of the widening gap between minority teachers and their counterparts, and more specifically Black teachers and students, more arguments have surfaced to diversify the teaching workforce (Achinstein et al., 2010; Jackson & Kohli, 2016; Villegas & Irvine, 2010; Villegas et al., 2012).

Research suggests that students of color benefit academically from being taught by a teacher of the same race or ethnicity (Egalite et al., 2015; Gershenson et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). Though not an exclusive focus on the K-12 student experience with having a teacher of color, researchers at the Learning Policy Institute, in a report regarding diversifying the teacher workforce, provided a summary of some of the literature about this topic and noted the positive benefits of teachers of color on K-12 students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Some conclusions drawn from the summary report that teachers of color positively impact the educational experiences of students of color, including (a) boosting academic performances, (b) improving test performance, and (c) improving positive social and emotional outcomes, and (d) positively impacting these same outcomes (e.g., academic, social) for White students (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Broadly categorized, these conclusions help to ground the significance of elevating research about recruiting and retaining teachers of color.

Challenges with Recruiting and Retaining Teachers from Underrepresented Groups

The lack of diversity in the educator workforce stems from a myriad of factors including unequal access, racism, and the ineffective strategies to recruit and retain pre-service teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Dorman, 1990; Frank, 2003; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Suzuki & Valencia, 1997). Epstein (2005) posits that the causes of the whitening of the U.S. teaching force is rooted in systemic racism, both institutional and ideological, which infiltrates the selection process of teacher preparation programs. Pre-service minority teachers also face challenges nationally with standardized testing requirements which have been found to be racially, culturally and linguistically biased (Suzuki & Valencia, 1997).

Moreover, minority pre-service teachers have experienced feelings of isolation and lack of belonging at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Frank (2003) studied the voices of African American education majors enrolled in a teacher education program at a predominantly white university to understand how their experiences might affect their perceptions of teaching and behaviors as future teachers. Frank (2003) asserts that African American pre-service teachers experience feelings of fear, anger and frustration at their PWI because of challenges with transitioning from an environment in high school that had been predominantly Black to a majority White setting. These pre-service teachers felt that they were expected to represent the entire Black race and that their success made them exceptions to the stereotypical views that Whites held of Blacks. They also expressed incidents of racism and the negative assumptions held by their White peers, affecting how they functioned at their institutions. Frank (2003) emphasizes the importance of PWIs to increase the number of minority pre-service teachers, and implement programs and supports to assist minority students as they transition from a mostly minority setting in high school to a majority white environment in college (Frank, 2003).

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of universities to develop programs and strategies to both recruit and retain minority pre-service teachers to better serve the growing diverse population of students.

Identifying Recruitment and Retention Strategies

The U.S. ranking on the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for reading and math has remained almost stagnant over the past decade and the same for low-performing students as it was 30 years ago, creating mounting pressures to produce students who can thrive in a global society (Walker, 2019). Therefore, teacher preparation programs must be innovative in their approaches to recruit and retain minority teachers. Since the adoption of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards which require recruitment of quality and diverse teacher candidates (CAEP, Standard 3), there is growing pressure for institutions of higher education (IHEs) to diversify their teacher preparation programs to reflect the needs of the field and local communities. CAEP defines diverse candidates as individuals who "reflect the diversity of America's P-12 students" and candidates who can fill areas of critical shortages, including special education, STEM and English as a Second Language (ESL) (CAEP, Standard 3.1). Despite the focus on recruiting diverse teacher candidates under the CAEP accreditation standards, it's well known that challenges still exist to meet this mandate (CAEP, Standard 3.1). Ladson-Billings (2000) acknowledges the bias selectivity towards pre-service teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, with most IHEs focusing solely on high academic merit, as opposed to a comprehensive profile of the candidate including their commitment to teaching and social justice.

Several researchers have identified strategies for recruiting minority pre-service teachers. Carrero and Lusk (2014) propose that IHEs use word of mouth through college faculty and other

professionals to reach prospective minority teacher candidates, and use culturally diverse students as recruiters on college campuses, as well as media campaigns directed at culturally diverse populations in and out of college. Tyler and colleagues (2004) suggested that universities publish culturally diverse students' success stories to attract future pre-service teachers, advertise to culturally diverse organizations on college campuses, and use professional publications and mediums for recruitment. The authors also recommended that colleges and universities offer college credits for culturally diverse high school students, provide opportunities for these students to attend college events or use college resources, and create linkages between 2-year colleges and 4-year institutions. Once minority students are recruited into teacher preparation programs, necessary steps must be taken to engage and retain students. Tyler et al. (2004) assert that an important strategy to promote engagement is to present curricula that focus on culturally relevant pedagogy, so that students feel that their experiences and cultures are represented in teaching and learning. To address retention of culturally diverse pre-service teachers, colleges should offer academic support and funding for minority students in teacher preparation programs (Tyler et al., 2004). Culturally diverse college students are disproportionately underrepresented on college campuses, often leading to feelings of isolation, therefore colleges should offer emotional support and mentorship to minority pre-service teachers through culturally diverse faculty and mentors (Tyler et al., 2004). Although several studies have reported on recruitment and retention strategies, IHEs have typically relied on theorizing and less on research strategies that consider individuals and institutions that utilize these strategies. This gap between research and practice, and lack of awareness of strategies to recruit minority teacher candidates suggest that more investigations are needed to understand the strategies used to recruit minority teacher candidates and whether they are useful.

Recruitment Strategies at HBCUs

      Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have prepared African American educators and leaders who have been influential in challenging injustice and inequality to achieve greater access and opportunities for minorities (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). There are 117 HBCUs, ranging from competitive premier research institutions offering undergraduate and graduate programs, to two-year colleges with non-competitive open admission (Brooks et al., 2012). Given their rich history, HBCUs play an important role in the nation's efforts to diversify the educator workforce. In many urban and rural communities, HBCUs produce high numbers of teachers who work in the local school divisions (Fenwick, 2016). Although they make up only 3% of the nation's colleges and universities, HBCUs prepare nearly 50% of the nation's African American teachers (Fenwick, 2016).

      HBCUs also enroll a small proportion of individuals who are preparing to be teachers, yet 16% of all African American teacher candidates attend HBCUs (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). HBCUs are essential to creating and advancing educational opportunities for minority, first generation, low-income, and underrepresented students who want to teach. Other non-minority serving institutions can draw from the effective practices of HBCUs to attract and maintain pre-service minority teachers in their programs. It is important to analyze the strategies HBCUs are currently employing and examine their effectiveness. Therefore, our objective was to explore the recruitment strategies used by HBCUs in order to understand the practices that lead to effective recruitment of African American teacher candidates at these institutions. Based on the researchers' review of the literature, no prior descriptive study has been conducted on this topic.

What We Know About Early Recruitment of Prospective Minority Teachers in High

School

Ginsberg et al. (2017) recommend that minority serving institutions (MSIs) take proactive measures to recruit minority students into the teaching profession when they are still in high school. MSIs which include HBCUs, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) have a holistic approach when it comes to selection of pre-service teacher candidates, including reaching out to students in high school to introduce them to the teaching profession, and identify their commitment and potential to teach. Cheyney University of Pennsylvania employs early recruitment by hosting an annual teacher conference for minority high school students who have an interest in teaching to identify and engage students before they enter post-secondary education (Ginsberg et al., 2017).

In addition to partnering with the local school division to provide field experiences in urban settings to their teacher candidates, several HBCUs have applied a unique model that utilizes the expertise of the university to establish public schools on their campuses (Ginsberg et al., 2017). Howard University, a premier research university in Washington, D.C., and second ranked HBCU by U.S. News and Report, operates the Howard University School for Mathematics and Science $(MS)^2$, the only public charter school on an HBCU campus. $(MS)^2$ prepares middle school students to enter careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) through their Math and Science-focused curricula, with the goal of diversifying the pipeline of minorities in the STEM field. $(MS)^2$ partners with the university to collaborate with faculty to develop and embed research-based programs, recruit minority teachers from the university, support instructional practices of teaching staff through professional development, and utilize facilities and resources of the university to offer a rigorous learning experience to its students. By establishing a middle school on its campus, Howard University is

able to attract minority pre-service teachers with interest in gaining field experience in an urban school setting, while receiving direct support from the university to cultivate their development.

Another innovative approach by HBCUs to diversify the educator workforce is evident in North Carolina A&T State University's *2+2 Transfer Program* that creates a pipeline for prospective minority pre-service teachers to transfer seamlessly from two-year community colleges to a four-year institution. Students who have earned their Associate degree at a community college can enroll at North Carolina A&T State University to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (Ginsberg et al., 2017).

Coppin State University also operates two public schools on its campus, the Rosemont Elementary/Middle School and Coppin Academy High School. Both schools were established through the Coppin Urban Education Corridor, an initiative that launched in 2003 in effort to enhance the achievement pipeline for K-12 students in Baltimore, Maryland by providing a quality education and increasing the number of students who are college and career-ready. More than 30% of teaching staff at the campus-based schools are Coppin State University graduates (Ginsberg et al., 2017). The partnership between Coppin State University and Baltimore City Public Schools to establish public schools on the HBCU campus has also produced positive outcomes for K-12 students. In the 2013-14 school year, Coppin Academy High School had 87% graduation rate and by 2017-18 had reached a 91% timely graduation rate. On key measures of school climate, students at the high school reported feeling safe attending school on an HBCU campus (77%) and felt a strong school connectedness and belonging (76%) (Coppin Academy High School Report Card, 2015; Maryland Department of Education School Report Card, 2017-18).

Given the strength of these initiatives at HBCUs to recruit teachers of color and the need

to diversify the teacher workforce nationwide, this study evaluated the recruitment strategies and practices used by HBCUs. As noted above, the unique ability of HBCUs to impact the diversity of the teacher workforce, despite the relatively low number of institutions is impressive, and other institutions, including PWIs must understand what recruitment strategies are applied at HBCUs that yield positive outcomes, and how these strategies can be replicated at non-HBCUs if diversifying the teacher workforce is going to be taken seriously by all stakeholders. Therefore, this study sought to identify the most salient recruitment strategies used by HBCUs, and specifically asked:

1. What recruitment strategies are being employed at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to recruit minority teacher candidates?

2. What strategies do HBCUs identify as effective for recruiting minority teacher candidates?

Methods

Survey Development

To answer the research questions, a 24-question survey was designed to gather data for analysis. The survey questions were developed over the course of several weeks of discussion between team members. Demographic data (questions 1-5) were developed and modified from the researchers' previous studies (Scott & Alexander, 2017). The remaining items on the survey were based on previous research regarding recruitment practices from universities, colleges, community colleges, and most specifically, HBCUs (Carrero & Lusk, 2014; Hill-Brisbane & Mosby, 2006; Kurtts et al., 2007; Rogers-Ard, 2015; Sawchuk, 2015; Smiles, 2002; Tyler et al., 2004; USDOE, 2016). It was determined that Google Forms (Alphabet Incorporated, 2014) would be the most reliable, secure form of conveyance based on the senior researchers'

experience with the platform and the university's partnership with Google technologies, ensuring data security (VCU, 2018).

The survey included four categories: (a) demographics, recruitment practices/strategies, (b) teacher preparation programs, and (c) incentive programs. The demographics included basic information about the participant and their school such as the name of the college/university, the participant's primary role in the department, the state or territory where the school is located, the number of students enrolled in the teacher preparation program, and the areas that students can attain licensure (e.g., elementary education, special education, secondary education, and post-secondary education).

The next section, recruitment practices/strategies, was developed based on prior research regarding recruitment practices (Elliot, 2001; Collins, 2004; Hill-Brisbane & Mosby, 2006; Sawchuk, 2015). The questions not only asked participants to identify practices their school employs from a list, but their perceptions of the frequency of how often these strategies accrued interest from students. This included items such as the use of word of mouth, advertising strategies, and in-house scholarships or grants (among others). The frequency was determined via a six-point Likert type scale, from no interest to the most interest, with a not applicable option. A list of application pre-requisites was developed based on prior research to college applications. These included items like applicant ACT/SAT scores, GPA, personal essays, and resumes, some or all of which are used by colleges during the application process to determine which candidates will be enrolled in their programs (Dale & Krueger, 2002; Orepoulos, 2016). Questions regarding partnerships to local school districts and the type of recruitment targets were also asked.

In the third section of the survey, the researchers developed a series of questions specific

to teacher preparation programs within HBCUs, our focus of interest. This included questions regarding the geographic location that students were being prepared to teach in (i.e., urban, rural, or suburban) and the tracks that the education program offers. These are focused on the environments that students are being prepared to teach in, and are separate from the demographics of the colleges/universities themselves. Participants were asked to select all that applied to both questions. Finally, a series of yes/no questions were developed based on whether or not the colleges/universities provided common forms of student incentives (such as publishing and distributing student-authored papers, academic and emotional supports, and specialized financial rewards) (Carrero & Lusk, 2014; Tyler et al., 2004). These were then followed by questions regarding how participants felt these incentives affected recruitment in their teacher preparation programs on a six-point Likert-type scale, from highly ineffective to highly effective, with an option for non-applicability. The survey was pilot-tested with doctoral students for content clarity. Feedback from the pilot suggested rephrasing within select questions and answers (such as adding a "no opinion" option to a series of questions along with a "not applicable" option). Moreover, an expert reviewer and researcher assessed the content validity of the instrument. The survey was finalized and sent to participants in the summer and fall of 2018.

Procedures

During survey development, the researchers started a search of potential HBCUs to participate in the study in the fall of 2017. It was determined that the most reliable list of HBCUs was curated by the National Center for Education Statistics (2017). This list included 102 federally recognized HBCUs from the United States and its territories. The list was pared down to determine which colleges included teacher preparation programs; 89 potential participant universities were identified. From there, the colleges were pared down further to only include

programs that were accredited or under the review of the Council for the Accreditation of

Educator Preparation (CAEP) or the former National Council of Accreditation for Teacher

Education (NCATE), leaving 72 potential universities. CAEP and NCATE (or accreditation

review) were selected as a criterion because of their focus on ensuring the quality of teacher

preparation programs in colleges and universities (CAEP, 2013). A single contact was gathered

for each of the universities, specifically targeting program coordinators or program directors.

Following Institutional Review Board approval in May of 2018, the survey was refined

based on pilot reactions, and a final 24-question version of the survey was sent via email to 72

contacts in June of 2018. Despite multiple reminders over the course of one month, only three

responses were collected during the initial data collection phase. It was determined that due to

the time of year, many of the nine-month faculty members who could have participated in the

survey were not present or checking their school emails. After deliberation among the

researchers, it was determined to try to survey participants once again in the fall of 2018 when

the majority of universities would be back in session. Additionally, the researchers expanded the

scope of the search to include program directors, coordinators, deans, department chairs, and HR

personnel specific to the department of education. This increased the number of potential

contacts to 189 at the 72 universities. On August 20th, the survey was disseminated once more,

with reminders sent every two weeks. Fifteen respondents had emails that were either bounced

back due to 404 errors or automatic responses from inactive email accounts, reducing the

potential participant pool to 174. The survey was closed on September 17th, with the final sample

consisting of 18 total participants from 17 universities, a 23.6% response rate from the total

number of HBCUs. While this is not necessarily representative of this population of HBCUs as a

whole, it is also typical of online-only, web-based surveys to feature lower response rates

compared to other survey methods (Manfreda et al., 2008). Additionally, there is an argument that finds low-response surveys (25% and lower) are as accurate as high-response surveys (60% and higher) when assessing the accuracy of measurements (Holbrook et al., 2005; Keeter et al., 2006; Visser et al., 1996). With these responses, the researchers confidently proceeded to analyze the data.

Results

This study examined two research questions about the recruitment strategies that are implemented at HBCUs to attract students into their teacher preparation programs. The first research question sought to identify the recruitment strategies that are implemented at HBCUs. Table 1 describes the frequency of strategies that were reportedly implemented by the participants. Overall, HBCUs reported implementing the following strategies *more frequently* to recruit students into their teacher preparation programs: (1) Word of mouth through faculty, students and other professionals; (2) Financial aid awards; (3) In-house scholarships and grants; and (3) Recruiting from local communities.

Table 1

Recruitment Strategies Implemented at HBCUs

Recruitment Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Word of mouth, current students and other professionals	18	100
Publishing culturally diverse students' success stories	8	44.4
Creating partnerships with 2-year colleges	8	44.4
Financial aid awards	13	72.2
Flexible options to licensure and degree completion	9	50

Using culturally diverse students' as recruiters	8	44.4
Advertising through culturally diverse student organizations	7	38.8
In-house scholarships and grants	10	55.5
Using professional publications and mediums for recruitment	9	50
Mentor/advisor with similar racially diverse background	9	50
Recruit from local communities	12	66.6
MOU with another institution to complete teacher preparation program *	1	5.5
Offering college credits to minority students to create an early pipeline*	3	11.1
Recruit from targeted regions within the state*	1	5.5
Recruit nationally*	1	5.5

Note. These strategies with asterisks were not included as options to select in the survey; participants listed them in the "Other" field.

The second research question of the study investigated the effectiveness of these strategies to recruit students into the institutions' teacher preparation programs (TPP). To answer this question, we examined Descriptive statistics using SPSS (see Table 2). The mean scores suggest that the top strategies that yielded the *most applications* or *interest*, in other words being more effective, were: (1) Word of mouth through college faculty, current students and other professionals; (2) Financial aid awards; (3) Recruiting from local communities and (4) Flexible options towards licensure and degree completion.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Recruitment Practices that have yielded the Most Interest

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Word of mouth through college faculty, current students and other professionals	3.44	1.617
Publishing culturally diverse students' success stories	2.17	1.917
Offering college credits to minority high school students	1.28	2.024
Advertising through culturally diverse student organizations involved in the community	1.28	1.638
Financial aid awards	3.00	2.249
In-house scholarships/grants	2.28	2.137
Flexible options for licensure/degree completion (e.g., teacher residency, online programs)	2.39	1.944
Mentor/advisor with similar racially diverse background	1.72	2.052
Recruit from local communities	2.39	2.173
Creating partnerships between 2-year colleges and your institution	1.78	1.987
Using professional publications and mediums for recruitment	1.39	1.819
Using culturally diverse students as recruiters	2.11	2.220

To determine whether there is a statistical difference between the means of the recruitment strategies that yielded *most interest* or *applications*, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted. The difference between the means of the practices was small, and the independent samples *t*-test yielded results that were not statistically significant. Since the result

was not significant, Table 3 below describes the independent sample t-test when equal variances are assumed.

Table 3

Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Recruitment Practices on Level of Interest or

Applications

Recruitment Practices	N	M	SD	t	Df	P
Word of mouth	18	3.44	1.61	.658	12	.628
Financial Aid Awards	13	3.00	2.24	-.071	12	.220
Recruiting from local communities	12	2.39	2.17	.-.690	12	.450
Flexible options to licensure/degree completion	9	2.39	1.94	-1.15	12	.267

Discussion

While States struggle to address the achievement disparities of students from racial/ethnic groups and the growing teacher shortage, an immediate and intentional focus must be made to effectively recruit minority teacher candidates into teacher preparation programs. This study sought to examine the strategies that are carried out by HBCUs, who have historically been at the forefront of producing more Black teachers in our nation. Our results suggest that HBCUs use recruitment strategies that are reflective of the values and beliefs of the Black community. In this study, HBCUs expressed using "word of mouth through college faculty, current students and other professionals" most often to recruit teacher candidates and that this strategy has yielded *high interest* and applications from prospective students. Word of mouth is embedded in the

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historical and sociocultural context of African Americans. Hamlet (2011) describes the African

American oral tradition referring to the stories, old sayings, songs, proverbs and other cultural

artifacts that had not been written down or recorded, but have been passed down from generation

to generation through word of mouth. As Hamlet describes, this oral tradition predates slavery

and has served as a conduit for cultural expression and survival, and establishes trust between

Blacks and systems and institutions. For example, in the African and African American

community, then and now, families rely on word of mouth of trusted people within their families

or network when it comes to decision-making on many things including the effectiveness of a

health remedy or the selection of a school or place of worship. This value of having a trusted

community is also consistent with HBCUs focus on recruiting from local communities, which

was identified as one of the strategies that yielded *high interest* and applications from

prospective students.

Financial aid awards and flexible options to licensure were also identified as two of the

top four strategies that were used to recruit minority teacher candidates. These results are

consistent with the research literature, which indicates that minority teacher candidates

experience financial barriers and biases during the process to becoming licensed (Suzuki &

Valencia, 1997; Tyler, 2011). Minority teacher candidates are more likely to not pursue their

licensure due to its high cost, as in the case of California where the California Subject

Examination for Teachers (CSET) in English, one of several assessments required for an English

endorsement, is twice the cost of a Praxis subject test in English Language Arts and higher than

the average cost for teacher certification nationally. In Virginia, the initial application fee for

teacher licensure for in-state candidates is $100 with an additional $50 to add an endorsement. In

addition to the application fees, the licensure requirements can cost up to $400 and includes the

Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) which costs $130 ($50 non-refundable fee and $80 for two subtests), the Praxis Subject Assessment ($120 - $146) and the Praxis Series Reading for Virginia Educators ($130) for individuals seeking elementary or special education licenses (Educational Testing Service, 2020; Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment, 2020). Since the requirements for teaching certification and licensure vary by state, this poses significant challenges for teacher candidates who may not have the financial resources to afford the various assessments and steps in the licensure process, therefore statewide efforts should offer financial support based on need for teacher candidates to afford the costs of obtaining their licensure. Minority teacher candidates also experience testing bias with required assessments. In 2011, a report by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), the entity that produces the widely used Praxis exams for teacher licensure, found that candidates of color who took the Praxis 1 basic test were more likely to fail the exam. Specifically, Black test-takers were nearly 40 percent less likely to pass than White test-takers, and Latinx candidates were about 20 percent less likely to pass. There were similar disparities for the Praxis II subject exams and disparities between White and Asian-Americans, and White and Native American test-takers.

Implications for Future Research, Policy and Practice

Based on interpretation of the results, there are several recommendations to inform the future of minority teacher preparation. First, future research should investigate the recruitment strategies implemented at PWIs, to examine the differences in strategies implemented at HBCUs and at PWIs. This research must also seek to explore the selection processes of teacher preparation programs at PWIs, and whether there are inherent biases towards candidates of color. Secondly, an inquiry on teacher shortage and the teaching endorsement areas of minority teachers who are obtaining their teaching licensure would inform future strategies to recruit and

prepare more diverse teacher candidates. Every state has identified critical shortage teaching

endorsement areas. To establish the importance of how HBCUs and all higher education

institutions can help to address the national education policy issue of teacher shortage, additional

research should examine the teaching endorsement that minority teachers are pursuing and

whether they are highly sought after to fill the consistently high vacancies in urban and rural

school divisions where the student needs are high and the shortage is widespread.

Lastly, federal and state education agencies must seek to establish policies and expand

programs that support the preparation of minority teachers. At the state-level, policies should be

established between higher education institutions and K-12 systems to prepare a teacher

workforce that represents the diversity and needs of the student population and community. Such

policies should consider scholarships based on need for teacher candidates who may not have the

financial resources to obtain their licensure. At the federal level, we recommend increased

funding for TEACH grants to recruit and prepare minority teachers, with a focus on awarding

grants to institutions who have historically and successfully produced minority teachers for the

workforce.

Limitations of Study

With any quantitative inquiry, there are limitations that impact the interpretation of the

results and the generalizability of the findings. For this study, there were limitations related to

the methodology and the research process. First, the response rate of 23.6% makes it difficult to

establish significant relationships from the data and generalize the findings to all HBCUs.

Majority of the HBCUs that participated in the study were geographically located in the

southeastern United States. There were two institutions from the Washington D.C. Metropolitan

Area. Another limitation is the self-reported data that cannot be completely verified and may contain sources of bias, whether intentional or unintentional.

Conclusion

Minority teachers are underrepresented in the educator workforce when compared to the general student population, which is becoming increasingly diverse, and predicted to be majority "minority" by 2027 (NCES & U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Research suggests that minority teachers produce stronger academic outcomes for minority students and have higher expectations of these students (Gershenson, et al., 2016). Therefore, these teachers are essential to closing the longstanding achievement gap between students of racial/ethnic groups and their counterparts, particularly the disparity between Black and White students. The 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the Nation's Report Card, revealed that there have been few changes in the score gaps between minority students and White students since the test was last administered in 2015, and in some instances inadequate progress in the last 25 years. The score gap between White and Black students in reading at grade 4 went from 32 points in 1990, with White students scoring higher than Black students to 25 points in 2017 (NAEP, 2017).

With previous research confirming that same-race teachers can have a greater impact on the academic success of minority students, it's critical that IHEs embed innovative approaches to attract minority students into their teacher preparation programs. This investigation confirms that there are effective ways of addressing the national epidemic of teacher shortage and teacher diversity. When it comes to recruiting Black teachers, the institutional knowledge and expertise of HBCUs must be sought after to identify and implement practices that represent the beliefs and values of the Black community, while attracting Black teacher candidates into teacher

preparation programs. Here are specific ways of how colleges and universities can implement the strategies identified in this study.

Expand Grant Support and Guarantee Job Placement

Teacher candidates and particularly candidates of color need access to more financial resources and guaranteed job placement upon degree completion. From the 2009-2010 academic year to 2015-2016, salaries for teachers in the U.S. increased modestly from $55,202 to $58,064, while the student loan debt increased by 6 percent in just one year from 2015 to 2016 (NCES, 2016; Cheng & Gonzalez, 2018). Students often consider many factors when choosing to enroll in college, one of the key factors being the amount of debt they will accrue and the prospect of securing a competitive paying job to pay off their debt. These considerations are no different for teacher candidates and particularly minority teacher candidates. Black graduates are more likely to take on student loan debt and they borrow more than other students for the same degrees because they lack the resources to afford college (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2014; Heulsman, 2015). Black and Latinx students also have a higher rate of defaulting on their student loans after graduation (Choy & Li, 2006; Dillon, 2007) and the majority of borrowers who are delinquent on their student loans reside in Black and Latinx communities (Steinbaum & Vaghul, 2016). For these reasons, IHEs should advocate for an increase to TEACH grants, the Teacher Quality Partnership grant program and other funding during the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) to enable more minority teacher candidates to enter their programs. Secondly, IHEs should have established partnerships with school divisions to guarantee job placement with competitive wages for their graduates.

Engage in Intentional and Culturally Relevant Recruitment

Colleges and schools of education must revise their approach to recruiting minority teacher candidates by using current minority students and minority faculty in its recruitment efforts and encouraging these individuals to also recruit within their network. As the findings of this study suggest, "word of mouth" has been an effective strategy to increase interest in TPPs for minority teacher candidates, thus the use of minority students and faculty in recruitment efforts and tapping within their respective networks will yield high interest. Moreover, recruitment should also occur within the community in which candidates are being prepared to teach in. If candidates are being prepared to teach in local urban schools, then recruitment efforts need to attract individuals who reside in and are from those communities.

Provide Multiple Pathways to Successful Completion

Lastly, as identified in the study's findings, flexible options to licensure and/or program completion was identified as a strategy that yielded high interest for minority teacher candidates. Therefore, TPPs must offer innovative ways of engaging students and multiple pathways for students of all backgrounds and lifestyles to be successful in their programs. These pathways may include a teacher residency model or an online program to meet the needs of students who are parents, full-time professionals and those who commute from far distances to campus.

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