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Midwestern K-8 School Principal Perceptions on Retention Strategies for African American Teachers

Sherrie Berry
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Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Sherrie Berry

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2022

Abstract

Midwestern K-8 School Principal Perceptions on Retention Strategies for African
American Teachers

by

Sherrie Berry

M. Ed, Ohio Dominican University, 2018

M. Ed, University of Dayton, 1997

BA, The Ohio State University, 1995

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

November 2022

Abstract

Attrition of African American teachers which outpaces the effectiveness of existing retention strategies used by principals is a documented issue in U.S. public schools. The problem addressed through this study was that K-8 principals in one midwestern school district were challenged to implement strategies to retain African American teachers. Guided by transformational and distributive leadership theories, the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of K-8 school principals in the local setting about the challenges they faced retaining African American teachers and strategies required to increase retention. Five K-8 school principals who had at least one African American teacher in their building participated in semistructured interviews. Data were analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding to identify themes. Findings indicated that the principals faced barriers to retaining African American K-8 teachers and needed support, had limited awareness of racial challenges affecting African American K-8 teachers, and recognized the importance of retaining African American K-8 teachers in their schools. Based on these findings, a 3-day professional development project for principals was created to promote development of targeted strategies for retaining African American teachers. By building awareness of the unique experiences and needs of African American teachers in midwestern K-8 schools, principals will be better positioned to establish a school culture that openly values diversity and actively fosters African American teacher retention thereby creating positive social change over time.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this doctoral study to my wonderful husband, William, who has supported me during this process, fervently prayed for me, and encouraged me when the battles I faced in the process seemed endless. William, thanks for being my best friend and my partner for life. You are one of my greatest blessings from God. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change”- James 1:17. William, I am deeply grateful for your kind words, prayers, hugs, dedication to keeping me focused, and love. My sweet youngest child Chloe, you have been such a blessing. Thank you for dedicating your time to supporting me in this process. I appreciate your patience at times when you were not able to do fun things because of time constraints with obtaining this degree. I love you. Special love for my older daughter Cassie, son in love Gerontaye, and my four beautiful grandchildren: Killian, Gerontaye Jr., Kali, and Roman. Thank you to my late Grandparents Lillie Mae and Arthur Lee Reed. Thank you to dearest aunt, Mot Ramsey, and adoptive mother, Karlynn Hornsburger, for believing in me, praying for me, and supporting me. I deeply appreciated and needed your love while I was on this challenging, yet rewarding, journey. I was able to complete this doctorate degree because of support that you gave me and the joy of the Lord as my strength. I love you and I thank God for each of you. I am blessed to have you both in my life!

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” - Proverbs 3:5-6

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Table of Contents

List of Tables iv

Section 1: The Problem.....1

 The Local Problem.....1

 Rationale5

 Definition of Terms.....6

 Significance of the Study8

 Research Question9

 Review of the Literature9

 Review of the Broader Problem.....15

 African American K-8 Teacher Retention 17

 Administrative Support in Retention of African American Teachers 19

 African American Teacher Attrition..... 21

 Impact of COVID-19 22

 Implications.....23

 Summary.....24

Section 2: The Methodology.....25

 Research Design and Approach25

 Participants.....31

 Data Collection33

 Instrumentation36

 Data Analysis37

 Coding Strategies 39

Credibility	40
Dependability	40
Confirmability.....	41
Transferability.....	41
Data Analysis Results	42
Findings	43
Theme 1: K-8 Principals’ lack of awareness of the importance of low retention among African American K-8 teachers affects their efforts to keep African American K-8 teachers.	43
Theme 2: The school culture that K-8 Midwestern principals create impacts African American K-8 teacher retention.	46
Theme 3: The Leadership of K-8 Midwestern Principals Impacts African American K-8 Teacher Retention	50
Discrepant Cases.....	52
Evidence of Quality	53
Summary.....	54
Section 3: The Project.....	55
Introduction.....	55
Goals of the Professional Development Project	55
Components of the Professional Development Project	56
Rationale	56
Review of the Literature	57
Professional Development	58

Professional Development Justification.....	61
Project Description.....	63
Potential Resources.....	63
Potential Barriers and Solutions.....	64
Implementation Proposal and Timeline	65
Roles and Responsibilities	66
Project Evaluation Plan.....	67
Project Implications	68
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	70
Project Strengths and Limitations.....	70
Recommendations for Alternative Approaches	71
Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change	72
Research and Development of the Project: Lessons Learned.....	72
Reflective Analysis of Myself as a Scholar	73
Reflection on the Importance of the Work	74
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research.....	74
Conclusion	75
References.....	77
Appendix: The Project	98

List of Tables

Table 1. Midwestern School District Teacher Demographics for 2019-2020 and 2020-
2021 School Year..... 6

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, a national teacher shortage was a concern for the field of education (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Feng & Sass, 2018). As the pandemic has exacerbated teaching shortages and complicated retaining African American teachers (Camp, 2019), low retention rates among African American teachers in public schools across the United States continue (Campoli, 2017; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). The main factors that have been linked to African American teacher retention include (a) social context and social interaction, (b) working conditions and relationships with principals and students, and (c) the teachers' satisfaction with their profession (Campoli, 2017). Positive social change was evidenced when academic leaders enacted retention policies to support African American teachers and improve diversity and inclusion in the teaching profession (Nguyen et al., 2020). My study has positive social change implications for the retention of African American teachers at the local study site.

The teacher workforce does not accurately reflect the U.S. national population of people of color, nor does the teacher workforce at the local study site. People of color currently represent 40% of the United States population and 50% of K-12 students (Carver-Thomas, 2018). In the 2019-2020 school year, data from the Ohio Department of Education (2021) revealed that 16.8% of students in this district were identified as African American, and only 4.3% of teachers in this district were African American (Ohio Department of Education, 2021).

The problem addressed through this basic qualitative study was that some K-8 principals in one midwestern school district (MSD) are challenged to implement strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. There is a low retention rate of African American K-8 teachers in the MSD. To explore the gap in practice with retaining African American teachers, I interviewed five of the 25 K-8 school principals at one MSD to gain insight into retention strategies among school leaders to enhance the persistence of teachers of color in their buildings. The global pandemic complicated the retention of African American teachers (Khlaif et al., 2021; Kini, 2020). The beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the teaching profession to shift from traditional educational learning to emergency distance learning, which amplified the workload of teachers across the United States (Affouneh et al., 2020; Wright, 2020). This significant shift caused many teachers to leave the profession, contributing to a worsening teacher shortage (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Wright, 2020).

Schools in the United States typically modify their hiring practices in emergency situations when there is a teacher shortage (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021), and the COVID-19 pandemic added to the significant teacher shortage (Bailey et al., 2020). Academic leaders in the state where the study took place faced a teacher shortage amid the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Principals in other states are issuing emergency teaching licenses to remediate the teacher shortage (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Khlaif et al., 2021). Districts across the United States focused on alternative and easier paths to teacher certification to help recruit and retain teachers years before the COVID-19 pandemic (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Wright, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated high rates of attrition

among the teacher workforce, hastening the need for strategies to retain more teachers to prevent the issue from persisting (Kini, 2020). New paths to teaching could play a significant role in retaining teachers in school districts (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Kini, 2020).

Data on emergency teacher licensure from one MSD's state department of education showed that by allowing alternative certification programs to fulfill teacher certification criteria, more teachers, including African American K-8 teachers, could be recruited in schools at faster rates, and could potentially increase low rates of teacher retention exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Kini, 2020). Despite school principal retention strategies for teachers at MSD, the attrition of African American K-8 teachers continues to increase (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). In the 2019-2020 school year, a total of 44 African American teachers were employed in MSD, which represents a total of 2.6% of staff that are African American teachers (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). During the 2020-2021 school year, 45 teachers, representing a total of 2.6% of staff, were African American (Ohio Department of Education, 2021).

In 2019-2020, approximately 1,690 teachers were employed at MSD; of that total, six African American teachers left (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of African American teachers in MSD decreased by 12% (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of African American teachers at MSD decreased by 16% (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). Therefore, the local study site faces challenges in retaining African American K-8 teachers. At MSD, academic leadership and instructional staff do not

represent student demographics' cultural and racial diversity, which may negatively influence a pipeline for African American K-8 school educators and other educators of color (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). During the 2020-2021 school year, approximately 1,710 teachers were employed at MSD; of that total, 45 were African American teachers, seven of the 45 left MSD (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). An administrative assistant at MSD noted, "the major reason listed for African American teachers leaving the [MSD] was to take another education job in [the region] or out-of-state" (Personal communication, December 8, 2021).

The publicly available data from 2016 to 2021 evidenced a gap in practice with retaining African American teachers across the midwestern state, as African American teachers consistently represent less than 5% of the total teacher population in this district (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). District leaders are tasked with increasing the retention of African American K-8 schoolteachers (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). My study explored the district's K-8 principals' perceptions related to the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention. Data from the midwestern state's school districts showed a history of low retention among African American teachers (Ohio Department of Education, 2021). Current efforts at the district level to combat the African American teacher shortage are not effective. The findings from my study inform efforts that may assist in retaining African American K-8 teachers.

Rationale

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple research studies (Campoli, 2017; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019) highlighted the main reasons for low retention among African American teachers and identified successful efforts to retain African American teachers across the United States. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to investigate whether the reasons for low African American teacher retention remain the same and whether prior efforts to retain African American teachers are still effective. My study provided insight into the challenges of retention among African American teachers and the strategies to increase retention to help fill the gap in practice in the local setting.

At the site where my study was conducted, Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) teachers represented only 1.89% of total teachers in MSD during the 2019-2020 school year (see Table 1), which indicated low retention among African American teachers within the district. Additionally, although the total amount of teachers increased during the 2020-2021 school year, Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) teachers represented only 1.87% of total teachers in MSD (see Table 1). This percentage indicated a decrease in the low pre-pandemic percentage of African American teachers. The presence of African American teachers in MSD is consistently low, as White teachers make up 95% of total teachers in the district, while African American teachers make up less than 2% of total teachers (see Table 1).

Table 1

Midwestern School District Teacher Demographics for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 School Year

Race	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	n	%	n	%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0.06	1	0.06
Asian	9	0.53	9	0.53
Black or African American (Non-Hispanic)	32	1.89	32	1.87
Hispanic/Latino	18	1.07	19	1.11
Multiracial	12	0.71	13	0.76
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.00	1	0.06
White (Non-Hispanic)	1,618	95.74	1,635	95.61
Total	1,690	100	1,710	100

The variable n represents the number of staff in MSD based on race. (Ohio Department of Education, 2021).

This study explored perceptions of K-8 school principals regarding the challenges of implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. By investigating K-8 school principal successes and challenges with efforts to retain African American K-8 teachers, the research study's findings provided principals and educational leaders in other school districts with insights into interventions to positively address the problem. The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of K-8 school principals in one MSD on the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention.

Definition of Terms

Terms specific or prevalent throughout the study are defined as follows:

Distance learning: Distance learning is a method that consists of teachers and students using the Internet, email, etc., to conduct classes rather than meeting in a

classroom (Khlaif et al., 2021). This definition is influenced by media use and the student learning (Khlaif et al., 2021). In the context of my investigation, a distinction is made between online or distance learning and emergency remote instruction.

Emergency remote instruction: Emergency remote instruction, for the purposes of this study, involves an unanticipated and immediate shift from a traditional method of education to a remote method after a state of emergency based on the COVID-19 outbreak (Affouneh et al., 2020; Khlaif et al., 2021). Shifting to emergency distance instruction was deemed a necessary step to limit the transmission of COVID-19 within schools (Abdulmir & Hafidh, 2020). Emergency distance learning differed from the traditional approach to online learning, which was meticulously planned because it was an unexpected shift in learning for students, parents, and teachers (Misirli & Ergulec, 2021).

Teacher attrition: Teacher attrition refers to teachers changing schools or leaving the teaching profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). In this study, teacher attrition mainly refers to the exacerbated lack of African American teachers in K-8 schools because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study also referred to teacher attrition as “Teacher Turnover.”

Teacher retention: Teacher retention is defined as strategies that keep teachers in the same school and the teaching profession (McCoy et al., 2014). Teacher retention is the ability to reduce teacher mobility and provide more stable learning conditions in schools (McCoy et al., 2014). The term teacher retention mainly refers to the retention of African American teachers in K-8 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teacher recruitment: Teacher recruitment is defined as using specific strategies to select quality teacher candidates for schools (Hornick-Lockard, 2021). In this study, teacher recruitment involves acquiring and increasing the number of qualified teachers over one school year within a school building (Bill et al., 2022). Teacher recruitment is used in the study to refer to recruitment, specifically the acquisition and hire of more African American teachers in K-8 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Significance of the Study

African American K-8 teacher retention rates have continued to decline in the United States (Campoli, 2017). Although Campoli's (2017) study was published before the COVID-19 pandemic, the research explored efforts such as supportive leadership to retain African American K-8 teachers. My study explored the perceptions of K-8 school principals in MSD about the challenges of implementing strategies for retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The field of educational research on teacher retention has expanded, as it has influenced elementary and middle school academic staff. Education institutions cannot keep up with the demand for new teachers to replace those who are leaving, and two out of three districts in the state reported teacher shortages (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). More research is needed to fill the gap in practice in the local setting.

The delivery of education shifted to emergency distance learning (Khlaif et al., 2021), which caused approaches to retain African American K-8 teachers to also shift. It is important to identify successful strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, K-8 school principals may need to revisit strategies to

retain African American K-8 teachers. Creative strategies used by K-8 school principals to successfully retain African American teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic may be useful to leaders across the state where the study took place. The study's findings revealed both barriers and supports for principals and educational leaders in other school districts on how to retain African American K-8 teachers. The findings of my study promotes social change through interventions aimed at filling the gap in practice, which includes developing a 3-day professional development program for key stakeholders. The findings from this research study contribute to positive social change by informing local Midwestern K-8 principals and school districts on ways to implement transformational leadership and distributive leadership in the development of strategies for retaining African American K-8 teachers.

Research Question

The research question explored the perceptions of K-8 school principals in a MSD about retention strategies among African American K-8 teachers and the efforts needed to reduce these rates of attrition of teachers of color from the classroom. The following research question guided this qualitative investigation:

RQ: What challenges do some K-8 principals in one MSD face when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers?

Review of the Literature

This study explored the research problem through the critical lens of Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and Gronn's (2000) distributive leadership theory. Transformational leadership and distributive leadership have been used in prior

studies of strategies and supportive techniques for relational trust-building strategies among school principals and teachers (Amankwaa, 2016; Anderson, 2017). This section provided more information regarding Burns's transformational leadership theory and Gronn's distributive leadership theory as the conceptual framework for the study, specific aspects of the theories that align with the purpose and problem, and the relevance of each theory within the study.

Burns (1978) described transformational leadership theory as a way for leaders to encourage change, specifically how characteristics of integrity, support, and mutual goals benefit those involved. Burns found that transformational leadership characteristics are mutually beneficial to leaders, which contrasts with transactional leadership, where the leader realizes more gain than the workers. Bass and Riggio (2006) expanded on Burns's ideas and suggested that enacting transformational leadership can also mean considering what is collectively most important. The core values of transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership were used to analyze K-8 principal perceptions of African American teacher retention challenges and strategies to reduce attrition.

Burns (1978) reported that an approach to social values promotes collaboration among school staff to improve staff relationships, in contrast to working independently and possibly competitively (Anderson, 2017). The role of transformational leadership has continued to evolve based on the interests of the leader and society, which has reinforced the need for a transformational leader to be attentive and supportive (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2019). Principals have played a significant role in increasing the retention of the teachers they lead (Player et al., 2017). Fernandez and Shaw (2020)

indicated that aspects of transformational leadership have proved to be most effective in helping lead staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transformational leadership theory was developed based on the foundational concept that a leader is defined by their practices based on values, goals, self-perceptions, and relationships with their followers (Burns, 1978; Galli, 2019). Further investigation into possible principal leadership practices and their impact on African American teacher retention may reveal aspects of transformational leadership specifically suited to school environments during times of change. Anderson (2017) used transformational leadership theory to help study how a principal impacts school culture. Wiyono (2017) used transformational leadership theory to understand how principals develop their leadership styles. Wiyono argued that transformational leadership theory influences the collective efficiency of a school, specifically teachers' motivation to stay in the profession, which affects teacher retention rates. Galli (2019) used transformational leadership theory to explore influential relationships between the educational community and leadership. A principal can influence a teacher's decision to stay within the teaching profession, impacting a school's teacher retention and attrition rates (Anderson, 2017; Galli, 2019; Glazer, 2018). Servant leadership differs from the transformational leadership theory because it is focused on the leader aspiring and encouraging individuals to work toward a common goal as an organization.

Transformational leadership theory framed my study as leaders need to develop goals and objectives beyond personal well-being. Distributive leadership theory was also used in my study, as it is also frequently used in educational settings. Gronn (2000)

emphasized that distributive leadership theory concerns the distribution of leadership and tasks across levels of an organization. Spillane et al. (2001) further expanded on Gronn by proposing that leadership tasks cannot be handled by a sole principal but need to be distributed across various levels, such as principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teachers. By doing so, the principal does not solely make a decision basis but is based on the learning of multiple leaders (Spillane et al., 2001). The main objective of distributive leadership is that everyone in an organization can participate based on the specific aspects of each task (Gronn, 2000; Sol, 2021). The distributive leadership theory relates to the transformational leadership theory by setting goals for followers to meet in an organization. Burns (1978) identified the focus of transformational leadership as having a focus on the individual actions of leaders, and Gronn identified the focus of distributive leadership as having a focus on the role of leadership shifting to other members of the community, with leaders focusing on interactions among themselves and their followers, as well as the details of their situation. While the distributive leadership theory has many similarities to transformational leadership, the focus on interactions takes a different approach, where distributive leadership has expanded on the roles and responsibilities of transformational leaders.

In my study, I investigated the perceptions of K-8 principals on K-8 African American teacher retention, which included investigating the actions of principals to devote efforts towards the crisis of African American K-8 teacher retention, an issue that requires more than interactions in an organization. Gronn (2000) and Sol (2021) described distributive leadership as involving interactions among multiple leaders, their

followers, and the nature of each situation. I studied how K-8 principals take on their leadership roles by using transformational leadership theory in addition to their actions and studied interactions among multiple leaders, their followers, and school culture, which made the distributive leadership theory also fitting for my study (Sol, 2021). The additional theory of distributive leadership was best for my study because it focuses on the interactions between leaders, tasks, and followers, which is essential when assessing the impact of K-8 principals' actions and interactions in their leadership on the retention of African American K-8 teachers.

Gronn (2000) and Sol (2021) described the role of the distributive leader as being held by multiple members of the community based on various situational needs. Gronn described distributed leadership as occurring when interprofessional responsibilities are more shared and less centralized. Gronn and Sol described the primary objective of distributive leadership to be where each member of an organization can participate in leadership, decision-making, and communication outreach based on the specific aspects of each task. In my basic qualitative study, I investigated how actions and interactions of K-8 principals as leaders impacted the retention of African American K-8 teachers. In my study, K-8 principals revealed the retention and persistence strategies that they, as individuals in leadership, have attempted to implement.

My study's use of transformational and distributive leadership theories aligned with a qualitative research interview style that supports obtaining important and detailed information from participants (Mayes & Gethers, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Sulit, 2020). Through the use of transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership

theory in the conceptual framework, my study was anchored in the tenets of transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theory. Between the two concepts, I analyzed and interpreted data collected from K-8 principals interviewed on their perceptions of transformational and distributive leadership and its impact on African American teacher retention. The best approach for data collection has been through semistructured interviews with open-ended questions, open codes, and alphanumeric or symbolic coding (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Wei et al., 2018).

By using the transformational and distributive leadership theories in my study for data analysis, I coded for certain leadership practices used by the K-8 principals. I interviewed and compared the transcripts with practices associated with transformational and distributive leadership theories. After analysis of the similarities between the participants' leadership practices and the common practices applied by a transformational and distributive leader, I analyzed data further to investigate how each participant's leadership practices could impact the retention of African American K-8 teachers within their schools. To effectively collect and analyze data using transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theory, I integrated the concepts of transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theories into the construction of the interview questions for the study.

The study design used transformational and distributive leadership theories to provide insight into effective retention strategies. Principals' perceptions inform decision-making, and by exploring the effects of leadership on African American teacher retention, the study led to new strategies for K-8 educational settings (Wiyono, 2017).

Northouse (2019) investigated how applying aspects of the transformational leadership theory could increase teacher retention. Sulit (2020) investigated how distributive leadership theory could be applied to lead to an increase in teacher retention. In my study, I investigated how applying aspects of transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theory to the decision-making of Midwestern K-8 principals could impact African American teacher retention. As high turnover continues to impact K-8 schools (See et al., 2020), exploring the impact of K-8 principal leadership on African American teacher retention is crucial. My study informed of interventions to positively influence retention among African American K-8 teachers.

Review of the Broader Problem

Pre-pandemic levels of teacher attrition averaged 16% per year in the United States (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Young, 2018). Research studies have shown that as teacher attrition has increased, it has become a greater problem for school districts, communities, students, and families (Campoli, 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2018). Additionally, African American K-8 teacher attrition rates have continued to climb in schools across the country, and the need for retention among this group is distinctive (Benson et al., 2021; Campoli, 2017). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the issue of teacher retention was made more challenging.

Affouneh et al. (2020) isolated emergency distance learning, a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, from online and traditional learning methods. Affouneh et al. explained that emergency distance learning focuses on shifts in course design and evaluation tools. Principals have had to retain teachers for traditional learning approaches

and identify teachers with the flexibility needed to shift to emergency distance learning. The study site was unable to retain African American K-8 teachers, which represented a gap in practice. My study explored K-8 school principals in MSD regarding the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention. The review of literature provided related academic investigations about retention and support for African American teachers. The literature provided descriptions of supportive practices of principals, such as incorporating a transformational or distributive leadership style, to increase teacher retention. Additionally, the literature review explored the best practices for teacher retention and the specific need for African American teacher retention in schools. In constructing this project, I expanded the literature review to focus on the study's findings.

When selecting literature for this review, I accessed the databases of the Walden University Library, Google Scholar, SAGE, ProQuest, Education Source, EBSCOhost, and ERIC and limited database searches to peer-reviewed journals published within the last 5 years. I expanded the search to older publications when no current research was found. The keywords used within the literature search included: *principal leadership practices, teacher retention, school principal's role in African American teacher retention, African American teacher retention, retention, teacher attrition, school principal's role in African American teacher attrition, teacher turnover, African American teacher attrition, transformational leadership practices, transformational leadership theory, distributive leadership practices, and distributive leadership.*

African American K-8 Teacher Retention

While each school district has had its unique challenges, it was important to understand the reasons that African American teachers had for turnover. In a study by Carver-Thomas (2018), high teacher turnover rates were linked to a lack of proper preparation, direct mentoring, and inadequate teaching conditions. Carver-Thomas reported that teachers of color described “concerns about compensation tied to student performance, lack of administrative support, lack of classroom autonomy and school influence, poor teaching conditions, and the desire to pursue another career or improve their opportunities in education” (p. 8) as the reason that they left employment. As the need to retain diverse teachers, particularly teachers of color, continues to increase, it has been imperative for school districts to address the significant barriers for teachers of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Coles & Stanley, 2021).

The exploration of K-8 school principals’ perceptions of the challenges faced when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers at the study site revealed supports and challenges Midwestern K-8 principals face regarding the issue. Many researchers have indicated the need for African American teachers in the midwestern state workforce, as teachers of color represent fewer than 4% of the workforce (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). Midwestern K-8 principals have faced a shortage of resources to address the issues that cause teachers of color to leave the workplace (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). Positive strategies to retain more African American teachers at the national level have included building pathways that support African American teachers and empowering change, developing hiring and

selection strategies for African American teachers, and improving teaching conditions in schools by improving school leadership (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

The need for strategies to retain teachers of color has been a concern among numerous school districts in the United States (Podolsky et al., 2019; See et al., 2020). Researchers predicted that school districts will have a population of 40% minority students and 5% minority teachers in future decades (National Education Association, 2018). There has been a need to retain minority teachers in U.S. school districts (Benson et al., 2021; Madsen et al., 2019). The lack of African American K-8 teachers has signified the call for developing and implementing effective retention strategies in schools (Ingersoll et al., 2017; Madkins, 2022).

Racism and systemic oppression have been widely perpetuated within the structure of schooling institutions in the United States and negatively impact teachers of color (Acosta et al., 2018; Coles & Stanley, 2021; Dixon et al., 2019). The dominant structure of schooling institutions within the United States has been founded on Eurocentric norms and racial inequities, whereas teachers of color have been more likely to “subvert the dominant culture of schooling” (Jackson & Knight-Manuel, 2019, para. 1). Jackson & Knight-Manuel (2019) emphasized that teachers of color promote the creation of culturally specific practices to encourage students of color to persist in education. Teachers of color were retained at higher rates in schools that “have a commitment to equity, social justice, and the dismantling of racism” (Dixon et al., 2019, p. 14). Dixon et al. (2019) stated that the “commitment to these values starts with the school and leaders” (p. 14). However, as these ideals have not been widely

communicated within the structure of school institutions, the needs of teachers of color are not addressed, causing them not to be efficiently retained across the United States (Dixon et al., 2019; Kohli, 2019). My study explored the perceptions of K-8 school principals in an MSD regarding the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention.

Ingersoll et al. (2017) and Kohli (2019) argued for improving K-8 principals' awareness of the importance of increasing the representation of African American teachers, as teachers need to better represent district student demographics, and school climate could be positively influenced. The strong positive effects of same-race teacher-student relationships were found to be effective for retaining African American K-8 teachers and students and have been the justification for increasing the retention of African American K-8 teachers (Gershenson et al., 2018; Madkins, 2022). Gershenson et al. (2018) noted that there was "compelling evidence that some exposure to Black teachers improves Black students' long-term academic outcomes" (p. 34). To provide same-race relationships to many African American students, the persistence and retention rate of African American K-8 teachers must increase at the local level where the study was conducted.

Administrative Support in Retention of African American Teachers

The retention of African American K-8 teachers has been a significant challenge in schools. In recent years, school administrators have had competing budgetary and administrative demands as they attempt to retain and develop African American K-8 teachers (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). However,

as Grissom & Bartanen (2019) argued, the school administrator remains responsible for retaining teachers representing their school's demographic population. A principal's effort to retain African American K-8 teachers influenced students' academic success (Fuller et al., 2018; Madkins, 2022; Young, 2018). An administrator's leadership methods significantly impact how well teachers are retained within schools (Burkhauser, 2017; Glazer, 2018; Stanley, 2021).

The need to retain teachers of color, particularly African American teachers, has continued to increase. Significant barriers to retention that these teachers have faced include work conditions, increased class sizes, and health-related concerns (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Retaining African American K-8 teachers within teacher education programs could increase the presence of African American K-8 teachers in schools (Field, 2017; Madkins, 2022). In a school system, school principals who directly engaged with their teachers and implemented strategies to build trust with them created a stronger relationship, thus increasing teacher retention (Bukko et al., 2021; Kars & Inandi, 2018). Teacher retention increased when school administrators consistently held high standards for staff (Bryan & Milton-Williams, 2017; Hornick-Lockard, 2021).

The Council for Educational Change (2018) provides supportive resources for school leaders and teachers, particularly African American K-8 teachers, to improve teacher retention. Additionally, introducing cultural competency training and other training focused on addressing conversations about race helped provide a comfortable school environment for African American K-8 teachers, helping to improve retention among this demographic (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). By school

administrators taking the time to learn about issues and conversations pertaining to race, they support and retain African American K-8 teachers in their building.

African American Teacher Attrition

African American teacher attrition has been a challenge in many school districts in the United States (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Papay et al., 2017), and the issue was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kini, 2020). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, school district leaders started to assess the causes of minority teacher attrition, specifically the root causes of African American teacher attrition (Ingersoll et al., 2017, 2019). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher retention was found to decrease when an administrator was unable to motivate and recognize staff, could not execute a clear vision, and did not run a school efficiently (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

School environments can impact teacher attrition, and principal leadership can help to encourage teachers to be engaged, satisfied with their jobs, and to have a voice (Dahlkamp et al., 2017; Uribe-Zarain et al., 2019). Researchers also indicated that the burnout and job satisfaction of teachers are correlated with low retention rates of teachers (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Perrone et al., 2019). Low retention rates significantly affect school classrooms, where knowledge of students, school curriculum, and the school program may be lost when a teacher leaves a school (Uribe-Zarain et al., 2019). Low retention rates can also negatively affect the school stakeholders, as teacher turnover encourages more teachers to leave a school, creating a cycle of continuous turnover (Santoro, 2018; See et al., 2020).

Continuous teacher turnover threatens the flow of school-level planning of curricula, and as school learning is interrupted, student achievement deteriorates (Dahlkamp et al., 2017). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the main reasons for teacher turnover were dissatisfaction with school principals, dissatisfaction with school policies, stressful and poor job conditions, and a lack of teacher preparation (Kamrath & Bradford, 2020; Sribayak et al., 2018). It is important to explore whether these reasons remain the same during the COVID-19 pandemic.

High rates of African American teacher attrition have existed over the course of decades. After the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* and desegregation was incorporated into law, an extensive number of white families refused to have African American teachers teaching their white children, causing many of these teachers to be forced out of the teaching profession (Donnelly, 2021; Pizarro & Kohli, 2018). African American K-8 teachers continue to be pushed out of the teaching profession when they do not feel recognized and valued by administrators (Pizarro & Kohli, 2018; Stanley, 2022). African American K-8 teachers struggle to stay within the profession based on the racial isolation they face (Cole & Stanley, 2021; Pizarro & Kohli, 2018). High rates of African American teacher attrition are a concern across the United States (Campoli, 2017; Madkins, 2022), as they create an issue for staffing schools with effective teachers (Bei et al., 2022; Learning Policy Institute, 2018).

Impact of COVID-19

Many teachers have been hesitant to fully resume teaching in person due to the risks of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020). The

COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing racial disparities in the teacher workforce, making it essential to increase efforts to retain African American teachers during the pandemic (Kini, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic caused 40% of African Americans to change or cancel plans to enter higher education, limiting African American students' presence in high-quality teacher preparation programs and the teaching profession (Kini, 2020). With fewer African Americans enrolled in college and university teacher preparation programs, the risk is that diversity in the teacher workforce will worsen (Kini, 2020; Madkins, 2022).

Implications

My basic qualitative study explored the perceptions of K-8 school principals in a MSD regarding the challenges of implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. Midwestern K-8 school principals were key stakeholders and provided insight into their needs to actively retain African American K-8 teachers. By determining themes from the data collected, I found common reasons for low African American retention rates and common efforts, successes, and challenges of retention for African American K-8 teachers. The findings from this study served to inform school leaders and policyholders at the study site and in similar district locations and demographics, as these groups of individuals can reflect on their current methods to retain African American K-8 teachers and apply different methods for retention based on the study's findings. Through data analysis, the study's findings were applied to the development of a three-day professional development program for Midwestern K-8 principals.

Summary

The section addressed the problem, purpose, and significance. This basic qualitative study guided the project that intended to explore the challenges K-8 principals face when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers at one MSD. It takes a comprehensive approach to improve teacher retention (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). The problem addressed through this basic qualitative study is that K-8 principals in one midwestern school district are challenged to implement strategies to retain African American teachers. The definitions presented served to ensure the reader's understanding of the study. The significance of this study served to inform school leaders and policyholders on the need for the retention of African American K-8 teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there have been studies on teacher retention, further research is still needed on African American K-8 teacher retention (Campoli, 2017), especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The literature review provided scholarship pertaining to the low retention rates of African American K-8 teachers. I used data to illustrate the gap in practice for efforts to retain African American K-8 teachers in MSD during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The research methodology and design consisted of a qualitative systematic approach and a basic qualitative research design. The choice of a basic qualitative research design was most suitable to help investigate research participants' experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). A basic qualitative research design helped researcher gain insight into their participants' perceptions of a certain topic or practice, which helped to determine the effect a certain action has on a person's experiences (Bukko et al., 2021). Transformational leadership, as described by Bass (1985), consists of four aspects: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which Bass deemed as skills essential for school principals to adequately meet the demands of education in the 21st century. Bill et al. (2022) described distributive leadership as involving making a leadership role more expanded among a community rather than having a sole leader. Because transformational and distributive leadership involve the actions and activities of both the leader and the follower, the theories allowed for an investigation of K-8 school principals' perceptions in the context of their effect on African American K-8 teachers under their building supervision.

Before selecting transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theory to serve as a foundation for developing the interview questions, I came across the potential theory of servant leadership. The main objective of using servant leadership theory was for the leaders to focus on each member's personal growth, achievements, and learning in an organization, where the servant leader seeks to meet the needs of the

organization and participants they serve (Bavik, 2020). Servant leadership theory is related to transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership by noting that the leaders who attempt to be servant-like are focused externally on helping individuals to meet goals in an organization. Some of the principals described their style as aligned with servant leadership theory. However, because my study revealed strategies, actions, and behaviors that support retention and persistence for K-8 African American teachers, transformational leadership theory and distributive leadership theory were a better fit for exploring the actions and role of a leader. Servant leadership was not appropriate for my study because my investigation focused on actions that leaders take to do more than serve the needs of their organization and individuals. In my study, I explored the perceptions of K-8 principals on K-8 African American teacher retention. This included investigating the actions of principals to devote efforts toward the crisis of African American K-8 teacher retention, an issue that may be outside the needs of the school they lead or the school staff they serve, which made it important for transformational and distributive leadership to be used in my study rather than servant leadership.

The leadership styles of transformational leadership and distributive leadership had the right components for data collection and analysis because they provided the framework to explore the lived experiences of principals who served as the experts for this basic qualitative research study. Definitions of transformational leadership and distributive leadership were described to participants during the interview, which supported the interview transcript as the primary data collection tool to gain detailed information from participants (Mayes & Gethers, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Distributive leadership has concepts of shared responsibility and interactions among multiple leaders, their followers, and the nature of each situation (Sol, 2021), and transformational leadership features concepts of idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016). In the context of retention, persistence, and support of African American K-8 teachers, new strategies were revealed that better integrate the distributive and transformational leaders' intended effect juxtaposed with the actual district-level data about African American K-8 school teacher persistence. In this qualitative study, research was conducted by interviewing K-8 school principals in MSD about successes and challenges to retaining African American K-8 teachers and steps to improve these efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rahman (2017) noted that the approach of collecting qualitative research, such as interviewing, helps to uncover the participants' experiences and the influences of others on their behaviors. Additionally, Rubin and Rubin (2012) described the rules and guidelines for a qualitative research interview, and the interviews provided a great amount of important detail about subjects the participants are able and willing to describe. Data for this qualitative research study were collected from 5 K-8 school principals from MSD that served as the study site.

Through semistructured interviews with open-ended questions, this basic qualitative research study was the best approach to capture experiences of K-8 school principals' efforts to combat low retention rates among African American K-8 teachers through the lens of transformational leadership and distributive leadership practices (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A distinctive technique used for data analysis of this qualitative

study was to use open codes and distinguish text to find themes among interviews. Additionally, magnitude coding was used to organize and analyze interview responses and results to determine tendencies in data (Saldaña, 2016).

A basic qualitative research design was the most appropriate for this study, as it helped gain insight from participants' perceptions regarding their experiences and shaped their lives (Bukko et al., 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A basic qualitative approach to studies substantially impacted the procedures and policies enacted within the educational field (Gallo et al., 2018; Javadian et al., 2020). Basic qualitative research cultivates a narrative of certain people's experiences and the impact these actions have on them (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

Through the use of a qualitative research method, researchers directly understand and interpret phenomena by discovering participants' experiences in their original setting rather than predicting participants' experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Qualitative research serves to help researchers understand how individuals perceive and process social problems through their feelings and experiences (Babbie, 2011; Walliman, 2010). However, quantitative research is based on researching measurable variables, collecting data, and showing results (Babbie, 2011; Walliman, 2010). Qualitative researchers seek to understand a problem by collecting and analyzing data to assess an individual's judgments, ideas, feelings, and beliefs, which can only be described in words and not reduced to numerical values (Babbie, 2011; Walliman, 2010).

Quantitative researchers seek to collect and analyze data by collecting statistical and numerical data, which is used to predict an intended outcome rather than recording

an actual experience in data (Babbie, 2011; Walliman, 2010). In my study, I intended to explore K-8 school principals' perceptions of the challenges faced when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. The MSD faced a low retention rate of African American K-8 teachers. A quantitative research design would have inhibited the detail and depth of the study participants' responses. A qualitative study was the most suitable for this project because it effectively depicted K-8 school principals' perceptions.

A qualitative study focuses on one of the six research designs: a phenomenological study, a narrative approach study, an ethnography study, a grounded theory study, a case study, and a basic qualitative (Javadian et al., 2020). A narrative study was not practical because it focuses on telling the stories lived and told by individuals (Clandinin et al., 2018). My study focused on relationships instead of individual actions, as I wanted to understand the strategies K-8 school principals use for retaining African American teachers in their schools.

A phenomenological study focuses on experiences and what they feel like, a shared phenomenon and its meaning, and how a specific event presents itself to participants and researchers (Rodriguez & Smith, 2018). Phenomenology did not match the study because it focuses on all possible ways a specific population could have the same experience. However, my study involved a population that has different experiences, making phenomenology ineffective to use in my study. Making a decision for a study design requires that the approach is matched to the problem to obtain actionable responses. An ethnography involves closely engaging with study participants over time (Hamilton & Finley, 2020), and as I intended to conduct my study based on one

specific point in time, an embedded long-term investigation was not possible for a capstone project. Another qualitative approach is grounded theory, and in that design, a theory is developed in a study based on analyzed findings concluded from theoretical sampling (Jamali, 2018; Shaw et al., 2019), which made it ineffective in my study, as I did not intend to develop a theory.

A case study helps researchers to understand human experiences; however, it inhibits the study from designating and fully interpreting results, which made it ineffective in my study design, since the study used findings to create a project (Snodgrass et al., 2018). A basic qualitative design, which gives the opportunity to examine participants' thoughts and perceptions through lived experiences (Bellamy et al., 2016; Kennedy, 2016), was best for my study because it is often used in education and by researchers to investigate how people perceive and value their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of K-8 school principals in one MSD on the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention, which was done through semistructured interviews.

With unprecedented shortages of African American teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic (Campoli, 2017), the pivot to emergency remote teaching and other classroom issues exacerbated these low rates of retention during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kini, 2020). To retain the African American teachers who have persisted during the pandemic, Midwestern K-8 principals' perceptions of the low retention rates among African American K-8 teachers provided insights regarding supports for this group of educators. COVID-19 pandemic learning conditions have exacerbated low rates

of retention among African American K-8 teachers in MSD, where the study was conducted. Further scholarship is needed to support African American K-8 teachers and improve the current lack of diversity in the teaching profession (Nguyen et al., 2020).

Participants

I explored the perceptions of K-8 school principals about the challenges of African American teacher retention in the MSD where the study took place. The selected research participants in this basic qualitative research study were K-8 principals in an MSD. By initially having a purposeful sample consisting of 25 K-8 school principals, I was able to reach a final sample size of five K-8 school principals who had at least one African American K-8 teacher employed in their building. The population of participants needed served in a K-8 setting inside the MSD. To establish the viability of my study, I contacted the district office by phone and followed up by email to establish a relationship with the intended study site.

Qualitative studies contain smaller sample sizes (Astroth & Chung, 2018), but in basic qualitative studies, the sample size in research must be ample enough to provide sufficient and meaningful data for its analysis (Blaikie, 2018; Farrugia, 2019). The main objective of qualitative research is to achieve data saturation when there is no further development of themes in a thematic analysis of transcripts. I interviewed five K-8 school principals in MSD to explore and understand their perceptions of the challenges faced when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. In multiple investigations using basic qualitative design, five to seven participants can provide sufficient and meaningful data that explains relative experiences among individuals in a

studied sample size (Turner-Bowker et al., 2018). Despite the small population of principals who qualified, I could interview five individuals at greater length and still reached data saturation with this number of individuals.

Before conducting any interviews, I ensured that I had informed consent from all participants in the study using a consent form. After working with the district to obtain potential participants' email addresses, I informed them that the maximum duration of the interview would be 1 hour, and their identities would remain confidential. The maximum interview duration of 1 hour allowed sufficient time to fully address the interview protocol to participants and for participants to provide responses to interview questions. Interviews were scheduled based on the participant's choice of the date and time, and interview questions were open-ended. I used the software program Calendarly to embed a schedule link, so interested participants could quickly schedule a date and time that worked best for them. Interviews were recorded with the participant's consent, and the recordings will be stored on a password-protected personal computer in my home office for 5 years.

Following my Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval with approval number 09-06-22-0989916, I sought the district's cooperation to distribute my flyer to potential participants. If I was unable to connect with potential participants in the district, I would have explored alternate districts by determining if the gap in practice is in evidence elsewhere in the state. Due to the high turnover of K-8 teachers, the MSD was similar to others that could be used as the study site. Because I conducted semistructured 45- to 60-minute interviews, I conducted interviews with five participants. To be included in this

study, the individual had to be a K-8 school principal from the MSD who had at least one African American teacher employed in their building. In-depth interviews with this smaller sample still provided sufficient data for the study question (Malterud et al., 2016). The goal was to have a final sample size of five interview participants who partook in interviews consisting of 45 minutes to 1 hour based on the interview protocol of the study. I interviewed participants via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and phone and transcribed each interview.

To maintain the confidentiality of the participants, I will keep all data, transcripts, and notes created during the investigation on a password-protected personal computer in my home office for 5 years. When each participant was identified and met the criteria established for participation, an informed consent letter allowed participants to be aware of all confidentiality measures used in the study. Each participant's identity and personal information were protected during the study's data collection and analysis processes by replacing the participant's identity with an alphanumeric code. I remained the only individual to handle the transcripts and audio files during data collection and analysis, which were kept on a password-protected device. Consequently, all data obtained within the study will dwell in a locked filing cabinet in my home for 5 years after the study is published and will be shredded after this period.

Data Collection

For my basic qualitative research design, I collected data using semistructured interviews following the data collection approach (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). This qualitative research study adhered to the Walden IRB approval process. Working directly

with the district office staff, I shared my interview protocol with potential participants via email. In my outreach through a study invitation email, I provided an overview of my study and a link to a calendar software that allowed them to identify a good date and time for the interview. Once participants agreed to be interviewed, I set up semistructured interviews with five K-8 school principals as a sample size from the 25 individuals in that role in the district. Walden's IRB approval review process required ethical decision-making to be in place during the construction of the purpose of the study, the protection of participant data, and the intended use of results in the study.

Interviews of K-8 school principals were captured using an audio recording conferencing system, Otter.ai. This software was password protected for participant confidentiality, and these transcripts were analyzed for anticipated and emergent themes. Interviews were transcribed using a digital word-processing tool. I then interpreted my data by using a thematic interview analysis approach, which organized data into important and practical codes and concepts through my choice of open coding (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

After I was granted permission by Walden's IRB and from MSD to conduct research in the district, I reached out to the MSD for a list of eligible K-8 principal participants to email study invitations. Potential participants received a consent form and invitation to participate in the research study via email. Once I received the consent form from the participants via email, an interview was scheduled through the software Calendarly. The participants were provided an email with the study description and an indication of potential protocols for privacy measures. The participants selected a date

and time to engage in a semistructured interview that was simultaneously transcribed for review. Each interview question in the interview protocol was aligned with transformational leadership theory, distributive leadership, and specific details of retention strategies. The protocols and procedures of the interview process encompassed a guide, note-taking, probing questions, and recording conferencing systems such as Zoom while using Otter.ai during the data collection process.

I used an interviewing protocol with probing questions that focused on specific protocols and procedural processes to guide the collection of research data during the interview. In the interviewing script, participants were informed of the policies and procedures of voluntary participation and reminded that they could discontinue the study at any point during the interview (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The participants were reminded of protocols and confidentiality procedures (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Participants were informed that they could remove themselves from the study without penalty or repercussions (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I ensured the accuracy of each participant's interview transcript through transcript verification (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

Transcript verification occurred immediately after each interview was transcribed and reviewed. Participants were able to review the Otter.ai transcripts that I sent to them and ensure that their responses were recorded accurately. As part of the interview protocol, transcripts were sent to participants with clear language that stated any inaccurate transcript item could be corrected and allowed participants to share any follow-up thoughts.

Instrumentation

Researchers are the main instruments in qualitative studies since they are primarily responsible for data collection and monitoring pre-conceived biases, assumptions, and subjectivities in qualitative studies (Johnson et al., 2020). Applying a data collection approach of conversational style semistructured interviews through an interview protocol created an opportunity for genuine two-way conversations among each participant and myself while using interview questions to address the study's research question. The interview questions, developed based on the research question, explored K-8 principal perceptions of challenges faced when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. I selected transformational and distributive leadership theories to serve as a framework for the interview questions developed. The interview questions explored K-8 principal perceptions of challenges when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. I embedded the concepts of transformational leadership and distributive leadership into the development of the interview questions to collect data on K-8 principals' perceptions of transformational and distributive leadership and its impact on African American teacher retention.

Here are some sample questions:

- As the school principal, describe the steps that you have taken to retain African American teachers in your building.
- While considering the definition above, how do you perceive transformational leadership characteristics impacting an African American teacher's decision to stay or leave?

- While considering the definition above, how do you perceive distributive leadership characteristics impacting an African American teacher's decision to stay or leave?

In each interview with a participant, I used a field journal to notate any long pauses or fluctuations in the participant's tone. The notes made in the field journal served as a tool to help me review any of my possible assumptions and biases notated during the study. By taking this measure, it helped to avoid losing the trustworthiness of the study's findings (Mohajan, 2018).

Data Analysis

Data analysis during qualitative research is conducted using the lens of the conceptual framework, which includes the theories of transformational leadership and distributive leadership. Specifically, the conceptual framework had aspects of distributive leadership, which consist of shared responsibility and interactions among multiple leaders, their followers, and the nature of each situation (Sol, 2021), and aspects of transformational leadership, which consist of concepts of idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Northouse, 2019; Sun & Henderson, 2016). These transformational and distributive leadership components guided the qualitative study as the interview questions explored K-8 principal perceptions of challenges faced when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. Interview transcripts with participants' responses were the primary data to understand K-8 school principals' perceptions of low African American K-8 schoolteacher retention and barriers to persistence for this population of educators.

Using traditional qualitative methods, I initially recorded each interview using Otter.ai recording software, which was accessible with digital meeting platform recording conferencing systems. Participants' interviewing responses were collected and analyzed. To begin coding, I reviewed interview transcripts while listening to each interview recording to ensure each interview transcript was accurate. After the interviewing process, I conducted an additional review of each interview transcript to incorporate within the literature review and conceptual framework before closely scrutinizing data to categorize common words and phrases into themes. The non-linear process involved a sequential order of data input until the process was completed (Saldaña, 2016). The data was compiled, and a disassembling process occurred to create smaller pieces of information for analysis. I implemented open coding, highlighting repeating ideas, phrases, and words until a category was developed (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

I categorized the codes into various levels. I used a spreadsheet to help me to sort the codes into themes and broader categories. I continued this process until emergent themes were evident (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). To organize the data, I developed a matrix that illustrated patterns and helped to interpret the data. A new narrative was illustrated in my findings through creative tables and graphs that provided in-depth information about the data. I analyzed my research question using the process of reasoning, which involved deductive and inductive methods (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The following elements accommodated a comprehensive interpretation: accuracy, credibility, completeness, value-added, and fairness (Saldaña, 2016). I concluded my study by reviewing the concepts, generalizations, and research discussed in the study (Saldaña, 2016).

Coding Strategies

Coding is essential to analyzing qualitative data, as it includes acknowledging and sorting concepts in data (Peesker et al., 2019; Turner-Bowker et al., 2018). Qualitative researchers usually follow three levels of coding: open-coding, axial-coding, and selective coding (Wei et al., 2018). The first level of coding, known as open-coding, started after I conducted an interview with the first participant in my study.

The open-coding phase consisted of taking notes while reviewing information discussed in participant interviews to link to data within the study. I individually reviewed each participant interview, then collectively analyzed the information discussed in interviews to develop any further possible connections to data. Additionally, I created a multi-colored system of coding to group alike words and phrases found when examining each participant's interview response before moving to second-level coding, known as axial-level coding (Williams & Moser, 2019). After identifying the open-codes from the first level of coding, I reevaluated open-codes in the axial-coding stage of analyzing qualitative data (Wei et al., 2018; Williams & Moser, 2019).

During the axial-coding phase, I revisited the transcribed interview data and comprehensively analyzed it additional times to confirm, revise, coordinate, and sort (Wei et al., 2018; Williams & Moser, 2019). I moved on to the selective-coding phase, which led to themes to finalize the analysis (Saunders et al., 2018). Using transformational leadership and distributive leadership as a conceptual lens for the coding process, I created meaningful and explanatory depictions of participants' experiences with the information discussed in the literature review.

Credibility

Credibility refers to the trustworthiness of data in the study (Astroth & Chung, 2018). Credibility can be increased in a study by the researcher practicing their interview questions with a peer or teacher (Forero et al., 2018). To confirm that the information found in the study was credible, I conducted one practice interview with my committee chair before collecting data to “refine the overall process using the interview protocol, time-management and the overall running of the interviews” (Forero et al., 2018, p. 5). This technique increased the credibility of the data I collected and my findings. I also created descriptions based on the experiences provided by K-8 school principals’ perceptions of reasons for low African American K-8 teacher retention (Gallo et al., 2018). I reinforced data credibility by involving a peer reviewer to assess the study (Astroth & Chung, 2018). I also increased credibility by conducting a prolonged review of the data collected, as I listened to audio files and reviewed transcripts from interviews multiple times. While I did not conduct a member check, I sent interview transcripts for transcript verification to all participants immediately upon my review to ensure alignment with the audio recording of each interview.

Dependability

Evidence of dependability was demonstrated by ensuring that access to information was secure with passcode protection, as only I had access to data collected from the study. Dependability is evident when researchers assess the decisions made during a qualitative study (Baillie, 2015). To guarantee dependability, I kept a detailed timeline of the research process in a journal, which preserved transparency throughout

the study and ensured that the study's findings were consistent and able to be replicated (Astroth & Chung, 2018; Connelly, 2016). This journal contained my notes regarding all events and decisions I made during the qualitative investigation (Connelly, 2016).

Confirmability

Confirmability assures that more individuals could develop the same results as the study's findings (Forero et al., 2018; Mohajan, 2018). A basic qualitative design supports confirmability through peer-reviewed references to demonstrate how the data aligns with previous findings (Astroth & Chung, 2018). In my investigation, data was collected in a single MSD and limited to just K-8 principals, so I looked at scholarship conducted in similar settings to confirm anticipated and emergent themes. The reflexive journal in this study was used as a form of confirmability, and I reflected on biases and subjectivities in avoidance of placing pre-conceived biases in the research study regarding K-8 school principals' perceptions of low African American K-8 teacher retention during the COVID-19 pandemic (Astroth & Chung, 2018). The journal allowed me to consider elements of participants' responses that align with my professional experience in K-8 settings in a different district in the same state where the study will be conducted.

Transferability

I provided descriptive findings regarding K-8 school principals' perceptions of why African American K-8 teacher retention during the COVID-19 pandemic would be transferable. Transferability strategies ensured that this study's findings could be interpreted into various concerns, contexts, or circumstances (Mohajan, 2018). The saturated qualitative data provided multiple contexts used in basic qualitative research

methodology (Baillie, 2015). Additionally, the study's descriptions accurately depicted K-8 school principals' perceptions of K-8 school principals in MSD about the challenges of implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers.

Data Analysis Results

This qualitative project study explored the perceptions of K-8 principals in a MSD about the low retention of African American teachers in their buildings. In this study, five principals were interviewed about their experience and ideas regarding the retention of African American K-8 teachers based on an interview protocol. The principals were asked 16 questions in the interview, which gave them the opportunity to share their full perceptions on African American K-8 teacher retention. These semistructured interviews were recorded and then transcribed through the software Otter.ai. All participants in the study consented to be recorded for transcription purposes. The participants varied in their experience as principals, and all participants were K-8 principals serving an economically disadvantaged student population.

After conducting an initial round of open coding, I created 36 codes based on words and phrases commonly used in interviews. After conducting a round of axial coding, in which interviews along with words and phrases participants stated were reviewed, the number of codes present was collapsed to 27 codes. After conducting a round of selective coding, where I finalized codes and identified emergent categories, the number of codes present was reduced to 14. Ultimately, through selective coding, three themes were emergent. The three themes present were the following:

1. K-8 Principals' lack of awareness of the importance of low retention among African American K-8 teachers affects their efforts to keep African American K-8 teachers,
2. The school culture that K-8 Midwestern principals create impacts African American K-8 teacher retention, and
3. The leadership of K-8 Midwestern principals significantly impacts African American K-8 teacher retention.

Findings

The findings from the research question, “What challenges do some K-8 principals in one MSD face when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers,” had three themes. The first theme was that K-8 Principals' lack of awareness of the importance of low retention among African American K-8 teachers affects their efforts to keep African American K-8 teachers. The second theme was that the school culture that K-8 Midwestern principals create impacts African American K-8 teacher retention. The third theme was that the leadership of K-8 Midwestern principals significantly impacts African American K-8 teacher retention.

Theme 1: K-8 Principals' lack of awareness of the importance of low retention among African American K-8 teachers affects their efforts to keep African American K-8 teachers.

My research study reinforces that principals can significantly impact the retention of African American K-8 teachers by the actions they take. For a school and its staff to thrive, a principal must be attentive to the needs of the school and the staff (Warrick,

2018). The participants in this study mentioned their perceptions of efforts toward the retention of African American K-8 teacher retention and, by doing so, showed a lack of awareness of the issues of low African American K-8 teacher retention. Participant 3 stated,

You're gonna struggle a lot more with retention, especially in a school like this one. I think there's always going to be barriers to these efforts because a lot of people who are not African American are not going to understand why you're taking the time out or doing this type of thing.

Principals' actions significantly impact the retention of teachers, and when principals take the time to acknowledge their teachers and develop positive interactions with them, teachers are more likely to be retained (Liebowitz & Poter, 2019; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). My study supports and addresses the challenges and responsibilities that Midwestern K-8 principals have with the awareness of the low retention of African American K-8 teachers, which affects their efforts to retain African American K-8 teachers. By conducting interviews with K-8 Principals, most K-8 principals deemed specific efforts to keep African American teachers of little importance, whereas some principals did not understand the significance of providing support with specific challenges African American K-8 teachers face. Participant 1 stated,

I don't think there's anything specific that I've done differently to support a teacher of color. I've just always done the work to support teachers. Period. It's just so hard for me to like tease out like that African American component.

Participant 1 commented, “You know, I’d probably take for granted that not all African American teachers feel comfortable saying to their white principal, you know, in five years, I would like to be an administrator, help me get there.” When asked specific questions about strategies used to retain African American K-8 teachers, many participants avoided the question entirely. Participant 1 openly shared, “This gets hard for me because when I start thinking through things like that, you know, like it almost by identifying certain, I guess, strategies for me, it makes me feel like I’m more decisive than inclusive.” Participant 2 noted that they did not take specific effort toward retaining African American teachers. “I don’t know. I mean, nothing beyond what I would typically do. I would have no reason to think that race would impact them more or less than any other race”

Warrick (2018) noted that school leaders will need to have skills extending beyond ensuring the simple function of a school building, with a focus towards the improvement, efficiency, and growth of a school building. In this study, a participant emphasized that Midwestern K-8 principals as leaders must extend their leadership beyond the simple function of their building and be attentive to issues and important concepts that affect the staff they serve. Participant 3 gave the following response:

And as a leader, it’s your job, to give people opportunities and to try to create a place that is responsible. To me, we have a responsibility to serve different cultures. And to do that you can’t be an all-white play and be able to serve different cultures. You have to bring in different cultures, to change people’s mindsets and help them understand how to function with different cultures to have

that sort of impact. And so I will look for ways to do that. And look for ways to help. You know, if we need to create a new club or a new position, to be able to increase that side of things, that's what we will do because it's going to benefit both our students and our teachers. And it will keep teachers of color in your building.

Given that the majority of K-8 principals are not aware of the low retention of African American K-8 teachers, their effort toward ensuring African American teachers are retained in their schools is minimal or not identifiable, as stated by Participant 3.

Theme 2: The school culture that K-8 Midwestern principals create impacts African American K-8 teacher retention.

Principals have a pertinent impact on the retention of teachers, where their influence on school culture can have a sizeable impact on a teacher's willingness to stay in their building (Baptiste, 2019). Principals are key factors in the development and components of school culture in their buildings, which can directly impact a teacher's decision to stay or leave, especially if teachers are not included in decisions made by the principal (Baptiste, 2019). All participants described their culture, including issues the building has faced, and their impact on the function and culture of their school building.

Participant 1 stated,

We're working for a huge cultural problem. I don't even think we have a functioning vision and mission anymore. We don't reference it. The systems weren't in place for the five step process. We did not have a functioning PBIS system. We didn't do anything positive with parent engagement. There was not a

structure for really doing anything. And so, in absence of that structure, everybody just kind of did their own thing.

Participant 2 stated,

Culture sometimes can be tricky to define because you're getting the perspective of somebody who's right here within the culture. I get a good sense of culture by being an outsider than coming into the building, so, I do try to take into account a lot of the perceptions that I hear from the buildings.

As principals have a serious effect on the school culture, and school culture teacher retention, principals are responsible to develop and sustain a school culture that embraces each teacher to improve retention (Atasoy, 2020).

Participant 3 stated the following:

So we had a lot of hiring of newer teachers and teachers within the first five years of their teaching had been brought in we were able to find ourselves some more experienced teachers with that, but there's probably two or three that had experience in the group that we brought in. Part of staff leaving was this place needed a culture change needed a shift in the culture, to better serve the needs of our students. We're also implementing a thing called a house system this year to help build culture. So last year, we seemed it was coming off COVID So that had something to do with it, but the relationship aspect wasn't there between teachers and students and between students and students. And so we're implementing a house system where we have 10 separate houses 70 kids and each house approximately four to six staff members, certified and classified to oversee the

houses where we're doing things to work on the social emotional learning and build up a culture of support instead of kind of you're on your own.

Taking time to develop and sustain school culture as a principal is crucial because it seriously impacts African American K-8 teacher retention (Sezgin, 2020). For a school culture to thrive, both teachers and principals must be included in the process to share goals and support one another (Sezgin, 2020). Additionally, to develop and sustain the school culture, teachers and school principals must communicate, stay informed, and share their experiences (Sezgin, 2020).

When discussing the importance of school culture, Participant 3 stated the following:

People of any color oftentimes need to see a model of someone that is someone of their color. You realize they can also do something. We had a Black president. Now we have a Black vice president. We have someone who's Black that's on the Supreme Court. People often will identify with people of their own color. And when they see people be successful, they realize they can see where they might not otherwise. And I think people majority racial groups, which are countries white are automatically have some of their because you know, white privilege for lack of a better word to be honest with you, because that's what's known. You know, I, it's important for me to bring in staff and people of different cultures and colors, because I think they can relate to the students in a different way. You know, I realized I do have one more Black teacher who's an instructional specialist. And I thought of him because he's one of those teachers who is able to

relate we have a big Somali population. The kids will gravitate to him because of that. And once you have the relationship, then you can have the learning.

A principal's actions have an effect on the development and implementation of school culture (Riveras-León, 2020). A principal's actions show what is expected in a school's culture (Ryu et al., 2022). In this study, one participant acknowledged the need for diversity in school culture and more African American K-8 teachers involved in the development of school culture. As stated by Participant 3,

And, you know, can we bring in more diversity? ...If we're not bringing in diversity? Why is that? Why are we not having people of color? You know, why there are not enough Black people on the staff? Why is it happening and getting their opinions on what can be done differently.

Participant 4 stated the following:

If I hear other people may be misinterpreting things from a cultural standpoint, like, you know, or from a just diversity of experience that I tried to make sure like, you know, hey, we're all just, you know, we each come to things from a different way and we need to be open to each other, right? So that openness to different perspectives, I hope helps everyone want to stay in this building, but I hope in particular, it does help my African American staff members feel like this is a good place to be because I know it's really hard that they are there. They're always going to be in the minority, you know, and that's a very challenging place to be. So it's not necessarily different, but I guess I am cognizant of it and try be

thoughtful about it and try to make sure that I'm checking in to provide that support and then it does feel like a place that is a good place to be.

Theme 3: The Leadership of K-8 Midwestern Principals Impacts African American K-8 Teacher Retention

Subtheme 1: Transformational and Distributive Leadership

A principal's leadership is the driving force in the success and growth of a school and is responsible for driving the effort to promote African American K-8 teacher retention. All participants in this study described the impact of transformational leadership and distributive leadership characteristics on the retention of all teachers in their building instead of focusing solely on African American K-8 teachers. These participants stated that the main aspects of transformational leadership and distributive leadership that are most important in the retention of a teacher yet most challenging in schools are promoting inclusivity and diversity, providing leadership opportunities, and ensuring teachers are valued. Participant 3 also mentioned the importance of providing exposure to different cultures and to "make sure we have a diverse atmosphere and one that's culturally responsive." However, they did not specifically reference African American K-8 teachers.

Participant 3 stated the following:

I find that once again, when people are in diverse environments, you need to make sure as a leader that you're helping them understand different ways of doing things. Even though we find it to be totally acceptable to help people understand

differences that different races have to go through, there are a lot of people who are in disagreement with that.

Subtheme 2: Principals Need Coaches to Help Improve African American Teacher Retention

Participants talked about the retention of African American K-8 teachers and teachers of all racial minority groups as if they were synonymous. Each racial minority group has different specific challenges and stereotypes that they must grapple with, and the style, effort, and strategies towards retaining each racial minority group of K-8 teachers is not the same. Therefore, a K-8 principal's strategies to retaining African American K-8 Teachers needs to be specific, individualized, and intentional. Based on data analyzed in this study, Midwestern K-8 principals continue to struggle to retain African American K-8 teachers but do rely heavily on their instructional coaches to help them deepen their understanding of and relationship with K-8 teachers. By providing coaches for K-8 principals that offer critical feedback with specific strategies for the retention of African American teachers, coaches can help K-8 principals to think deeper about the issue and develop individualized strategies for the retention of African American K-8 teachers in their building (Lackritz, 2019).

K-8 principals have a significant impact on K-8 teachers, African American K-8 teachers in particular. Having a coach for principals could be beneficial for principals and the African American K-8 teachers they lead. Participant 1 stated "I also brought in a mindset coach, because I don't think anybody's really invested in them as teachers in a long time." Participant 2 stated the following:

I rely heavily on the instructional coaches in this building, who are very knowledgeable, and experts in their field and have a really nice way of presenting information that can be then quickly digested and used by teachers to help support student learning. This is something which I work closely with my coaches to help review and analyze data to help support this decision making which I then share with our leadership team to really kind of round it out, smooth up the language, and make sure everybody feels comfortable and confident with what's been expected.

Participant 5 remarked that they have more questions than solutions to retaining African American K-8 teachers. By having a coach to help principals sort through the questions that principals have about African American K-8 teacher retention can better develop and implement strategies for African American K-8 teacher retention.

Discrepant Cases

In this study, a qualitative approach was used to collect and analyze data, as well as to assess possible discrepant cases, where certain data collected does not align with other data. No data collected from participants were completely uncharacteristic of what was expected. Within the data collected, minor discrepancies were present. Out of the participants that were interviewed, and two participants had a considerable number of years of expertise as principals who have served students from any grade from K-8th grade. Both participants, with abundant years of expertise, had issues with retaining African American K-8 teachers and provided more lengthy responses regarding the issue. The remaining participants, particularly Participants 4 and 5, had fewer years of

experience with retaining African American K-8 teachers and provided shorter responses. Participants 4 and 5 provided responses that were focused on the entire population of their teachers rather than specifying their African American teachers, in which they were among most participants who showed a lack of awareness of the need for African American K-8 teacher retention. Therefore, the data presented for Participants 4 and 5 are based on both Participants' perceptions in the context of challenges of African American K-8 teacher retention, which is the focus of the study. In the context of challenges of African American K-8 teacher retention, Participant 4 focused on school culture in their response, while Participant 5 focused on leadership, so the data presented for the latter participants were organized according to emergent themes present. Despite the differences of experience in various areas among participants, such as in years of expertise and the grade level served in, most participants in the study had similar perceptions of the low retention of African American K-8 teachers in a MSD.

Evidence of Quality

This study was approved by Walden University's IRB. Participants for this study were chosen based on specific criteria, where participants had to be a principal that served students of any grade between K-8th grade and serve at least one African American teacher in their building. Each participant's identity was kept confidential by replacing their name with a number and removing any mention of the location of the school and school district they serve in transcripts. Participants were also reminded of the confidentiality of their interviews, which contributed to the evidence of quality by generating data with genuine and honest responses. To further ensure evidence of quality

in data, participants had the opportunity to provide their full perceptions on the low retention of African American K-8 teachers in interviews, in which I would provide follow-up questions to fully capture each participant's perceptions. Each interview was recorded and transcribed by the digital tool Otter.ai. After reviewing each participant's interview transcripts for possible errors, interview transcripts were then sent to the participants to further confirm the data collected or to revise the transcript sent. By partaking in the previous methods, the data is credible and has evidence of quality.

Summary

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of K-8 school principals in one MSD on the challenges of retention among African American teachers and strategies to increase retention. The problem addressed in this study is the low retention of African American K-8 teachers in an MSD. Retention of teachers of color is one of the most important drivers of increasing the academic performance of students of color. Training principals to purposefully retain K-8 African American teachers is especially important and urgent in schools that serve a high population of students of color. The data collected in this study helped me to gain a deeper understanding of Midwestern K-8 principals' perceptions on the low retention of K-8 African American teachers. After the data was analyzed, I concluded that participants could benefit from a 3-day professional development where coaches will be assigned to support participants throughout the school year.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The proposed project is a 3-day interactive professional development for Midwestern K-8 principals to inform and train them on retaining African American teachers in their schools. The project's design was founded on research that suggests sessions of professional development in the form of a series that helped to produce skills and knowledge over time (Davis, 2020). The structure and subjects of the professional development project were constructed based on principals' thoughts and needs expressed in one-on-one interviews. Professional development sessions are focused on leadership, school culture, and viable strategies for African American teacher retention. The professional development project establishes a personal and group connection to the material.

Goals of the Professional Development Project

The goal of the 3-day professional development is to help Midwestern K-8 principals to improve retention among K-8 African American teachers in their schools. By informing and training Midwestern K-8 principals on the low retention of African American K-8 teachers using resources of high quality, the professional development project will help Midwestern K-8 principals retain African American K-8 teachers. Based on interviews with Midwestern K-8 principals, the awareness of the importance of low retention of African American K-8 teachers was low among principals. Due to a lack of awareness among Midwestern K-8 principals, I focused on making the professional development project about self-reflection, improving awareness, and applying awareness

to areas principals have a significant impact. Within professional development sessions, Midwestern K-8 principals will be able to collaborate and build relationships with fellow principals as they reflect on ways to improve African American K-8 teacher retention through their awareness. Over the course of 3 days, Midwestern K-8 principals will reflect on their impact on African American K-8 teacher retention and develop ways to improve retention among this demographic.

Components of the Professional Development Project

The objective of the professional development project is to help principals reflect on the impact of school culture and their leadership style on the retention of African American K-8 teachers. The components of the project focus on viable strategies for African American K-8 teachers, the impact of school culture on African American K-8 teacher retention, and the impact of leadership on African American K-8 teacher retention. The professional development project aims to incorporate the aspects of transformational and distributive leadership into certain subjects of the professional development project.

Rationale

By conducting one-on-one semistructured interviews with Midwestern K-8 principals, I found that Midwestern K-8 principals faced barriers to retaining African American K-8 teachers and needed support. Based on interviews, I found that K-8 principals had little awareness of racial challenges that affect African American K-8 teachers and the importance of retaining African American K-8 teachers. My professional development project fills the awareness gap identified in interviews by educating K-8

principals on the importance of retaining African American K-8 teachers and helping K-8 principals develop strategies for retaining African American K-8 teachers based on their leadership and school culture. A professional development experience is most appropriate for addressing possible blind spots, biases, professionalism, school culture, and isolation. The professional development project creates a safe learning environment that encourages K-8 principals to become more culturally aware and sensitive to promoting diversity in their schools to create a school environment where African American K-8 teachers thrive.

Selecting a project focused on professional development gives Midwestern K-8 principals tools to use immediately on the job was most important. Given that African American K-8 teachers in Midwestern K-8 schools have been retained at very low rates, the professional development project aimed to inform Midwestern K-8 principals about the importance of African American K-8 teacher retention and help K-8 principals to reflect on how they can improve African American K-8 teacher retention through their school culture and leadership. The learning experience for Midwestern K-8 principals during professional development would involve individual and collaborative activities that support Midwestern K-8 principals in their efforts to retain African American K-8 teachers.

Review of the Literature

The research question for this project study was: What challenges do some K-8 principals in one MSD face when implementing strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers? To address this research question, I conducted semistructured

interviews with five Midwestern K-8 principals with at least one African American teacher employed in their school. By conducting data analysis, I found that the principals had little awareness of the importance of African American K-8 teacher retention. The literature review was based on the choice of professional development for the project. The selection of a professional development project supported Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and Gronn's (2000) distributive leadership theory, which promotes professional development with a focus on self-reflection and improvement.

Similar to the first literature review, when selecting literature for this review, I accessed the databases of the Walden University Library, Google Scholar, SAGE, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and ERIC. I limited database searches to peer-reviewed journals published within the last 5 years. The keywords used within the literature search included: *Leadership Coaching, School Principals and Professional Development, Principal Professional Development, Professional Development, and Coaching and Professional Development.*

Professional Development

Professional development has been an essential factor in advancing the education field. Professional development can examine and address aspects of schools, such as relational dispositions (Davis et al., 2020). Some factors cause challenges for principals to participate in professional development, such as organizational features involving school climate (Klein & Schwanenberg, 2020). Professional development can impact factors of school capacity (Choy & Chua, 2019; Rowland, 2017). Principal professional

development can help to improve teacher retention (Steinberg & Yang, 2022).

Professional development encourages teachers and administrators to better themselves in their profession by improving their skills and knowledge in education (Aas & Blom, 2017; Lazenby et al., 2020). A professional development project was most appropriate for this study because the project aligned with the most common form of delivery for improving skills and knowledge for teachers and administrators.

Professional development has the purpose of engaging participants to think critically, communicate with others, and work with others to become more competent and effective in their respective fields (Koonce et al., 2019; Nasreen & Odhiambo, 2018). A professional development project provides specialized training which needs to be intentional, relevant, and transferable to foster participant engagement (Cunningham et al., 2018; Nasreen & Odhiambo, 2018). Furthermore, professional development can be more engaging for principals by taking a teaching-learning approach, making professional development more relevant and implementable (Honig & Rainey, 2019; Paulsen & Hjertø, 2019). Professional development that stimulates engagement among principals helps principals to change their perspectives and perceptions of professional development and embrace opportunities to grow through professional development (Samson & Charles, 2018).

By creating a professional development project for Midwestern K-8 principals, participants can stay informed on the significance of low African American K-8 teacher retention. To make professional development effective, a solid foundation of knowledge must continue to be built (Cunningham et al., 2018). In this professional development

project, Midwestern K-8 principals will first need a foundation of awareness of low African American K-8 teacher retention and its importance. K-8 principals will then apply their awareness to reflect on their leadership style and their school's culture and ultimately determine their influence on African American K-8 teacher retention. By Midwestern K-8 principals determining their influence on African American K-8 teacher retention in their school, they can then implement a plan to address their areas of influence and improve African American K-8 teacher retention in their school.

Furthermore, the efficacy of professional development improves when principals have coaches and a network of principals to guide them (Daniëls et al., 2019; Service et al., 2017). Service et al. (2017) signified adding coaching to the continuous professional development of principals. By providing professional development with a coach, principals can enrich their reflections on their leadership and influence to foster a new perspective on school culture (Lewis & Scott, 2020; Service et al., 2017). Incorporating coaching into a professional development project's agenda directly helps principals improve (Gumus, 2019; Lewis & Scott, 2020). By creating a network of principals for learning and promoting conversational discussions in professional development, principals can become more successful in leadership at their schools (Hildreth et al., 2018; Lewis & Scott, 2020). Although current literature contains many articles about the benefits of teacher professional development, a limited number of articles focused on the professional development of principals. Hildreth et al. (2018) emphasized that the continuous professional development of principals is so important that principal professional development may be more important than the professional development of

teachers. Professional development for principals helps to expand their knowledge and to maintain their efficacy as a leader (Gümüş & Bellibaş, 2020), which was essential for the framework for this project.

Professional development is continuous, intentional, and provides an opportunity for principals to grow (Gordon, 2020), making it essential for school districts to implement professional development that involves coaching principals in improving their leadership and skills (Desimone & Pak, 2017). In this professional development project, the purpose was to help Midwestern K-8 principals become aware of and address the need for African American K-8 retention in their schools by developing specific strategies. Each session of professional development has the objective of helping principals develop and apply awareness of low African American K-8 teacher retention to increase retention in their schools.

Professional Development Justification

By collecting data using semistructured and individual interviews, targeted professional development focused on applicable and implementable methods is beneficial for principals in their schools. Professional development is essential for principals, especially when focusing on a leader's self-reflection (Sofa & Abonyi, 2017). In order to make professional development effective for principals, it must be relevant to the current state of a principal's building, where principals can easily apply the topics learned in professional development to the current situation of their school (Service et al., 2017). As principals have increasing responsibilities and are crucial figures in public education, continuous professional development for principals is very significant.

A professional development project was most appropriate for this study because it can be used to provide principals with easily implementable strategies for their schools (Nasreen & Odhiambo, 2018). A professional development project was most appropriate for this study because it encourages self-reflection among participants to help them learn and grow. The main objective of this professional development project was to inform Midwestern K-8 principals about the need for African American K-8 teacher retention and have Midwestern K-8 principals apply their awareness to develop strategies to improve African American K-8 teacher retention at their schools.

In this study, coaching for principals was added to the framework of the professional development project. By adding coaching to the framework, coaches can provide support and advice for principals as they apply strategies for African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools (Lewis & Scott, 2020; Tingle et al., 2019). Additionally, coaches can help principals in problem-solving while applying their awareness of low African American K-8 teacher retention and implementing strategies to improve the latter in their schools (Tingle et al., 2019). Coaches can ask questions, provide feedback, and create a trusting relationship with principals in and beyond the duration of the professional development project (Tingle et al., 2019). Coaching during and after professional development helps principals to think critically about how they develop and apply strategies to improve the retention of African American K-8 teachers. By incorporating coaching into professional development and having coaches establish relationships with principals, principals are more likely to apply the knowledge gained

from professional development at their schools (Lewis & Scott, 2020; Versland & Erickson, 2017).

Project Description

The findings of this study served as the basis for the development of a professional development project. The 3-day professional development project has the ultimate goal of helping Midwestern K-8 principals improve the retention of African American K-8 teachers in their schools. The professional development project informs Midwestern K-8 principals about the low retention of African American K-8 teachers and helps them develop strategies to improve retention by reflecting on school culture and leadership. Coaches are also a part of the professional development framework. Coaches will be introduced to Midwestern K-8 principals on Day 2 of the professional development to help them deepen their reflections on their school culture and leadership and implement strategies for retention in their schools. Each day of the 3-day professional development will consist of a full day of content.. The materials for the 3-day professional development include a PowerPoint presentation for each day, pre-and post-assessments, self-reflection prompts, exit tickets, and agendas for participants (see Appendix A).

Potential Resources

The potential resources needed for the 3-day professional development will be based on the location of the professional development, which will be in person at an air-conditioned location. The location of the professional development would also need to have or create break-out rooms as needed. The location of the professional development

will need a projector, projection screen, equipment to connect the device to the projector, internet access, and resources for technology assistance. Water and light snacks for participants will be provided each day of the professional development. Principals will need to be available for each full day of professional development. Coaches will need to be available for Days 2 and 3 of the professional development and for further contact with participants to help implement skills learned in the professional development program. Coaches will be selected based on their experience and success in motivating and coaching administrators in education to achieve their goals. Coaches will have experience with helping K-8 principals reflect and execute a vision they have for their school. Coaches with experience in helping K-8 principals increasing the retention of K-8 teachers, or specifically African American K-8 teachers, will be preferred. Coaches will be supervised by the school district the principal serves in, where the coach will report to the school district administration to assess the participant's progress in executing the plan they developed for African American K-8 teacher retention during the professional development program. Self-reflection slips and exit tickets will be provided each day of the professional development program.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

There are two potential barriers to implementing the 3-day professional development program. The first potential barrier to implementing the project is possible scheduling conflicts with the professional development dates. As the professional development will last 3 full days, when principals return to work and prepare for students, it is important to ensure that principals can attend the professional development.

A solution to this barrier is to schedule the professional development 3 months in advance for the event to have a solidified location, for MSDs to be notified of and share the event, and for principals to be notified by school districts and social communication about the event. The proposed solution allows participants to schedule their time commitments and vacations around the scheduled professional development. The second potential barrier to implementing the project is the coordination required to ensure that the program attendance will be capped at seven participants. As participants will be provided with coaches to assist them and help them reflect deeper, there will also need to be one coach assigned to each participant in the professional development. Each coach will agree to coach the participants for self-reflection in professional development and to help implement solutions for retention after the program. As a solution, principals can register for professional development until one month before the start date, allowing necessary preparation for the event.

Implementation Proposal and Timeline

The 3-day professional development program would start before classes begin in the Fall. The professional development program will commence at a central location. Participants will be present for all three days of the professional development project. Coaches will be present on Days 2 and 3 of the professional development project. For each of the three days of professional development, the professional development will start at 8:00 am and end at 4:30 pm. A light breakfast, snacks, and water will be provided, and participants can order lunch or bring lunch to the central location each day. The days of professional development will focus on awareness and development of strategies for

low retention of African American K-8 teachers. Day 1 of the professional development will consist of a pre-assessment, activities, group exercises, and a self-reflection based on becoming aware of the need for African American K-8 teacher retention. Day 2 of the professional development will consist of activities, coaching, group exercises, and a self-reflection based on applying awareness of the need for African American K-8 teacher retention to Midwestern K-8 principals' school culture. Day 3 of the professional development will consist of activities, coaching, group exercises, a self-reflection, and a post-assessment based on applying awareness of the need for African American K-8 teacher retention to Midwestern K-8 principals' leadership. Breakout rooms will be used to help participants be engaged in activities and group exercises as needed. Coaches will actively work with participants during the professional development to help them to reflect deeper on how they can apply their awareness to their school culture and leadership. Coaches will also work with participants to help them implement strategies they developed to improve African American K-8 teacher retention during the professional development in their schools.

Roles and Responsibilities

My role will be to develop, implement, and coordinate the 3-day professional development project. I will develop an agenda, power points, activities, group exercises, pre- and post-assessment slips, self-reflection slips, exit tickets, and all content for professional development. Exit tickets that participants will fill out each day will serve as evaluations in professional development. I will find and confirm the venue for the professional development. I will then reach out to MSDs to share the event 3 months

prior to the event date. MSDs have the role of reaching out to principals about the event and providing registration information. Based on the number of principals who register for the program, I will contact the appropriate number of coaches to confirm their commitment to helping participants during and beyond the professional development program. Coaches have the responsibility of committing to the professional development program. I will contact coaches and participants about the program dates and central location. During the professional development program, I will coordinate and facilitate each session of the professional development program. The participants in the professional development program are responsible for attending the program, having an open mind, being engaged, and being willing to acknowledge possible shortcomings to grow.

Project Evaluation Plan

The evaluations planned for the professional development project are based on Guskey's (2002) five steps of professional development evaluation. Using Guskey's (2002) model for professional development evaluation, I can assess how participants respond to, reflect on, and implement what they are learning. Levels 1 and 2 of Guskey's (2002) model assess participants' reactions and learning. For Levels 1 and 2 of Guskey's (2002) model, I will use a pre-assessment, exit tickets with reflections. A post-assessment, where a pre-assessment will be used on Day 1, exit tickets will be used on all three days of the professional development. The post-assessment will be used on Day 3 of the professional development. The pre-assessment will assess how aware Midwestern K-8 principals are of low African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools. The

exit tickets serve to reinforce the topics that participants learned each day in the professional development. The post-assessment will assess how aware Midwestern K-8 principals are of the importance of retention of African American K-8 teachers and how they will apply their awareness to improving retention among the demographic. After the professional development program, I also want to check in with participants every 6 months to see how they have implemented the solutions they developed for African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools during the professional development. Levels 3 through 5 in Guskey's (2002) evaluation model involves assessing the initial implementation, implementation progress, and implementation outcomes of topics learned in the professional development after the professional development has ended. For Levels 3 through 5 of Guskey's (2002) professional development evaluation model, the coaches assigned to participants and participants will check in with me every 6 months. Participants will individually reflect on their growth in the 6 months, the support of their supervisors and staff to implement changes, and the impact of their implementation efforts on their school's issues. Coaches will also reflect on the growth of participants in the 6 months, the support of the participant's supervisors and staff to implement changes, and the impact of participants' implementation efforts on their school's issues.

Project Implications

The project will have positive social change implications by providing Midwestern K-8 principals with tools to help them gain awareness of African American K-8 teacher retention, apply their awareness to their school culture and leadership, and

develop strategies to increase African American teacher retention in their schools. By participating in professional development, Midwestern K-8 principals can deeply reflect on the impact of their leadership and school culture with the help of a coach and can develop African American K-8 teacher retention strategies specific to their school's needs. At the local level, the project can significantly close the gap between the MSD's representation of racial demographics among students and teachers. At the larger level, the project can help to aid the crisis of low African American K-8 teacher retention in MSDs with the development of specialized strategies for retention in each Midwestern K-8 principal's school.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

The project will help increase the retention of African American K-8 teachers, which is a significant challenge in schools. Implementing this project's K-8 school principal professional development would be beneficial by maintaining a demographic representation of teachers to the student population. This study focused on executing a 3-day professional development project to provide Midwestern K-8 principals with the necessary resources, training, research strategies, and support to help increase African American K-8 teacher retention. Creating this project brings awareness to K-8 school principals to implement strategies to reduce retention rates among African American K-8 teachers. The project study discussed strengths and limitations in addressing the problem with the perceptions of Midwestern K-8 principals on the low retention of African American K-8 teachers in the appropriate literature.

A strength of this project study is that Midwestern K-8 principals will have the opportunity to increase the retention of African American K-8 teachers in their schools. The professional development experience will help principals gain various perspectives from their colleagues. Having this opportunity helps Midwestern K-8 principals build relationships with their peers. A potential limitation could have been the small number of eligible participants to partake in the study because the study was strictly voluntary. Another limitation in the study could have been scheduling conflicts when scheduling interviews, as principals can have very busy schedules. A limitation of the project study was that the current literature contains few scholarly articles that discuss professional

development for school principals. In the future, researchers should consider further investigation into the professional development of principals.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The local problem was that some K-8 principals in one MSD were challenged to implement strategies to retain K-8 African American teachers. The study investigated the perceptions of Midwestern K-8 principals on K-8 African American teacher retention and K-8 school principal successes and challenges with efforts to retain African American K-8 teachers. To address the problem, K-8 principals were interviewed, and a professional development project was created. The problem could have been addressed by conducting various methods such as the following: online surveys, case studies, observational studies, focus groups, or interviews of MSD leaders to investigate the availability of implementable strategies to improve African American K-8 teacher retention.

An alternative definition of the problem could have been that there is an issue with district administrators not ensuring that principals are capable of collaborating with racially diverse staff during the hiring process. An alternative solution to the local problem would have been for district administrators to be trained to identify principals that can thrive in leading racially diverse staff. A second alternative definition of the problem could have been that Midwestern K-8 principals are not equipped and trained on how to improve African American K-8 teacher retention successfully. An alternative solution to that local problem could have been to provide ongoing professional development opportunities such as collegial relationships and culturally responsive training throughout the school year.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

In this qualitative study, I learned how to grow as a researcher and develop potential solutions to issues identified in my findings. By conducting research, I learned how to investigate human experiences from a qualitative perspective. By developing a project, I learned how to apply findings in my study to create a deliverable that can be implemented in schools like the site of this study. As a scholar, I faced rigorous challenges but gracefully persevered.

Research and Development of the Project: Lessons Learned

By conducting this study, I learned lessons on how to think critically and curiously as a qualitative researcher. Through a qualitative research lens, I learned to investigate human experiences intensely and develop interpretable and applicable conclusions through complex reasoning as a researcher. In the data collection stage, I applied critical thinking and curiosity to develop my research questions and while conducting participant interviews. I asked probing questions to develop further and understand my research. Qualitative research taught me that collecting data is significantly more rigorous than in theory.

Through the development of the project, I learned lessons on how to apply findings to create a product that will implicate positive social change in the field of education. By applying data collected from participants' experiences to the project's development, I created a project that can be implementable in schools similar to the study site. The project's development helped me actualize the study's results and think

systematically to provide an artifact based on the needs of K-8 principals exemplified in the study.

Reflective Analysis of Myself as a Scholar

Reflecting on my scholarship experience, I found the process to be rigorous and incalculable. The Walden University staff was encouraging and resourceful. As a scholar, I had a supportive advisor, instructors, and committee members. The university provided a wealth of resources to help me to succeed during the coursework and project study process. As a novice researcher, I acquired various abilities to effectively convey to the readers the findings and procedures of this study. I most appreciated reading, synthesizing, and analyzing journals and peer-reviewed articles. I felt that my purpose as a researcher was validated while completing my project. The scholarly writing process tremendously increased my confidence in writing my study. As a scholar, it was challenging at times to learn and discuss research methods. The study process was meaningful because it involved clear expectations of the development of the project, such as the following: prospectus, proposal, data collection, and final study.

My experiences at Walden University have strengthened my research skills. The research project experience fostered my confidence and ability to become a communal social change agent. The qualitative project study was captivating. I displayed respect and appreciation while interviewing participants, which developed a sense of trust and cohesiveness. I have grown as a practitioner and obtained a wealth of knowledge regarding how research can shape and provide scientific evidence for change.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

Based on the study's findings, it became clear that Midwestern K-8 principals needed professional development to improve K-8 African American teacher retention in their schools. I learned that most Midwestern K-8 principals were not aware of the issue of low retention of K-8 African American teachers. I gained an understanding of Midwestern K-8 principals' perceptions of K-8 African American teacher retention through interview responses. By coding to analyze my data, I found themes to apply to the development of my project. I learned that it is critical for principals to participate in professional development to build capacity and meet the school community's needs.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This study potentially impacts positive social change at the organizational level. Organizational positive social change can be fostered by providing Midwestern K-8 school districts with insight into the low retention of K-8 African American teachers and equipping Midwestern K-8 principals with resources to improve African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools. The school organization could benefit from including district leaders and coaches in professional development to support principals. Implementing the 3-day professional development project will help principals grow professionally to improve their school culture, assess their leadership style, and ultimately increase the retention of K-8 African American teachers. This study was based on the conceptual theory of Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and Gronn's (2000) distributive leadership theory. The selection of a professional development project supported Burns's transformational leadership theory and Gronn's

distributive leadership theory, which promotes professional development with a focus on self-reflection and improvement.

Additional literature is needed to investigate principal professional development in K-8 schools. Current literature focuses on the impact and benefit of teacher professional development; however, little literature focuses on the importance of principal professional development in schools. Also, I recommend future research focuses on the impact of coaching and professional development on the ability of principals to retain African American teachers.

Conclusion

This study focused on the Midwestern K-8 principals' perceptions of the low retention of K-8 African American teachers. Conducting a basic qualitative research study cultivated professional development opportunities for Midwestern K-8 principals to experience job-embedded experiences. The feedback from the professional development could better equip and guide the effectiveness of future principal efforts to implement strategies for increasing retention with African American K-8 teachers. The professional development can inspire principals to adopt strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers. Through literature review, data collection, and data analysis, it became evident that Midwestern K-8 principals need support to effectively retain African American K-8 teachers. The professional development emphasized the importance of principals building cohesive professional relationships with African American K-8 teachers. Several principals could appreciate the interactive professional development activities. The anonymous evaluations could be a tool that provides evidence that principals view the

professional development to be positive and information needed to extend throughout the school year and school district. Research supported the need for professional development that cultivates principals to be effective leaders who learn through job-embedded experiences, increase their content knowledge, and effectively retain their teachers.

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Appendix: The Project

Program Purpose

The purpose of the Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention professional development was to bring an awareness of African American K-8 low Teacher Retention that was identified during interviews with K-8 principals. The professional development experience would be most appropriate in addressing possible blind spots, biases, professionalism, school culture, and isolation. The professional development project was designed to create a safe learning environment to encourage K-8 principals to become more culturally aware and sensitive to promoting diversity in their schools.

By conducting one-on-one semistructured interviews with K-8 principals, Midwestern K-8 principals face barriers to retaining African American K-8 teachers and need support. Based on interviews, I found that K-8 principals had little awareness of racial challenges that affect African American K-8 teachers and the importance of retaining African American K-8 teachers. My professional development project fills the awareness gap identified in interviews by educating K-8 principals on the importance of retaining African American K-8 teachers and viable strategies. A professional development experience would be most appropriate in addressing possible blind spots, biases, professionalism, school culture, and isolation. The professional development project creates a safe learning environment that encourages K-8 principals to become more culturally aware and sensitive to promoting diversity in their schools. Selecting a project focused on professional development would give Midwestern K-8 principals tools

to use immediately on the job was most important. Given that African American K-8 teachers in Midwestern K-8 schools are being retained at very low rates, the professional development project aims to inform Midwestern K-8 principals about the importance of African American K-8 teacher retention. This experience could help K-8 principals to reflect on how they can improve the African American K-8 teacher retention through their school culture and leadership.

Program Goals

The goal of the 3-day professional development is to help Midwestern K-8 principals to improve retention among K-8 African American teachers in their schools. By informing and training Midwestern K-8 principals on the low retention of African American K-8 teachers using resources of high quality, the professional development project can help Midwestern K-8 principals retain African American K-8 teachers. Based on interviews with Midwestern K-8 principals, the awareness of the importance of low retention of African American K-8 teachers was low among principals. Due to a lack of awareness among Midwestern K-8 principals, I focused on making the professional development project about self-reflection, improving awareness, and applying awareness to areas principals have a significant impact. Within professional development sessions, Midwestern K-8 principals will be able to collaborate and build relationships with fellow principals as they reflect on ways they can improve African American K-8 teacher retention through their awareness. Over the course of 3 days, Midwestern K-8 principals will reflect on their impact on African American K-8 teacher retention and develop ways to improve retention among this demographic.

Learning Outcomes

The objective of the professional development project is to help principals reflect on the impact of school culture and their leadership style on the retention of African American K-8 teachers.

Target Audience: Midwestern K-8 principals.

Components

The components of the project are the following:

- The impact of school culture on African American K-8 teacher retention
- The impact of leadership on African American K-8 teacher retention.
- The professional development project also aims to incorporate the aspects of transformational and distributive leadership into certain subjects of the professional development project.

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan will consist of a pre assessment and post assessment, and a 3 day participant self reflection form. The pre assessment and post assessment will evaluate participants' awareness of low African American K-8 Teacher Retention. The forms are designed with opportunities for comprehensive responses and picking a rating based off the rating scale of: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. A 3 day self reflection form will be used to evaluate participants' daily comprehensive responses for each professional development topic.

Information from the assessment tool will be shared with district office leaders. These efforts would be to increase bring awareness to the need to increase low African

American K-8 Teacher Retention. The data collected will be used as a tool to help principals. Principals will be assigned to a coach based on their needs.

The type of evaluations planned for the professional development project are based on Guskey's (2002) five steps of professional development evaluation. By using Guskey's (2002) model for professional development evaluation, I can assess how participants are responding to, reflecting on, and implementing what they are learning. Levels 1 and 2 of Guskey's (2002) model are about assessing participants' reactions and learning. For Levels 1 and 2 of Guskey's (2002) model, I will use a pre assessment, exit tickets with reflections, and a post assessment, where a pre assessment will be used on Day 1, exit tickets will be used on all three days of the professional development, and the post assessment will be used on Day 3 of the professional development. The pre assessment will assess how aware Midwestern K-8 principals are of low African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools. The exit tickets serve to instill the topics that participants learned each day in the professional development. The post assessment will assess how aware Midwestern K-8 principals are of the importance of retention of African American K-8 teachers and how they will apply their awareness to improving retention among the demographic. After the professional development program, I also want to check in with participants every 6 months to see how they have implemented the solutions they developed to African American K-8 teacher retention in their schools during the professional development. Levels 3 through 5 in Guskey's (2002) evaluation model involve assessing the initial implementation, implementation progress, and outcomes of implementation of topics learned in the professional development after the

professional development has ended. For Levels 3 through 5 of Guskey's (2002) professional development evaluation model, the coaches assigned to participants and participants will check in with me every 6 months. Participants will individually reflect on their growth in the 6 month period, the support of their supervisors and staff to implement changes, and the impact of their implementation efforts on their school's issues. Coaches will also reflect on the growth of participants in the 6 month period, the support of the participants' supervisors and staff to implement changes, and the impact of participants' implementation efforts on their school's issues.

Agenda of Activities:

Day 1: Awareness of Low African American K-8 Teacher Retention

- Pre-assessment
- Have principals write about how they view the importance of African American K-8 teachers in the classroom. Have principals dialogue (small/whole groups)
- Have principals dialogue (small/whole groups) about the following: African American Teachers: Are they needed in the classroom?
- Discuss why retention of African American teachers is essential. Have principals write how they view the importance of African American K-8 teachers after learning about the impact of African American teachers in schools.
- Write and dialogue (small/whole group) about viable (general) strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers and ask principals which they view as the most important/easiest to implement in their school.

- Summarize the power point presentation. Have participants complete evaluation form.

Day 2: School Culture

- Introduce and Assign Coaches
- Have principals define/write what school culture is.
- Have principals share their definition of school culture with colleagues.
- Have principals describe their school culture and share with peers.
- Principals identify common areas of school culture principals and how they influence school culture
- Discuss how school culture impacts African American K-8 teacher retention and evaluate how principals can increase retention based on their personal definitions and descriptions of school culture and common areas focused on in school culture.
- Summarize the power point presentation. Have participants complete evaluation form.

Day 3: Leadership

- Have principals explain what leadership means as a principal.
- Have principles discuss their leadership styles, aspects, and values of their leadership style (underlying question: how do they lead?) and how they implement them in their school.
- Identify common areas of leadership (style, values, etc.) principals focus on.

- Discuss how leadership impacts African American K-8 teacher retention and evaluate how principals can increase retention based on their personal leadership styles and values and common areas principals focus on in leadership.
- Summarize the power point presentation. Have participants complete evaluation form.
- Post assessment

The PowerPoint contains the project study presentation that will be shown through all 3-full days. The presentation agenda will encompass a presenter, stakeholder representative, and coaches. The presenter notes are included as a guide on how the agenda will be implemented each day. The training will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. A complimentary breakfast will be served during sign in.

DAY 1 PowerPoint and Notes

Professional Development

Principal's Role in African
American K-8 Teacher Retention
Day 1

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Set up slide: Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention



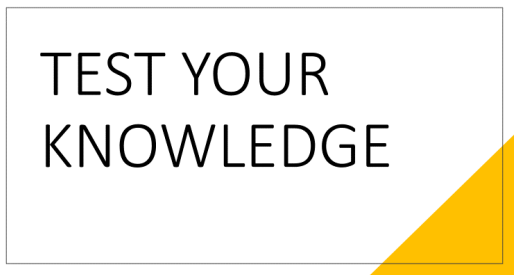
Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Welcome
2. Play relaxing music
3. Reminders for participants to sign in
4. Give participant a ticket for a raffle drawing



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite flavor of ice cream
2. Introduce yourself by providing your name



Professional Development Presenter's Notes: **Pre - Assessment**

Presenter will say to participants welcome to Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention professional development. In order to make this experience the most to beneficial, I would like for everyone to test your knowledge. Please take one of the forms located in the middle of the table to complete. Once completed place the form face down in the middle of the table.

Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention

The Importance of African American K -8 teachers.

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about your view of the importance of African American K-8 teachers in your school. Have principals dialogue in small/whole group. If time permits

15 MINUTE BREAK

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Break: Set timer for 15 minutes

What's Your Favorite Food

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite food
2. Share your work experience

Are African American Teachers needed in the classroom?

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Participants dialogue/write in small groups. Participants participate in whole group discussion. **"Are African American Teachers needed in the classroom?"**

**Lunch 12:00 p.m. -
1:00 p.m.**

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Set timer for lunch 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

What is the name of your favorite bird?

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite bird
2. How many years of service

Principal's
Role in
African
American K-8
Teacher
Retention

- Retention of K-8 African American teachers
- Impact of African American K-8 teachers

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about why is retention of K-8 African American teachers is essential? Next presenters will ask presenters to write about the your view of the impact of African American K-8 teachers in your schools.

15 MINUTE BREAK

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

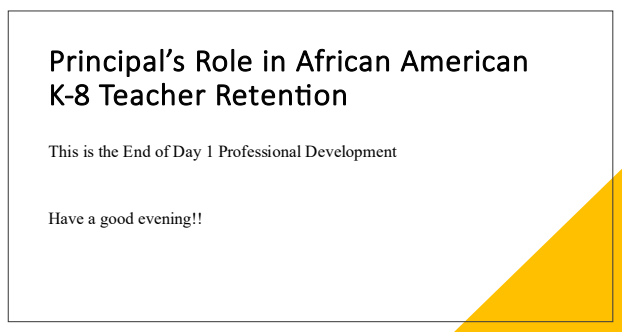
Break: Set timer for 15 minute

Principal's Role in African American K-8
Teacher Retention

- Viable (general) strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers
- Implement Strategies
-

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about why is Discussion about viable (general) strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers. Ask principals to write and share with small/whole group about which viable (general) strategies is the most important/easiest to implement in their school



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
The Presenter will summarize the presentation. Participants will be asked to complete a self reflection.

DAY 2 PowerPoint and Notes

Professional Development

Principal's Role in African
American K-8 Teacher Retention
Day 2

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Set up slide: Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
1. Welcome

2. Play relaxing music
3. Reminders for participants to sign in
4. Give participant a ticket for a raffle drawing

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE
DONUT?

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite donut

Coaching

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will Introduce, Explain and Assign Coaches

Principal's Role in African
American K-8 Teacher Retention

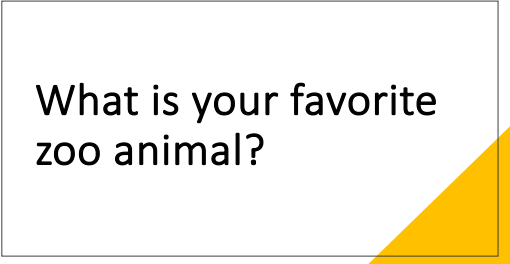
SchoolCulture

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about your view of what school culture is .
Have principals dialogue in small/whole group.

15 MINUTE BREAK

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Break: Set timer for 15 minute



What is your favorite
zoo animal?

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
1. Tell your colleague your favorite zoo animal
2. Why is the animal your favorite

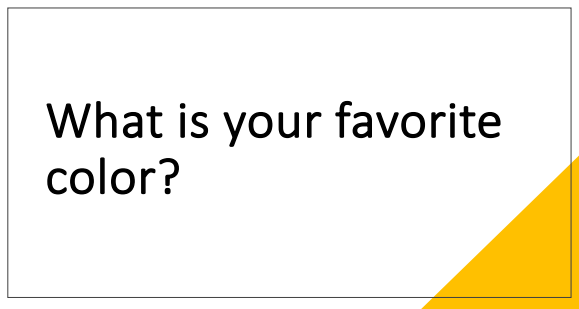
Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retentio

Describe School Culture

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Participants dialogue/write in small groups. Participants participate in whole group discussion. Principals describe their school culture and share with peers.

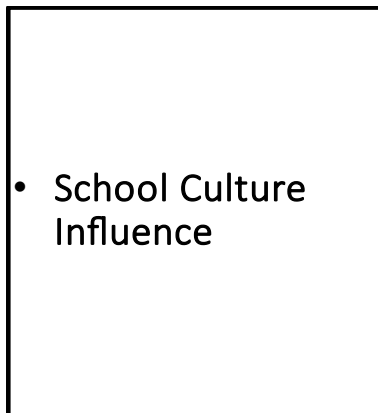
Lunch 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Set timer for lunch 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
1. Tell your colleague your favorite color
2. Talk about your years of service

Principal's
Role in
African
American K-8
Teacher
Retention



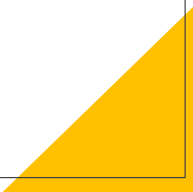
Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Presenter will say to participants to write about identifying common areas of school culture and how they influence school culture

15 MINUTE BREAK

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Break: Set timer for 15 minute

Principal's Role in African American K-8
Teacher Retention

- School Culture and K-8 Teachers
- How to Increase Retention?
-

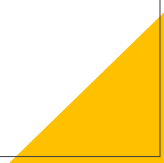


Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
Presenter will say to participants to write about discuss how school culture impacts African American K-8 teacher retention. Ask how principals can increase retention based on their personal definitions and describe of school culture and common areas focused on in school culture.

**Principal's Role in African American
K-8 Teacher Retention**

This is the End of Day 2 Professional Development

Have a good evening!!



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:
The Presenter will summarize the presentation. Participants will be asked to complete a self reflection.

DAY 3 PowerPoint and Notes

Professional Development

Principal's Role in African
American K-8 Teacher Retention
Day 3

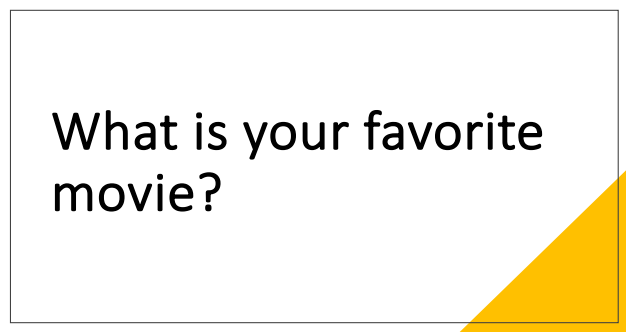
Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Set up slide: Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Welcome
2. Play relaxing music
3. Reminders for participants to sign in
4. Give participant a ticket for a raffle drawing



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite movie

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Professional Development Presenter's Notes: **Post - Assessment**

Presenter will say to participants repeat of Day 1!! Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retention professional development. In order to make this experience the most to beneficial, I would like for everyone to test your knowledge. Please take one of the forms located in the middle of the table to complete. Once completed place the form face down in the middle of the table.

Principal's Role in African
American K-8 Teacher Retention

The Importance of African American K -8 teachers.

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about your view of the importance of African American K-8 teachers in your school. Have principals dialogue in small/whole group. If time permits

15 MINUTE BREAK

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Break: Set timer for 15 minute

What is my
favorite snack

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite snack

Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher Retentio

Principals Leadership Styles

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Participants dialogue/write in small groups. Participants participate in whole group discussion. Have principals discuss their leadership styles, aspects, and values of their leadership style (underlying question: how do they lead?) and how they implement them in their school.

Lunch 12:00 p.m. -
1:00 p.m.

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Set timer for lunch 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

What is your favorite sport?

Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

1. Tell your colleague your favorite sport

Principal's
Role in
African
American K-8
Teacher
Retention

COACHES

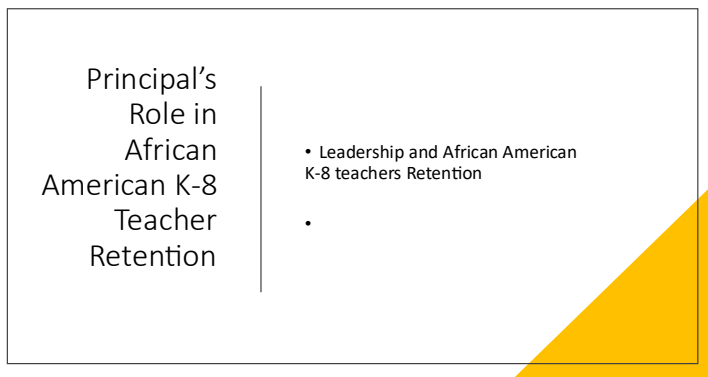
Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants coaches will help participants to reflect deeper on their reflection. They will help them to implement the strategies that they develop to retain African American K-8 teachers during professional development.

15 MINUTE
BREAK

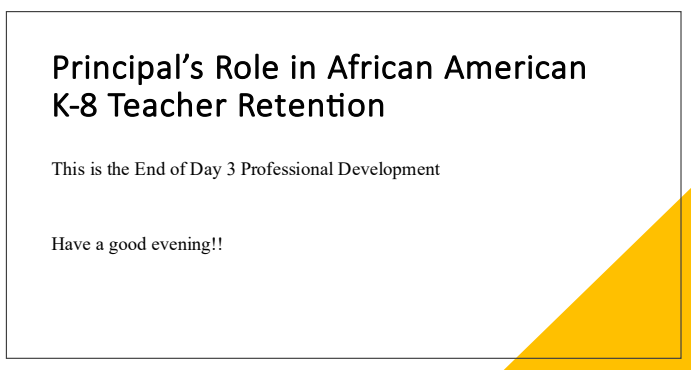
Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Break: Set timer for 15 minutes



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

Presenter will say to participants to write about how leadership impacts African American K-8 teacher retention and evaluate how principals can increase retention based on their personal leadership styles and values and common areas principals focus on in leadership.



Professional Development Presenter's Notes:

The Presenter will summarize the presentation. Participants will be asked to complete a self reflection.

Materials and Equipment (Will be available for three-day training workshop)

- Group Work Materials
- Index cards
- Small break-out rooms
- Chart paper

- Markers
- Tape
- Trainer Materials
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Printed copy of PowerPoint presentation
 - Handouts and presentation articles
 - Evaluation forms
 - Smartboard/Laptop
- Large conference room
- Tables and chairs
- Audio-visual equipment (laptops, cords, projector, document camera, screen)
- Name tags
- Paper (chart paper, post-its, notebooks)
- Writing Utensils (pens, pencils, markers, highlighters)
- Binders
- Breakfast
- Water
- Candy for tables
- Lunch menus
- Speaker and relaxing music
- Tickets for a raffle drawing

Professional Development: Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher

Retention

Detail of 3 Day Timeline Training: (hour-by-hour)

Workshop Day 1: Awareness of Low African American K-8 Teacher Retention

Time

Time	Day 1 Activities
8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast and Sign In
8:30 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.	Pre-assessment PPT Slide #4
9:00 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Please write about your view of the importance of African American K-8 teachers in your school. Have principals dialogue in small/whole group. PPT Slide #5
10:30 a.m.- 10:45 a.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide #6
10:45 a.m.- 12:00 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: African American Teachers: Are they needed in the classroom? PPT Slides #8
12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH – PPT Slide #9
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Why is retention of K-8 African American teachers is essential? Focus: Please write about your view of the impact of African American K-8 teachers in your schools. PPT Slides: #11

2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide #12
2:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Discussion about viable (general) strategies to retain African American K-8 teachers. Focus: Ask principals to write and share with small/whole group about which viable (general) strategies is the most important/easiest to implement in their school. PPT Slides: #13
4:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Summarize the power point presentation. Participants complete a self reflection form. PPT Slide: #14

Professional Development: Principal’s Role in African American K-8 Teacher

Retention

Detail of 3 Day Timeline Training: (hour-by-hour)

Workshop Day 2: School Culture

Time	Day 2 Activities
8:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast and Sign In
8:30 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.	Focus: Introduce, Explain and Assign Coaches PPT Slide: #4
9:00 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Principals define/write what school culture is PPT Slide: #5

10:30 a.m.- 10:45 a.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide: #6
10:45 a.m.- 12:00 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Principals describe their school culture and share with peers. PPT Slide: #8
12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH – PPT Slide: #9
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Principals identify common areas of school culture and how they influence school culture PPT Slide: #11
2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide: #12
2:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Discuss how school culture impacts African American K-8 teacher retention. Ask how principals can increase retention based on their personal definitions and describe of school culture and common areas focused on in school culture. PPT Slide: #13
4:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the power point presentation. • Participants complete evaluation form. PPT Slide: #14

Professional Development: Principal's Role in African American K-8 Teacher

Retention

Detail of 3 Day Timeline Training: (hour-by-hour)

Workshop Day 3: Leadership

Time	Day 3 Activities
8:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast and Sign In
8:30 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.	Post assessment: #4
9:00 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Have principals explain what leadership means as a principal. PPT Slide: #5
10:30 a.m.- 10:45 a.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide: #6
10:45 a.m.- 12:00 a.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Have principals discuss their leadership styles, aspects, and values of their leadership style (underlying question: how do they lead?) and how they implement them in their school. PPT Slide: #8
12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH – PPT Slide: #9
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Coach will help participants to reflect deeper on their reflection. They will help them to implement the strategies that they develop to retain African American K-8 teachers during professional development PPT Slide: #11
2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	BREAK – PPT Slide: #12
2:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development Focus: Discuss how leadership impacts African American K-8 teacher retention and evaluate how principals can increase retention based on their personal leadership styles and values and common areas principals focus on in leadership.

	PPT Slide: #13
4:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.	The Presenter will lead the Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the power point presentation. • Participants complete evaluation form. PPT Slide: #14

Pre-Assessment

Day 1: Awareness of Low African American Teacher Retention:

Test Your Knowledge: Participant Pre-Assessment

Your feedback is valued and appreciated so we can improve our faculty professional development program.

1. Are you aware of low African American teacher retention in your school? Please provide an explanation.

2. What are “blind spots”?

3. What factors do you think have impacted low African American K-8 teacher retention at your school?

4. Do you view African American teacher retention as a problem? Please provide an explanation.

5. Are there any strategies that you have used to to retain African American teachers?

6. Why do you think there is a shortage of African American teachers?

Please use the Rating Scale as you answer the questions listed below.

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

7. Does school culture impact African American K-8 teacher retention?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

8. Have you ever empowered an African American K-8 teacher?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

9. Does leadership impact African American K-8 teacher retention?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

10. Do you think this the retention rate for your school?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Your feedback will help to improve stakeholders with providing training to retain K-8
Midwestern African American teachers.

Post-Assessment

Day 3: Leadership:

Test Your Knowledge: Participant Post-Assessment

Your feedback is valued and appreciated so we can improve our faculty professional
development program.

1. After attending the professional development what are your views of African
American teacher retention?

2. Do you think your school could lose more African American K-8 teachers? Please
provide an explanation.

3. What strategies have you obtain while attending this professional development? Please provide an explanation.

Please use the Rating Scale as you answer the questions listed below.

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2= Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

4. This workshop activity helped me to better understand why there is low K-8 African American teacher retention in my school district.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

5. This professional development helped me to think more critically about the needs for African American K-8 teacher retention

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

6. Overall, this workshop activity was a successful experience for me.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Your feedback will help to improve stakeholders with providing training to retain K-8 Midwestern African American teachers.

Professional Development Training Program Participant Self Reflection Form and Exit Ticket: Day 1: Awareness of Low African American Teacher Retention

Day 1: Awareness of Low African American Teacher Retention

Test Your Knowledge

Your feedback is valued and appreciated so we can improve our faculty training program. As you reflect on what you have learned about **Awareness of Low African American Teacher Retention**, how can you apply this information to the situation in your school? Please place form in the center of the table once you are done. Thanks for your participation.
