

Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research

The publication of the *American Education Research Association*

Urban Learning, Teaching & Research SIG

November 2024



Retaining African American Teachers in Urban Settings: A Literature Review of Successful Strategies Utilized by Principals

Jillian Ardley

Norfolk State University

Dr. Angela White Goodloe

Ascend

ABSTRACT

School administrators contribute to the macro and micro environmental factors that challenge the sustainability of African American teachers. Retaining African American teachers is a particular challenge for schools that serve high proportions of students of color living in households with low-income. Although some research focuses on the attrition of teachers of color due to poor work environments, these conditions are most common in schools that enroll socio-economically disenfranchised students. However, literary reviews point to strategies that can work in such settings and more. Thus, this literature review examines effective strategies used by principals to sustain African American teachers in diverse schools. Critical Learning Theory framed the categories for this research. Critical Learning Theory explains the process of education and racial dignity. The longevity of African American teachers is dependent on the layers of support provided by principals. From the eleven different categories examined, the researchers of this study reflected and shared the research as a path towards sustainability for African American teachers. Overall, three categories emerged from this literature review within the 10-year span, 2011-2020: Black Teacher Retention, Mentorship, and Grow-Your-Own. Missing practices surrounding social justice such as incorporating ethnicity, culture, societal norms, and equity require further investigation as tools for principals to retain teachers of color.

Keywords: educators of color, retention of educators of color, strategies to retain educators of color, mentorship, social justice, grow-your-own, principal leadership

Introduction

African American teachers are particularly important to the school culture for diverse learners. As Villegas and Irvine (2010) suggest in their argument for a diverse teacher workforce, “seeing people of color in professional roles communicates to White students that adults of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds are successful and contributing members of society” (p. 175). Relative to the point, principals who successfully retain African American teachers reviewed and implemented strategies used by other successful educational leaders (Bednar & Gicheva, 2019). Therefore, this literature review seeks to add to this conversation of promulgating and categorizing principals’ best practices for retaining African American teachers in today’s classrooms. Principals who integrate these strategies within their leadership plan of action understand that they play a significant role in teacher retention (Thompson et al., 2023). Understandably, knowing and examining the role of principals in sustaining African American teachers is important because if principals are perceived as “too busy” to interact, then teachers will not feel they are a priority or important to their leadership (Cross, 2011).

Dismal statistics and research on the decrease of African American teachers is not new within the body of educational research. The identification of successful strategies and practices implemented by principals to retain African American teachers continues to pose questions. During the 2015-2016 school year, the United States Census Bureau surveyed teachers using the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) and found that European American teachers account for 81% of teachers in elementary and secondary schools, whereas, African American teachers represent only 19.9% (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015). Specifically, K-12 teachers in the US were only 6.7% African American (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015). In the subsequent school year of 2017-2018, there were 78% European American principals and 11% African American principals (NCES, 2017). According to the NCES, over the decade 2011-2020, African American teachers represented less than seven percent of educators in American public schools. Research and documentation denote the decline of employed African American teachers and principals in American schools (Randolph & Robinson, 2019). Furthermore, research reveals a plethora of reasons Black males and females leave the profession in present-day and historical literature (Goldstein, 2015; Thompson et al., 2023; US Department of Health,

Education, and Welfare, 1972). However, among teachers who are choosing to stay in urban environments within the US, what are those identifiable strategies in which contemporary principals use to support the retention of teachers of color?

Achinstein, Ogawa, and Sexton (2010) conducted a literature review of 70 scholarly articles related to the retention of teachers of color. They found that teachers of color are placed in hard-to-staff urban schools with limited access to supportive administrators and limited professional development opportunities. Consequently, teachers of color are more likely to leave the profession. These circumstances change when more time is spent on the sustainability of teachers of color with impactful outcomes for all ethnic groups, cultures, and classes of people, particularly when the school climate is associated with a supportive environment (Hopper et al., 2021). This research endeavor posed the examination of peer-reviewed articles that address the following questions.

1. What theoretical foundation underpins the investigation for best practices utilized by principals to retain African American teachers?
2. Which categories have the most representation based on topics derived from Critical Learning Theory and best practices for the retention of African American teachers?
3. What categories have the least representation based on topics gleaned from Critical Learning Theory and best practices for the retention of African American teachers?

With disproportionately high attrition rates for African American teachers, there is much to learn from successful principals that can inform how educational leaders support African American teachers in urban settings and beyond.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Learning Theory

Following the 1954 *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* decision, schools that served African American students shut down, and African American educators found themselves disproportionately impacted with school closings. Consequently, there was a rapid decline in the number of African American principals and teachers, leading to a shortage of representation within the education system that continues today. Addressing this issue requires

a collective commitment from all stakeholders, particularly leaders, to prioritize racial equity, diversity, and teacher development.

Understanding how African American teachers navigate their workplace experiences with broader societal constructs is crucial to develop measures for retention. This research adopts Critical Learning Theory to explore this dynamic. This theory posits that society significantly influences what individuals learn, how they behave, and their capacity for activism. Scholars like Paulo Freire emphasized the potential for transformative change, advocating for a “pedagogy of the oppressed” that empowers individuals to challenge oppressive systems actively (Freire, 1971).

Freire’s emphasis on praxis underscores the importance of translating theory into action. For African American teachers, persisting within educational environments and advocating for societal change are essential components of this transformative process. Through the lens of Critical Learning Theory, educators engage in a critical examination of racial awareness and social justice, fostering a culture of schooling that empowers marginalized students. Principals must undergo self-reflection to understand how socio-cultural and political events have shaped their perspectives (Gooden & O’Doherty, 2015), thus preparing them to lead effectively in pursuit of equity and justice within education.

The Black Lives Matter movement exemplifies a call for justice and social change with educational reform as an integral component. Educational leaders must recognize their role as activists in effecting systemic transformation and advocates for emerging leaders who seek positive change. Parker, Horowitz, and Anderson (2020) agree that all parties have a part to play if social change is to occur within society. Critical Learning Theory underscores the importance of collective action from all segments of society to drive meaningful social change.

Confronting issues within the educational system necessitates responsible leadership that is responsive to the diverse needs of all stakeholders. The challenge is to prepare educational leaders committed to social justice and equity in a manner that does not revert to old practices (Byrne-Jiménez et al., 2016). Therefore, facilitating change in a manner that acknowledges the indelible fight for social justice and equity is important. Principals must acknowledge the impact of socio-cultural and economic factors on disenfranchised learners

(Giroux, 2019) while actively challenging racial stratification and unfair power dynamics. This requires continual self-reflection and a commitment to challenging prejudicial norms and practices.

Method

The literature review applied within the methodology of Hallinger (2014) encourages researchers to share key points and rationale of their research strategies. This methodology exposed practices of school principals to retain teachers of color, which included: a) guiding questions, b) the theoretical framework, c) the types of sources used for the study, d) the nature of data evaluation and analysis, to lead to the e) major results of the literature review. With this understanding in place, the researchers utilized scholarly research on the importance of teachers of color, specifically African American teachers, and key terms related to Critical Learning Theory to unearth connections between best practices implemented or suggested by school leaders to retain these teachers within their school populations. Thus, in the following sections, the researchers discussed a focus on the types of sources utilized for the study and the nature of data evaluation.

Data Collection

The researchers constructed an exploratory investigation of published scholarship related to the principals' best practices with African American teachers to support retention by using two types of search engines: EBSCO host and Google Scholar. Each database selected contained over 1,000 journals and allowed for delineation of time restricted to the years 2011-2020 and key terms to examine peer-referred information.

Discovering articles that focused on African American teachers in relation to principals caused its own unique challenges in the review process. Key terms viewed in the database demonstrated how multiple researchers categorize African Americans through diverse group identity markers. Group identity refers to a person's sense of belonging to a particular group

and how over time social influences have changed the narrative of these markers or best practices (Postmes et al., 2005). Key terms used to investigate this endeavor are in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Historical and Current Key Terms Utilized to Search Best Practices

Historical and Current Key Terms Utilized to Search Best Practices	
• Teachers under Investigation	• Principals Under Investigation
• Minority Teachers (minority)	• Principals
• Black Teachers (race)	• School Administrators
• African American Teachers (culture)	• Public School Administrators
• Teachers of Color	• School Leaders
• Beginning Teachers of Color	• Educational Leadership
• Underrepresented New Teachers	• Underrepresented Principals
• Urban Teachers	• Urban Principals
• BIPOC Teachers	• BIPOC Teachers

Note: BIPOC is an abbreviation for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

Key terms selected for the topic under investigation for the retention of African American teachers by principals were added to the search engine with either “and” or the “or” Boolean subsets to narrow the research. See Table 2 for details for retention phrases or related terms.

TABLE 2
Key Terms for Teacher Retention Under Investigation

Key Terms for Teacher Retention Under Investigation			
• Employment	• Teacher Shortage	• Teacher Retention	• Teacher Persistence
• Teacher Resilience	• Black Teacher Retention	• African American Teacher Retention	• Teachers of Color Retention

Data Analysis

All terms explored also focused on key terms utilized in articles about best practices for the recruitment and retention of teachers of color such as school climate, mentoring, and growing your own (Goings et al., 2018). However, most categories came from the researchers’

work and interchanges with Dr. Jackie Jordan-Irvine, an urban education advocate, and Dr. Christine Sleeter, an education activist, during the 2019 Teachers of Color Summit sponsored by Kappa Delta Pi. This event focused on best practices to recruit and retain teachers of color that are utilized by teacher education programs and educational leaders "to prepare their graduates for the realities of diverse students, schools, and communities they will serve, particularly in urban areas, where teachers are expected to overcome the effects of poverty and discrimination without adequate resources or school-based supports" (McKeown, USTESD Network, 2013, p. 8) Subsequently, a different perspective for viewing sustainable practices for this topic may have unearthed a broader or different range of results for the time period between 2011 and 2020.

Findings

The research findings consistently highlight the significance of principals in retaining African American teachers within urban educational settings. EBSCO Host and Google Scholar searches indicate that mentorship programs, specifically designed to address the unique challenges and experiences of Black educators in urban schools, emerged as a key strategy. Additionally, Grow-Your-Own programs that cultivate local talent and foster a sense of belonging within the urban community were found to be effective in promoting teacher retention. While general retention practices remain important, the emphasis on the role of principals underscores the need for school leaders to address the specific needs and challenges faced by African American teachers in urban environments.

Other categories, including self-efficacy, professional affiliations, cultural responsiveness training, relational demography, school climate, social justice, and policies, were less frequently represented in the research. This suggests that while these factors may play a role, they are not as consistently identified as key drivers of African American teacher retention. This is evident in Tables 3-6.

EBSCO Results

The first results from the EBSCO Host research relating to Successful Strategies Used by Principals to Retain African American Teachers are shown in Table 3. The total number of results returned was 118, and of those, nine were relevant. The search term string used was:

Principals *or* School Leaders *or* Administrators *AND* teacher retention *AND* (ethnicity *or* race *or* culture *or* minority *or* minorities *or* teachers of color *or* Black teachers *or* African American teachers *or* underrepresented teachers *or* urban teachers *AND* teacher retention *or* teacher attrition *or* teacher turnover *or* teacher persistence)

TABLE 3: Results from EBSCO Host Research One

EBSCO host research one for Successful Strategies Used by Principals to Retain African American Teachers

Category	Citation of Relevant Result
Black Teacher Retention	Olsen, A. A., & Huang, F. L. (2019). Teacher job satisfaction by principal support and teacher cooperation: results from the schools and staffing survey. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i> , 27(11), 1-31.
Black Teacher Retention	Farinde-Wu, A., & Fitchett, P. G. (2018). Searching for satisfaction: Black female teachers' workplace climate and job satisfaction. <i>Urban Education</i> , 53(1), 86–112.
General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices	Goings, R. B., Walker, L. J., & Cotignola-Pickens, H. (2018). School and district leaders' role in diversifying the teacher workforce. <i>Educational Planning</i> , 25(3), 7–17.
Mentorship	Bednar, S., & Gicheva, D. (2019). Workplace support and diversity in the market for public school teachers. <i>Education Finance and Policy</i> , 14(2), 272–297.
Mentorship	Farinde, A. A., Allen, A., & Lewis, C. W. (2016). Retaining Black teachers: An examination of Black female teachers' intentions to remain in K-12 classrooms. <i>Equity & Excellence in Education</i> , 49(1), 115–127.
Mentorship	Campoli, A. K. (2017). Supportive principals and Black teacher turnover: ESSA as an opportunity to improve retention. <i>Journal of School Leadership</i> , 27(5), 675–700.
Grow-Your-Own	Coffey, H., Putman, S. M., Handler, L. K., & Leach, W. (2019). Growing them early: Recruiting and preparing future urban teachers through an early college collaboration between a college of education and an urban school district. <i>Teacher Education Quarterly</i> , 46(1), 35–54.
Self-efficacy, Self-Actualization & Mindfulness	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Professional Affiliations	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic

Cultural Responsiveness/ Awareness Training	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Relational Demography	Fairchild, S., Tobias, R., Corcoran, S., Djukic, M., Kovner, C., & Noguera, P. (2012). White and Black teachers' job satisfaction: Does relational demography matter? <i>Urban Education</i> , 47(1), 170–197.
School Climate	Bristol, T. J. (2020). A tale of two types of schools: An exploration of how school working conditions influence Black male teacher turnover. <i>Teachers College Record</i> , 122(3), 1–24.
Social Justice	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Policies	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic

The second set of results from the EBSCO Host research narrows the search for specific keywords for retention as it relates to African American Teachers as noted below. The search returned 70 results, and three were relevant. The others were duplicates from previous search engine results.

Black teacher retention *or* African American teacher retention *or* teachers of color retention *or* minority teacher retention *or* ethnic teacher retention *or* underrepresented teacher retention

TABLE 4: Results from the EBSCO Host Research Two
EBSCO host research two for Successful Strategies Used by Principals to Retain African American Teachers

Category	Citation
Black Teacher Retention	Carter Andrews, D. J., Castro, E., Cho, C. L., Petchauer, E., Richmond, G., & Floden, R. (2019). Changing the narrative on diversifying the teaching workforce: A look at historical and contemporary factors that inform recruitment and retention of teachers of color. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i> , 70(1), 6–12.
Black Teacher Retention	Sun, M. (2018). Black teachers' retention and transfer patterns in North Carolina: How do patterns vary by teacher effectiveness, subject, and school conditions? <i>AERA Open</i> , 4(3). 1-23.
Black Teacher Retention*	Olsen, A. A., & Huang, F. L. (2019). Teacher job satisfaction by principal support and teacher cooperation: Results from the schools and staffing survey. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i> , 27(11), 1-31.

General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Mentorship*	Farinde, A. A., Allen, A., & Lewis, C. W. (2016). Retaining Black teachers: An examination of black female teachers' intentions to remain in K-12 Classrooms. <i>Equity & Excellence in Education</i> , 49(1), 115–127.
Grow Your Own	Goodloe, A., Kerns, K., & Ardley, J. (2020). Building capacity in the successful preparation of teachers of color: Effective recruitment strategies. <i>Kappa Delta Pi Record</i> , 56(3), 112–115.
Self-efficacy, Self-Actualization & Mindfulness	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Professional Affiliations	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Cultural Responsiveness/Awareness Training	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Relational Demography	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
School Climate*	Bristol, T. J. (2020). A tale of two types of schools: An exploration of how school working conditions influence Black male teacher turnover. <i>Teachers College Record</i> , 122(3), 1–24.
Social Justice	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic
Policies	Zero findings in EBSCO Host Related to Topic

* Denotes results from search are duplicates from previous search engine results

Google Scholar Search Results

The third research strategy utilized Google Scholar as a means to review literature and results. Google Scholar utilizes key phrases to unearth articles pertaining to the topic. The phrases and the number of articles found, the articles gleaned from the categories related to the topic are noted in Table 5, plus the number of results. No phrase returned more than one relevant result, no mater the number of overall results.

TABLE 5: Results from Google Scholar

Google Scholar search utilizing key phrases to unearth articles focusing on successful retention practices of principals for African American teachers.

Category	Phrases	Results	Citation(s)
Black Teacher Retention	Principals train African American teachers	12	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Black Teacher Retention	School principals keep teachers of color	101	Kokka, K. (2016). Urban teacher longevity: What keeps teachers of color in one under-resourced urban school? <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i> , 59, 169-179.
Black Teacher Retention	School leaders of color	104	Castro, A., Germain, E., & Gooden, M. (2018). Increasing diversity in K-12 school leadership: Policy briefs 2018-3. <i>Quality Leadership Matters, Online Submission</i> .
General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices	Principals train African American teachers	12	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Mentorship*	School principals keep teachers of color	101	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Grow-Your Own	School leaders of color	104	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Self-efficacy, Self-Actualization, Mindfulness	Transformational leadership and Teacher diversity	123	Wilson, C.M. (2016). Enacting critical care and transformative leadership in schools highly impacted by poverty: A counter narrative, <i>International Journal of Leadership in Education</i> , 19(5), 557-577.
Professional Affiliations	Transformational leadership and Teacher diversity	123	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Cultural Responsiveness/Awareness Training	Effective school leadership and African American teachers	123	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic

Relational Demography	School leaders and new African American	123	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
School Climate	Transformational leadership and teacher diversity	123	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Social Justice	Transformational leadership and teacher diversity	123	0 findings in Google Scholar Related to Topic
Policies*	Effective school leadership and African American teachers	123	Williams, E., & Johnson, M. (2011). Politics and principals: Beginning Black teachers' perceptions of relationships with administrators in 21st-century schools. <i>Improving Schools, 14</i> (2), 187–199.
Policies*	School leaders and new African American teachers	123	Williams, E., & Johnson, M. (2011). Politics and principals: Beginning Black teachers' perceptions of relationships with administrators in 21st-century schools. <i>Improving Schools, 14</i> (2), 187–199.

* Denotes results from search are duplicates from previous search engine results

The compilation of the results for the three research tables is summarized in Table 6 and explained later in the discussion section.

TABLE 6: Compilation of Searches for Articles on Successful Practices of Principals
Compilation of Searches for Articles on Successful Practices of Principals

	EBSCO Host 1	EBSCO Host 2	Google Scholar	Total	%
Black Teacher Retention	2	2	2	6	37.5%
General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices	1	0	0	1	6.25%
Mentorship	3	*	*	3	18.75%
Grow-Your-Own	1	1	0	2	12.5%
Self-efficacy, self-actualization, and mindfulness	0	0	1	1	6.25%

Professional affiliations	0	0	0	0	0%
Cultural Responsiveness/Awareness Training	0	0	0	0	0%
Relational Demography	1	0	0	1	6.25%
School Climate	1	*	0	1	6.25%
Social Justice	0	0	0	0	0%
Policies	0	0	1	1	6.25%
Totals	9	3	4	16	100%

* Represents duplication of same articles

Discussion/Implications

Although the research on effective strategies employed by school principals to retain African American teachers is scarce, it can be inferred that the central themes presented in the literature review emphasize the significance of various categories encapsulating best practices for retaining such educators. These categories include: 1. African American teacher retention, 2. general retention strategies, 3. mentorship programs, 4. grow-your-own initiatives, 5. self-efficacy promotion, 6. fostering professional affiliation, 7. cultural responsiveness/awareness training, 8. consideration of relational demography, 9. nurturing a positive school climate, 10. promoting social justice, and 11. implementing supportive policies.

African American Teacher Retention

Articles that focused on African American teacher retention are the largest category within the findings at 37.5%. These articles typically focus on training programs. For example, Carter et. al. (2019) reminds researchers to look at the events of the past and present to develop effective training programs that respect and acknowledge the expertise of the African American teachers. Moreover, the research reiterates and supports the findings of Farinde-Wu, Allen-Handy, & Lewis (2018) who list principal training programs with the promise for recruiting African Americans back into the profession. This review, however, focuses on the desire to see

how these selected programs fare around retention. The study of training programs would determine if the training resulted in a larger increase in teacher retention.

The longevity of principals in urban settings (Kokka, 2016), or a state's journey with African American teachers are also discussed in this category. However, these studies extend the work of authors who combine African American teacher satisfaction and retention with the variable of student achievement (Kraft et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2012). Authors also reviewed working conditions, variables that attract and support a recommitment to urban communities from former residents who decided to return to their area of origin, and the perception of African American teachers on their principal's demeanor (Boyd et al., 2005; Boyd et. al., 2011). Studies in these results, such as Sun (2018), indicate stronger school leadership and higher-quality professional development can heighten the retention of effective African American teachers. However, this article does not go into detail on the types of leadership behaviors or professional development topics sufficient for retaining African American teachers. More emphasis, therefore, on studies associated with principal-teacher interactions to address principal characteristics and professional development strategies that support African American teacher retention requires the attention of educational researchers.

General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices

Only one article, representing 6.25% within the review, concentrated on common practices that support diverse teachers, was found in the review of literature. Within this article, Goings, Walker, & Cotignola-Pickens (2018) denote the term diverse as a comprehensive term for non-white, minority ethnic group people teaching in the United States. The factors influencing the recruitment and retention of a racial diversity of teachers at the pre-service and in-service levels were addressed in this article and are focused on two areas. The researchers consider the need for educational leaders to share the task of recruiting and diversifying the teacher population with strategies similar to the key terms researched utilized in the study (i.e. Grow-Your-Own, Revisioning Training, & Positive School Conditions/Climate.) This is not a surprise because their work also informed multicultural advocates such as Jordan-Irvine and Sleeter, who focus on the recruitment and retention within the frameworks of Critical Learning Theory that reflect how the oppression of others impacts systems within society. Moreover,

this article represents the best practices by principals for African American teachers because the embedded compilation of research acknowledges efforts of educational leaders towards African Americans and other ethnic groups due to racism and stereotyping from colleagues and students. To reiterate, professional development, noted under the category of Black Teacher Retention, was crucial to support general retention of African American teachers.

Principal-teacher relationships can offer a sense of connectedness and attachment which may affect employees' sense of meaningfulness to work (Rothmann & Janik, 2015). Accordingly, whether in the United States or in other parts of the globe, successful practices used for diverse people of color should be considered for African American teachers. Therefore, the work reviewed by researchers who investigated impressive retention rates of principals in urban areas seek support for teachers who are employed at a higher rate in these areas (Branch, 2013; Abitabile & Sage Colleges, 2018). Urban school leaders have tools to extrapolate strategies that can support them in their endeavor to sustain quality African American teachers when information applied enhances teacher

Mentorships

Articles on mentorship had the second highest retrieval rate in the literature review of 18.75%. Findings were characterized by gender in addition to ethnicity. The research in this area drew implications and suggestions from surveys given to African American teachers that included questions that allowed them to rank the supportiveness of their principals (i.e., Farinde et al., 2016; Farinde-Wu & Fitchett, 2018). It is interesting to note that articles discussing African American males and what principals are doing constructively to support their tenure in urban settings were not found within the ten-year span. This is disheartening because of the research on the importance of African American role models who look like the students whom they serve (Milner, 2016).

Research acknowledged that mentoring introduced, implemented, and continued by principals can deter attrition (Campoli, 2017). Mentoring includes specific formats, appropriate matching of individuals, increased time for mentoring, and better training for mentors (Frels, et. al., 2013). African American teachers need more effective mentoring opportunities-to voice their concerns and expectations (Nichols, 2019). Strategies for giving voice to what mentoring

resembles between the principal and teacher could go a long way in solving the intricacies of developing relationships that produce teachers who increase their academic and social acuity within the school settings.

Grow-Your-Own Programs

Articles which emphasized Grow-Your-Own programs were 12.5% of the total. This technique emphasizes school districts who draw potential teachers from individuals who have a proclivity for teaching and desire to stay within their area of residence. This strategy for retention encompasses stakeholders from the K-12 setting to the higher-education, creating a cycle of potential teachers who return to their home community to teach. Coffey et al. (2019), as well as Goodloe, Kerns, and Ardley (2020) reinforce the fact that school principals who have an impact on students' development can foster an aspiration in teachers of color to use their desire to give back to their community after graduation as a way of promoting activism, change, and reform within a setting that they have a familial connection. Furthermore, a Grow-Your-Own model that values social justice and uses P-12 administrators and higher education personnel to foster respect and viability of the teaching profession is a worthwhile pursuit for sustaining African Americans in former schools where they received acclimations and affirmation (Versland, 2013).

Self-Efficacy, Self-Actualization, and Mindfulness

Only one article addressed the importance of understanding the goals, expectations, and route-to-success mapped out by individuals in impoverished settings. Wilson (2016) expresses how educators who better understand the reality of poverty, racist conditions, and other oppressive contexts related to groups of students, are better prepared for marginalized youth. These teachers understand that these constructions must critically assess and address issues to support the achievement and success of learners. Though the focus of the article spoke to students' success in general, there were implications for principals working with African American teachers to retain them in a challenging setting. More research on how principals can use theories of motivation and basic mentoring to listen to an individual's aspirations are essential in this area to counter burnout of teachers who may be unsure of how to navigate their environments to plan for their future (Bridwell, 2012).

Professional Affiliations

No articles in this research addressed the importance of clubs, memberships, unions, or organizations. More time or different indicators are required to ascertain the relevance of being a part of an alliance, union, or professional teaching organization. For example, a principal can support a new teacher's sustainability through professional affiliations. It may appear as an oxymoron for a principal to support a teacher in their proclivity for joining and actively participating in a union or a teacher association. However, it can help teachers find their voice and place in the profession which is important for retention. Ingersoll et. al., (2018) reiterates this point:

What does impact their (minorities) decisions (to stay or go), our analyses show are school working conditions, in particular the degree of autonomy and discretion over issues that arise in their classrooms, and the level of collective faculty influence over schoolwide decisions that affect teachers' jobs. (p. 20).

Collective influence is easily perpetuated in teacher clubs and memberships. Association with an organization in which principals identify can either help or hinder the sustainability of a teacher of color. Thus, associations can identify and /or expose what is important and supported by principals.

Cultural Responsiveness/Awareness Training

The literature did not identify a direct correlation between culturally responsiveness in relationship to awareness training to promote retention of African American teachers by principals. Unfortunately, too many preservice and in-service teacher education programs are structured through a lens of whiteness, perpetuating an anti-Blackness platform. Porcher and Bertrand (2023), for example, state that they often are teaching white pre-service teachers about equity and social justice but were neglecting the aspect of freedom within the context of Black folk. They further explain that the Black gaze emphasizes Blackness as a way of centering the conversation and that culturally responsive training infused with self-love is an effective part of the process.

In addition, hooks (1992) argued that the Black gaze is not only a way of seeing, but also a way of changing reality. Furthermore, principals who are change agents should consider using this approach in designing culturally responsive training. The researchers of this study used this latest term “culturally responsiveness” in hopes of seeing strategies that acknowledge the role diversity training plays in sustaining or eliminating African American teachers from the classroom. Using other terms such as “culturally relevant practices” or “critical pedagogies” need consideration for future assessments of the literature to see if any findings present themselves with phrases used during this period.

Relational Demography

Only one study on relational demography was pertinent to the review. According to Fairchild et al. (2012), the construct of relational demography

conceptualizes a set of racial and gender congruency items between teachers and principals, teachers and teachers, and teachers and students. The results that one study shows cannot be discounted because it depicts some of the components of relational demography directly affecting teacher job satisfaction, over and above the effects of work-related attitudes of Black teachers” (p. 170).

In basic terms, the principal understands the life experience of the teacher due to their shared cultural history. Teachers who leave school to go to another school often try to find one with the same cultural value system and similar points of reference. Presently, studies which depict the clustering of African American teachers around other African American colleagues may not denote the familial or historical shared histories to promote a shared understanding of experiences or languages that solidify relations. Therefore, this was not found in the research.

Bartanen & Grissom (2019), for example, shared that an African American principal at a school within the demographic of their study increased the propensity for hiring African American teachers by up to 7% and there is a great likelihood for their ability to retain them. In simple terms, the principals are not only supporting their students with a diversified teacher population, but they are also giving teachers that look like themselves the opportunity to learn

from someone who has had or is experiencing similar struggles. More research on the category relational demography is needed.

School Climate

The literature review indicated that school climate, as characterized by its positive impact on principal-teacher relationships for African Americans, was 6.25%. It was alluded to in other research articles, but it was not the focus of what principals were doing to change the environment for African American teachers who needed to find their place in a collegial environment. Studies that focus on school climate or work conditions usually consist of surveys completed by diverse teachers. The majority of research addressed school climate in terms of work conditions and evaluated the teachers' perspective of principals that led to attrition and retention on the general population, with a section on people of color (i.e., Ingersoll et. al., 2019; Johnson et. al., 2012; Wang & Bird, 2011). Because this researcher chose to focus on articles that targeted important concepts for African Americans teachers specifically, these articles were not conducive to this review.

Social Justice

Often the thinking of social justice, equity, and fairness focuses on socio-economically disenfranchised students. However, in the framework of Critical Learning Theory, to develop a society that promotes equity for its members (Hopper et. al., 2021), all parties need to be recipients and instigators of its goals. Teachers are the ones who set the stage for learning and are instrumental in voicing strategies that may support democratic constructs and behaviors. Ultimately, social justice is "both a process and a goal" that seeks "full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (Bell, 1997, p. 3). The researchers saw it as a natural fit to explore how social justice leadership provided by principals supports teacher retention, which is an effective strategy that should be used by principals in urban settings and beyond (Reed & Swaminathan, 2014). Unfortunately, it wasn't until Stanley's (2021) case study that the impact of *de-escalation* in social justice efforts by the principal for African American teachers was identified as a potential factor contributing to teacher turnover.. However, no articles were forthcoming in the parameters set by the period of this search.

Policies

Articles focused on policies enacted, changed, or influenced by principals as an approach to support African American teachers was not prevalent during the timeframe of this study. Instead, principals shared grassroot approaches on what they could do directly in the research articles. A critical approach to this circumstance explained by Grooms (2020) implied that community engagement is a substantial element to change the narrative for racial inequities. However, for best practices to become a part of a systems approach, policies are needed that perpetuate and reinforce effective practices (Williams & Johnson, 2011). White et. al., (2020) explain three policy interpretations and how policies influence the retention and departure of African American teachers and principals. Lessons gleaned from critically examining policies impact those who see a need to delineate and share clear guidelines with less obstacles for other people of color who choose to stay in education. Using this type of literature as a guide to build from a foundation of studies in the years preceding 2011 are useful to reform present-day efforts to retain African American teachers at higher rates.

Conclusion

This literature review revealed that some best practices, such as Black teacher retention, mentoring, and grow-your-own were more prevalent within the research parameters. These practices vary among principals yet proved useful most often to recruit and retain teachers of color. This is an indication of the work yet to be done to discover strategies used to sustain teachers of color, specifically African American teachers. From this investigation, principal preparation programs and K-12 in-service education programs can strengthen their learning modules and induction/orientation processes by implementing effective strategies presently noted in this body of work. Researchers advocate for principals who are presently effectively retaining African American teachers should consider sharing these techniques with the present and future school leaders. Research in this area is critical and the continuum is necessary to support the retention of African American teachers.

References

- Abitabile, A. W. (2018). The leadership effect of school principals on teacher retention in urban high schools. *Dissertation Abstracts International*.
- Achinstein, B., Ogawa, R., Sexton, D., & Freitas, C. (2010). Retaining teachers of color: A pressing problem and a potential strategy for “hard-to-staff” schools. *Review of Educational Research*, 80(1), 71-107. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654309355994>
- Albert Shanker Institute. (2015, September). *The state of teacher diversity in American education*. [The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education | Shanker Institute](https://www.shankerinstitute.org/state-of-teacher-diversity-in-american-education)
- Bartanen, B. & Grissom, J. (2019). School principal race and the hiring and retention of racially diverse teachers (*EdWorkingPaper* No.19-59). <http://edworkingpapers.com/ai19-59>
- Bednar, S., & Gicheva, D. (2019). Workplace support and diversity in the market for public school teachers. *Education Finance and Policy*, 14(2), 272–297. https://doi.org/10.1162/edfp_a_00243
- Bell, L. A. (1997). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*, 3-15. Routledge.
- Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2005). The draw of home: How teachers’ preferences for proximity disadvantage urban schools. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 24(1), 113–132. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.20072>
- Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Education Research Journal*, 48(2), 303–333. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27975291>
- Branch, R. A. II. (2013). *Leadership practices of a principal in a high school with a high teacher retention rate* (Publication No. 3631) [Doctoral dissertation, West Virginia University Library] <https://doi.org/10.33915/etd.3631>

- Bridwell, S. D. (2012). School leadership: Lessons from the lived experiences of urban teachers. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*, 7(2), 52-63.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1001869>
- Bristol, T. J. (2020). A tale of two types of schools: An exploration of how school working conditions influence Black male teacher turnover. *Teachers College Record*, 122(3), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681201220031>
- Byrne-Jiménez, M., Gooden, M. A., & Tucker, P. D. (2016). Facilitating learning in leadership preparation: Limited research but promising practices. In M.D. Young & G.M. Crow (Eds.), *Handbook of research on the education of school leaders*, 187–215. Routledge.
- Campoli, A. K. (2017). Supportive principals and Black teacher turnover: ESSA as an opportunity to improve retention. *Journal of School Leadership*, 27(5), 675–700.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461702700504>
- Carter Andrews, D. J., Castro, E., Cho, C. L., Petchauer, E., Richmond, G., & Floden, R. (2019). Changing the narrative on diversifying the teaching workforce: A look at historical and contemporary factors that inform recruitment and retention of teachers of color. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(1), 6–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118812418>
- Castro, A., Germain, E., & Gooden, M. (2018). Increasing diversity in K-12 leadership: Policy briefs 2018-3. *Quality Leadership Matters*.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED580900.pdf>
- Coffey, H., Putman, S. M., Handler, L. K., & Leach, W. (2019). Growing them early: Recruiting and preparing future urban teachers through an early college collaboration between a college of education and an urban School district. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 46(1), 35–54. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26558181>
- Cross, K. (2011). *Examining the role of principals in the retention of new teachers* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Dominican University of California.

- Fairchild, S., Tobias, R., Corcoran, S., Djukic, M., Kovner, C., & Noguera, P. (2012). White and Black teachers' job satisfaction: Does relational demography matter? *Urban Education*, 47(1), 170–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085911429582>
- Farinde, A. A., Allen-Handy, A., & Lewis, C. W. (2016). Retaining Black teachers: An examination of black female teachers' intentions to remain in K-12 Classrooms. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 49(1), 115–127. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2015.1120367>
- Farinde-Wu, A., & Fitchett, P. G. (2018). Searching for satisfaction: Black female teachers' workplace climate and job satisfaction. *Urban Education*, 53(1), 86–112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916648745>
- Freire, P. (1971). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Herder & Herder.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Rowman and Littlefield.
- Frels, R.K., Reichwein, L., Zientek, L. R. & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2013). Differences of mentoring experiences across grade span among principals, mentors, and mentees. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 21(1), 28-58. <http://doi:10.1080/13611267.2013.784058>
- Giroux, H. (2019). Critical theory and educational practice. In A. Darder, R. D. Torres, & M.P. Baltodano, *The critical pedagogy reader*, (3rd ed., 31-56). Routledge Taylor & Francis.
- Goings, R. B., Walker, L. J., & Cotignola-Pickens, H. (2018). School and district leaders' role in diversifying the teacher workforce. *Educational Planning*, 25(3), 7–17. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1207943>
- Goldstein, D. (2015). *The teacher wars: A history of America's most embattled profession*. Anchor Books.
- Gooden, M. A., & O'Doherty, A. (2015). Do you see what I see? Fostering aspiring leaders' racial awareness. *Urban Education*, 50(2), 225–255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085914534273>

- Goodloe, A., Kerns, K., & Ardley, J. (2020). Building capacity in the successful preparation of teachers of color: Effective recruitment strategies. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 56(3), 112–115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2020.1770003>
- Grooms, A. A., & Shinn, D. H. (2020). Leaders of color navigating policy in diversifying schools. In S. Winton & G. Parekh (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on education policy and schools, families, and communities*. Information Age Publishing Inc.
- hooks, B. (1992). *Black looks: Race and Representation*. Boston South End Press.
- Hopper, E. B., Robinson, D., & Fitchett, P. (2022). Early career African American teachers and the impact of administrative support. *Urban Education*, 57(3), 401-431. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085920988335>
- Ingersoll, R. M. Merrill, E., Stuckey, D., & Collins, G. (2018). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force – Updated October 2018. *CPRE Research Reports*. pp. 1-28. https://repository.upenn.edu/cpre_researchreports/108
- Ingersoll, R., May, H., & Collins, G. (2019). Recruitment, employment, retention and the minority teacher shortage. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(37). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.27.3714>
- Johnson, S. M., Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2012). How context matters in high-need schools: The effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. *Teachers College Record*, 114(10), 1–39. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1001989>
- Kappa Delta Pi. (2019). *Teachers of Color Conference*. Norfolk, Virginia.
- Kokka, K. (2016). Urban teacher longevity: What keeps teachers of color in one under-resourced urban school? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 59, 169-179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.05.014>

- Kraft, M. A., Marinell, W. H., & Yee, D. (2015). School organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement: Evidence from panel data.
<http://scholar.harvard.edu/mkraft/publications/school-organizational-contexts-teacher-turnover-and-student-achievement-evidence>
- McKeown, R., with USTESD Network. (2013). Reorienting teacher education to address sustainability: The U.S. context, White Paper Series, No. 1. Indianapolis, IN: United States Teacher Education for Sustainable Development Network.
https://www.kdp.org/initiatives/pdf/USTESD_WhitePaperOct13.pdf
- McLaren, P. (1999). A pedagogy of possibility: Reflecting upon Paulo Freire's politics of education. *Educational Researcher*, 28(2), 49-54.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X028002049>
- Milner, R. H. (2016). A Black male teacher's culturally responsive practices. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 85(4), 417-432. <https://doi:10.7709/jnegroeducation.85.4.0417>
- Nichols, I. A. (2019). A phenomenological study on the mentoring experiences of teachers of color in New Orleans. *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 2627.
<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/2627>
- National Teacher and Principal Survey (2019). *National Center for Educational Statistic US Department of Education* <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/summary/2019141.asp>
- Olsen, A. A., & Huang, F. L. (2019). Teacher job satisfaction by principal support and teacher cooperation: Results from the schools and staffing survey. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(11), 1-31. <https://doi:10.14507/epaa.27.4174>
- Parker, K, Horowitz, J. M., & Anderson, M. (2020, June 12). Amid protests, majorities across racial and ethnic groups express support for the Black Lives Matter movement. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2020/06/12/amid-protests-majorities-across-racial-and-ethnic-groups-express-support-for-the-black-lives-matter-movement/>

- Porcher, K., & Bertrand, S., (2023). Black Gaze Framework (BGF): Centering and celebrating Blackness in education for liberation. *The Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 17 (Special), 1-33.
- Postmes, T., Spears, R., Lee, A. T., & Novak, R. J. (2005). Individuality and social influence in groups: Inductive and deductive routes to group identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89(5), 747–763. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.89.5.747>
- Randolph, A. W. & Robinson, D. V. (2019). De facto desegregation in the urban north: Voices of African American teachers and principals on employment, students, and community in Columbus, Ohio, 1940 to 1980. *Urban Education*, 54(10), 1403–1430. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085917697204>
- Reed, L. C., & Swaminathan, R. (2014). An urban school leader’s approach to school improvement: Toward contextually responsive leadership. *Urban Education*, 51(9),1096-1125. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085914553675>
- Rothmann, S., & Janik, M. (2015). Meaningful work and secondary school teachers' intention to leave. *South African Journal of Education*, 35(2), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v35n2a1008>
- Stanley, D. A. (2021). “I want to leave ASAP”: Black women teachers discuss the role of administrative support and teacher turnover. *Journal of School Leadership*, 31(3), 209-226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684620904021>
- Sun, M. (2018). Black teachers’ retention and transfer patterns in North Carolina: How do patterns vary by teacher effectiveness, subject, and school conditions. *AERA Open*, 4(3), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858418784914>
- Thompson, D., Virella, P., Goings, R. B., (2023). Black women Principals and expressions of culturally responsive leadership during crisis: An exploratory study. *The Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*,17(Special), 89-111.<https://jultr.online/article/87487-black-women-principals-and-expressions-of-culturally-responsive-school-leadership-during-crisis-an-exploratory-study>

- US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. (1972). *Displacement of Black educators in desegregating public schools*. US Government Printing Office, Washington.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015041203236;view=1up;seq=3.1972>
- Versland, T. M. (2013). Principal efficacy: implications for rural "grow your own" leadership programs. *Rural Educator*, 35(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v35i1.361>
- Villegas, A. M., & Irvine, J. J. (2010). Diversifying the teaching force: An examination of major arguments. *Urban Review*, 42, 175–192. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-010-0150-1>
- Wang, C. J., & Bird, J. J. (2011). Multi-level modeling of principal authenticity and teachers' trust and engagement. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, 15(4), 125-148.
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hemant-Sashittal/publication/273002428_Teaching_Students_to_Work_in_Classroom_Teams_A_Preliminary_Investigation_of_Instructors'_Motivations_Attitudes_and_Actions/links/54f779c80cf210398e92b0fa/Teaching-Students-to-Work-in-Classroom-Teams-A-Preliminary-Investigation-of-Instructors-Motivations-Attitudes-and-Actions.pdf#page=133
- White, T., Woodward, B., Graham, D., Milner, H. R., & Howard, T. C. (2020). Education policy and Black teachers: Perspectives on race, policy, and teacher diversity. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 71(4), 449-463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487119879895>
- Williams, E., & Johnson, M. (2011). Politics and principals: Beginning Black teachers' perceptions of relationships with administrators in 21st-century schools. *Improving Schools*, 14(2), 187–199. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480211409899>
- Wilson, C. M. (2016). Enacting critical care and transformative leadership in schools highly impacted by poverty: An African American principal's counter narrative, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 19(5), 557-577.
<https://doi:10.1080/13603124.2015.1023360>

Dr. Jillian Ardley (she/her) is an associate professor in Norfolk State University's department of early childhood, elementary education, and special education in the School of Education. Her terminal degree is in early childhood education with an emphasis on culturally responsive practices for young children. Dr. Jillian Ardley specializes in connecting university faculty with future educators via video-mediated conferencing and video annotation tools. She also works tirelessly in supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion issues to support the retention and recruitment of future and new teachers of color in the public school system. Consequently, her present faculty assignment as a university field supervisor allows her to support student teachers, counselor interns, and principal interns in the field supported by cutting edge technology. She also facilitates practicum policy workshops and culturally responsive sessions to support future and in-service educators and administrators.

Dr. Angela White Goodloe (she/her) has made a profound impact on education through her leadership and dedication to inclusion, equity, and academic achievement. Her work spans over two decades, preparing teachers and principals to become advocates for social justice and change in schools, government, and corporate sectors. She has played a key role in improving student performance outcomes both domestically and internationally, transforming schools with underperforming students into high-achieving institutions. Her extensive leadership in higher education is particularly notable, having served as a two-term senator on her university's Faculty Senate and co-authoring a strategic 25-year plan for the institution. Dr. Goodloe's contributions also extend into national service, including her current role as the President-Elect of the National Board of Directors for Kappa Delta Pi, a prestigious honor society for educators. Dr. Goodloe's scholarly work, focusing on the recruitment and retention of marginalized groups in education, reflects her commitment to fostering diversity and equity among educational professionals. Her research integrates leadership and culturally relevant pedagogy with technology, illustrating her forward-thinking approach to education. Overall, her career is a testament to her commitment to equity and social justice, particularly through the development of leaders who champion these causes for their students.