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Exploring the Lived Experiences of Former Lagos State Male Public High School Teachers About Their Onboarding Process.

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
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Abstract

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MS, Walden University, 2023

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Industrial and Organizational Psychology—General Practice

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Abstract

Lagos State, Nigeria, faces male teacher retention challenges in public high schools, including destabilizing the educational environment, reducing the availability of experienced mentors, and negatively impacting student performance and outcomes. School leaders need to understand the challenges leading to male teacher turnover. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the profession, focusing particularly on their perceptions of onboarding and reasons for leaving the profession. This study was grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory, Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Bandura's social cognitive theory. The participants comprised 10 former male public high school teachers in Lagos State. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and field notes. Four themes emerged from the thematic analysis: (a) structural and systemic shortcomings in onboarding programs, (b) social and emotional dimensions of the onboarding experience, (c) professional practice and classroom realities, and (d) coping mechanisms, resilience, and exit decisions. Participants reported that the onboarding process was largely informal and inconsistent, leaving them unprepared for classroom realities and institutional expectations, contributing to early career disillusionment and a diminished sense of professional identity due to the absence of structured support. The implications for positive social change include the potential for school leaders to use these findings to develop more effective onboarding and a gender-responsive induction framework for Lagos State public schools while enhancing workforce stability in the education sector.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to the almighty God who made my aspiration possible.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Education serves as a vital instrument for eradicating illiteracy and poverty by equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive (Unachukwu & Nwanga, 2021). It fosters positive attitudes and raises awareness of individual rights within society. Okaforcha and Okeke (2020) emphasized that education is essential for acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for personal growth, self-reliance, and societal progress. High school education, which links primary and tertiary levels, aims to prepare students for further education, independence, active societal participation, and contributions to community development. Knowledgeable teachers are key elements in the actualization of these aims. Consequently, local, state, and federal governments need to ensure that the onboarding experience of newly recruited teachers is effective in sustaining their interests in the teaching profession for an appreciable period. Such onboarding programs not only improve their skills, but also boost their loyalty, dedication, and commitment to their profession (Unachukwu & Nwanga, 2021).

One of the most critical factors for the success of the education system in any country is the quality of teachers and instructional practices. It is essential to link teacher quality and classroom instructional practices to successful reform initiatives and improved student outcomes (Unachukwu & Nwanga, 2021). The high social importance of teacher quality makes it imperative to invest in teacher salaries and working conditions to boost and retain the best public high school teachers. Despite the implementation of some key strategies (e.g., onboarding, mentoring, and orientation programs) proposed by

state and federal governments in Nigeria to retain good classroom teachers, an appreciable number of these teachers quit the profession every year (Abioye, 2021).

In a study on why teachers leave, Chambers Mack et al. (2019) examined 2,588 teachers from 46 school districts across Texas, who participated by completing an in-depth survey on occupational health. Researchers used both univariate and multivariate analyses to explore how various demographic, job-related, and health factors influenced teachers' plans to leave the profession within the next year. The results showed that teachers with fewer years of teaching experience and alternative qualifications and the ones with lower perceived support and mentorship were more likely to quit the profession. Furthermore, Chambers Mack et al. reported that some of the factors responsible for quitting cannot be modified. That is, there are some inherent or unchangeable factors in a teacher's personal life. These factors are often beyond the control of the individual and cannot be easily altered to retain teachers. For example, life events such as family responsibilities, relocation for a partner's job, or health issues can lead teachers to leave the profession. These are personal choices or life situations that cannot be influenced by school policies or improvements in the work environment. However, interventions focusing on teachers' retention through appropriate onboarding schemes may assist in minimizing the rate at which new teachers quit the profession in public high schools (Akinwunmi et al., 2023). It has been argued that onboarding is one of the desirable strategies that senior leaders and managers in educational industries can adopt to retain their employees (Akdemir, 2020; Harron & Shakil, 2021). Therefore, this

research study was undertaken to explore the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process.

Background

Studies reveal that male teachers often face unique challenges, such as a lack of mentorship, inadequate support systems, and difficulties adapting to the school culture (Johnson & Birkeland, 2019; Smith & Gillespie, 2020). Gender stereotypes and expectations can also place extra pressure on male teachers, particularly in fields dominated by female colleagues (Preece & Bullingham, 2022).

Research shows that effective onboarding fosters job satisfaction, enhances perceptions of organizational support, strengthens affective commitment to the job, and reduces turnover intentions (Chan et al., 2021). Additionally, Sharma and Stol (2020) opined that successful onboarding deepens employees' connection to the organization. Meanwhile, the onboarding process, which ideally helps teachers transition smoothly into their roles, has often been criticized for being ineffective in providing both personal and professional support tailored to male teachers' needs (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). In Lagos State, public high schools face a variety of challenges, including overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teaching materials, and low teacher salaries. These systemic issues exacerbate the already difficult conditions for new teachers. For male teachers, who may experience additional pressures from gender role expectations or lack of support in navigating their professional responsibilities, the onboarding process becomes even more critical. When onboarding programs fail to effectively integrate male teachers

into the school culture or provide adequate guidance, these educators are more likely to feel disillusioned with their career choices (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Despite attention to factors like job satisfaction and burnout, there is limited research and understanding of the qualitative, lived experiences of male teachers during the onboarding phase. Particularly, current literature tends to focus on attrition rates and general causes for leaving but lacks a deep dive into the specific onboarding experiences that might influence male teachers' decisions to exit the profession early (Chan et al., 2021). Various global studies have consistently highlighted gender imbalances in the teaching profession, with a higher percentage of female teachers than male teachers (Abdul-Kareem et al., 2017; Ingersoll, 2013; Orubuloye, 2011). In Lagos State of Nigeria, this disparity is particularly apparent in the public high school system, where female teachers are significantly greater in number. This gender gap becomes even more pronounced when examining the retention rates among teachers, with a concerning trend of more male teachers leaving the profession (Abioye, 2021; Akinwunmi et al., 2023). This issue raises concerns about the potential impact on the overall quality of education in Lagos State.

In another development, a significant gap exists in understanding the nuanced, lived experiences of male public high school teachers during the onboarding process. While quantitative data provide insight into attrition rates and broad reasons for leaving, there is a dearth of qualitative research exploring how male teachers perceive and experience the onboarding phase (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Specifically, little attention has

been paid to the social and emotional aspects of onboarding and how they may uniquely affect male teachers compared to their female counterparts (Moore, 2024).

Male teacher retention, particularly in public high schools in Lagos State, presents a significant challenge to the education sector. Despite the implementation of onboarding programs designed to support and integrate new teachers into the school environment, many male teachers choose to leave the profession shortly after their onboarding session (Abioye, 2021). In fact, many of them leave the teaching profession within their first 5 years on the job (Abioye, 2021; Ibrahim et al, 2022). This inability to retain male teachers disrupts the continuity of education, undermines the stability of the teaching workforce, and potentially indicates deeper systemic issues that need to be addressed (Abioye, 2021).

This study is essential because understanding the lived experiences of male teachers during the onboarding process can offer valuable insights into why they leave the profession early. Addressing this knowledge gap is critical for developing more effective support systems, improving retention strategies, and fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for male teachers in public high schools. By focusing on this overlooked aspect, the study could contribute to more tailored onboarding processes, addressing early attrition among male teachers and ultimately improving educational outcomes (Garcia & Weiss, 2019; Smith & Gillespie, 2023).

Problem Statement

In Lagos State, Nigeria, the most common challenges that public high schools face are inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and limited professional growth opportunities (Faremi, 2021). However, in recent times, like many other states, Lagos has

been facing male teacher retention challenges in public high schools. (Abioye, 2021; Ademola et al., 2021). Male teachers, who are often seen as crucial role models for young boys, are leaving the profession at alarming rates (Kühhirt et al., 2023; Zeitlin, 2021). This retention challenge has far-reaching implications, including destabilizing the educational environment, reducing the availability of experienced mentors, and negatively impacting student performance and outcomes (Ademola et al., 2021). More importantly, the decrease in male teachers could negatively impact the socialization of children, particularly boys, who might experience long-term effects due to a lack of male role models (Sokal & Katz, 2008). Indeed, the causes of teacher retention are multifaceted, involving factors such as job satisfaction, professional development opportunities, working conditions, societal perceptions of the teaching profession, and the onboarding process (Sone, 2020; Toropova et al., 2021).

The relationship between onboarding and retention of staff in an organization is closely interlinked and significantly influential in shaping the overall employee experience (Medina, 2024). For example, onboarding is often the first in-depth interaction that new employees have with an organization after being hired. A well-structured onboarding process sets a positive tone, helping employees feel welcomed, informed, and supported (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Therefore, when onboarding is thorough, it leads to higher job satisfaction. Employees who understand their roles, the organizational culture, and expectations are more likely to feel confident and content in their positions and want to stay. In addition, onboarding is an opportunity to discuss career development, training, and growth opportunities. Employees who see a clear path

for advancement are more likely to stay with the organization (Frogeli et al., 2023; Moser & McKim, 2020). Onboarding is a deliberate and structured process designed to rapidly integrate new employees into an organization, establishing a strong foundation for a lasting professional relationship. Medina (2024) defined onboarding as the formal and informal practices, programs, and policies implemented by an organization or its representatives to assist newcomers in adjusting. Lagos State is one of the few states in Nigeria that provide onboarding training to newly recruited teachers. The primary goal is to swiftly and thoroughly integrate new teachers into the teaching profession's operational structure, systems, facilities, and culture. Onboarding offers a comprehensive integration program that provides new employees with the tools and knowledge they need to become fully engaged, culturally aware, and productive members of the workforce (Hillman, 2010; Ibrahim et al., 2022).

There is a growing emphasis on male teachers' retention in public high schools in Lagos State of Nigeria. However, little is known about the experiences and perceptions of those who leave the teaching profession within their first 5 years, even though they received the onboarding training that was designed to clearly define their roles and responsibilities and provide them with professional development opportunities (Medina, 2024). Five years is widely regarded as a critical period for newly employed teachers to decide whether to remain in the profession due to a combination of attrition trends, professional growth dynamics, and the alignment of personal expectations with professional realities. Research consistently identifies this timeframe as pivotal for teachers to adapt, assess their satisfaction, and determine their long-term commitment to

teaching (Wang et al., 2021). A significant proportion of teachers leave the profession within their initial years. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reveal that approximately 44% of new teachers in the United States exit the profession within 5 years (Gray & Taie, 2015). Similarly, Ingersoll and Smith (2003) noted that the highest attrition occurs during this early phase. The early years are marked by challenges such as heavy workloads, classroom management difficulties, and adapting to school culture. These factors contribute to a "survival period," where teachers evaluate their capacity to meet the demands of teaching.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the profession, focusing particularly on their perceptions of onboarding and reasons for leaving the profession. Through this study, I intended to uncover both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that play a crucial role in their decision to quit the teaching profession within a brief period after receiving onboarding training. By exploring participants' personal narratives and professional journeys, I sought to identify the key elements that might assist in retaining Lagos State male public high school teachers for a longer period. In other words, the research outcomes will provide valuable insights that may inform policies and practices aimed at improving the onboarding process to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction in Lagos State public high schools.

Ultimately, the aim was to further understand this population of male teachers in hopes of sharing information that might support policies and practices that may enhance

male teacher retention and job satisfaction, especially in Lagos State public high schools. By understanding the lived experiences of male public high school teachers who left the profession and why they left, policymakers may design more effective onboarding programs**.** The findings from this study may be used to make recommendations for educational policymakers and school administrators according to this particular population.

Research Questions

The research questions used for this study were as follows:

1. What are the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process?
2. How do Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years perceive the onboarding training provided to them when they were about to enter the teaching profession?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was grounded in theories of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which are essential in understanding teacher retention. The framework integrated elements from Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory, Bauer and Erdogan’s (2011) onboarding theory, Maslow's (1943, 1954, 1968) hierarchy of needs, and Bandura’s (1977, 2001) social cognitive theory to explore how professional development influences male teacher retention. Onboarding theory revolves around the process of integrating new employees into an organization. The relationship between onboarding theory and motivator-hygiene theory lies in how onboarding can be designed

to address both motivators and hygiene factors, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction and reducing dissatisfaction (Bundtzen, 2021).

Hygiene factors are elements in the workplace that, while not directly increasing job satisfaction, can prevent dissatisfaction when adequately addressed. These factors were first introduced by psychologist Frederick Herzberg in his motivator-hygiene theory (also known as the two-factor theory), published in 1959 (Herzberg, 1968; Latham & Budworth, 2021; Pinder, 2008). Herzberg identified that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by different sets of factors, which he divided into motivators and hygiene factors. Herzberg developed his theory based on research involving interviews with engineers and accountants, where he asked them to describe times they felt exceptionally good or bad about their jobs. He found that factors leading to job satisfaction (motivators) were distinct from those causing dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). Hygiene factors were named as such because, like hygiene practices, they do not necessarily make people happy when present but can cause issues when absent or inadequate (Alrawahi, 2020).

Examples of hygiene factors include company policies and administration—clear, fair policies that employees perceive as nonburdensome; supervision quality—effective and supportive supervision without being overly controlling; work conditions—adequate facilities, safe working environments, and comfortable physical conditions; and salary—fair and competitive pay to avoid dissatisfaction, though it may not directly motivate higher performance (Akdemir, 2020).

During the onboarding process, addressing hygiene factors is essential. This involves ensuring that new hires understand organizational policies, receive fair compensation, and have a clear understanding of their working conditions and job expectations. By addressing these elements, organizations may mitigate potential sources of dissatisfaction right from the start (Cable & Staats, 2013; Klein et al., 2015). In another development, Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a broad framework for understanding human motivation. It suggests that individuals are motivated by a series of hierarchical needs, ranging from basic physiological requirements to self-actualization (Akdemir, 2020; Alrawahi, 2020). For male high school teachers, the onboarding process can play a crucial role in addressing these needs. At the most fundamental level, onboarding can help ensure that teachers' physiological and safety needs are met through job security and a stable salary. Moving up the hierarchy, the sense of community and belonging fostered during onboarding can fulfill social needs. Furthermore, Bandura's social learning theory emphasizes the importance of observational learning, self-efficacy, and social reinforcement. During onboarding, new teachers observe experienced colleagues and mentors, learning effective teaching strategies and classroom management techniques. This observational learning is crucial, as it helps new teachers build confidence in their abilities (Akdemir, 2020). Bandura’s concept of self-efficacy is particularly relevant here; onboarding programs that provide positive feedback and support can significantly enhance a teacher’s belief in their competence, which is critical for sustained motivation.

In summary, these theories provide a comprehensive lens through which the onboarding experiences of male public high school teachers in Lagos State can be examined, capturing both the structural and psychosocial elements that impact their professional trajectories and satisfaction. Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory, with its focus on job satisfaction and motivation, helps distinguish between the hygiene factors (e.g., salary, job security, and working conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition and opportunities for advancement), both of which likely influence teachers' perceptions of their onboarding experiences. This connects closely with Bauer and Erdogan's (2011) onboarding theory, which emphasizes that successful onboarding includes clarifying job expectations, fostering social integration, and equipping new employees with the necessary resources, factors critical to teachers' initial professional adaptation. Maslow's (1943, 1954, 1968) hierarchy of needs further contextualizes these experiences by identifying the need for psychological and safety fulfillment, belongingness, esteem, and ultimately self-actualization. For teachers, these needs might manifest in a desire for supportive environments, professional development, and peer acknowledgment during onboarding. Finally, Bandura's (1977, 2001) social cognitive theory highlights the importance of observational learning, self-efficacy, and social modeling in the workplace; teachers may internalize onboarding norms and expectations through interactions with experienced colleagues, shaping their sense of competence and influencing their decision to remain in the profession.

Nature of the Study

To address the research questions in this qualitative study, the specific research design was a phenomenological study of inquiry of the lived experiences of Lagos State male public high school teachers who decided to leave the teaching profession within their first 5 years of entering. The analysis followed Giorgi's (2009) descriptive phenomenological method in psychology. Phenomenological research has its foundation in philosophy, and it is strictly aimed at understanding experiences as lived (Peoples, 2021). Meaning-making is crucial in phenomenological inquiry, but it is confined to the context of experience. A phenomenological research study aims to answer the question, "What is it like to experience a certain phenomenon?" By posing this question to enough individuals in a specific situation, one can then analyze various experiences of the same situation and draw generalizations about that particular experience (Giorgi, 2009; Peoples, 2021).

The phenomenological paradigm has been chosen as it emphasizes understanding participants' subjective experiences and meanings, aligning with the study's goal of uncovering the essence of teachers' onboarding experiences. Phenomenology is particularly suited to capturing nuanced personal insights that quantitative methods might overlook, especially as they relate to complex human processes (Peoples, 2021) like onboarding in a public high school setting. Because the phenomenon being investigated was the onboarding process experienced by these former teachers - specifically, their perceptions, feelings, and reflections on how the process influenced their decision to quit the teaching job early—by examining this phenomenon, the research study had the

potential to shed light on the unique challenges and supports these teachers encountered, providing valuable insights for policymakers and educational leaders in Lagos State. Finally, data collection involved in-depth, semistructured interviews with former teachers who met the criteria for participation, allowing them to share detailed recollections of their onboarding. The data analysis followed Giorgi's (2009) and Peoples' (2021) six-step process, as detailed in Chapter 3 of this study. This rigorous approach aimed to produce a rich, authentic description of former teachers' onboarding experiences, grounded in their own words and perspectives. Discrepant or deviant cases were accounted for in the analysis rather than discarding them. This is because they reveal alternative perspectives or experiences that challenge or expand the main themes, contributing to more credible and comprehensive research outcomes and findings (Patton, 2015).

Definitions

The definitions being used throughout this study include the following:

Lived experience: The firsthand accounts and impressions of living through a particular situation or event (Van Manen, 2023).

Onboarding: The formal and informal practices, programs, and policies implemented by an organization or its representatives to assist newcomers in adjusting (Medina, 2024).

Professional development: This refers to activities that enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators (Desimone, 2009).

Public high-school teachers: These are teachers who have been hired by the government/state to teach students in public high schools, often referred to as *government/state-funded high schools/public schools*.

Teacher retention: The ability of a school or educational system to keep its teachers employed over time (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Assumptions

Burkholder et al. (2020) opined that an assumption is valid when there is a reason for its existence. In this study, some assumptions were made. For example, it was assumed that participants would provide honest, accurate, and detailed accounts of their experiences during and after the onboarding process. This is crucial because the study relied on self-reported data gathered through interviews, which formed the primary source of information for understanding the lived experiences of the teachers. A second assumption was that participants could accurately recall and articulate their experiences and the factors that influenced their decision to leave the teaching profession. Given that some time may have passed since their onboarding and subsequent departure, this assumption was critical for the validity of the findings. Finally, it was assumed that the onboarding programs across different public high schools in Lagos State have enough similarities that the experiences of teachers can be compared and analyzed collectively (Ademola et al., 2021). These assumptions were important for identifying common themes and patterns in the data.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on exploring the lived experiences of male public high school teachers in Lagos State who left the teaching profession early. Specifically, it aimed to understand their perceptions and experiences during the onboarding process, as well as how this process influenced their decision to exit the profession. The research primarily examined the teachers' onboarding experience, including training, mentorship, and support provided at the start of their teaching careers, the challenges and opportunities encountered during the initial stages of their professional journey, the factors within the onboarding process that contributed to their early departure from teaching, and the impact of school culture, administrative support, and work environment on the teachers' decision to leave. The study used qualitative methods, particularly semistructured interviews, to gather in-depth insights from participants who met the criteria. The target population included male teachers who left their positions within their first 5 years of teaching. This is because the 5-year mark is often used as a critical threshold in teaching research because it represents a pivotal period for teacher retention (Sulit & Davidson, 2020; Tompkins, 2023).

The research was confined to public high schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, limiting the generalizability of findings to other regions or countries while the focus was exclusively on male teachers, excluding the experiences of female teachers or nonbinary individuals. Only teachers who left the profession early (within the first 5 years) were included, thus excluding those who remained in the profession or left after a longer

period. The study focused solely on public high school teachers and did not extend to teachers in private schools, primary schools, or tertiary institutions.

Limitations

Due to applying a qualitative research strategy, this research aimed to provide an interpretation based on meaning and insight by the participants. Consequently, the findings, whilst contributing to participants' perceptions of onboarding that influenced their decision to quit the teaching profession early, are valid only in the context of the time and place they were conducted, namely Lagos State. Results from a specific context or setting as the one explored may not be easily transferable to different environments or populations. Another probable barrier that was envisaged from the outset was limitations such as access to participants, changes in participant consent and availability, as well as ethical considerations, as all these may have restricted certain methodological choices. However, the overall intention of the study was to add further knowledge of the topic, not to solve the problem at this stage.

Significance

This study is significant in that it provides unique insights into the specific experiences of male public high school teachers in Lagos State who left teaching shortly after completing their onboarding training. By focusing on their lived experiences, the research uncovered underlying factors and challenges that may not have been previously addressed in existing literature. This phenomenological approach revealed personal narratives and perceptions, offering a deeper understanding of the process of onboarding programs. The study's original contribution lies in its focus on a specific demographic in

a specific geographical context, providing nuanced data that could inform tailored strategies for improving male public high school teacher retention in Lagos State of Nigeria.

Furthermore, this study supports professional practice by identifying specific elements of onboarding programs that are either effective or ineffective in retaining new male public high school teachers according to the participants' perspectives. The findings may inform the development of more comprehensive and supportive onboarding processes that address the unique needs and challenges faced by male public high school teachers in Lagos State. By highlighting practical issues and potential solutions, the study may offer actionable recommendations for educational policymakers and administrators to enhance male teacher retention rates. In addition, the research may lead to tangible improvements in the professional practice of teacher onboarding and retention strategies in Lagos State. The potential findings may lead to positive social change by contributing to evidence-based recommendations that can be tested for improving male teacher retention, which is crucial for maintaining a stable and effective educational system. Stable male teacher retention can enhance the quality of education, leading to better student outcomes and overall societal development.

Summary

Lagos State, Nigeria, faces male teacher retention challenges in public high schools, including destabilizing the educational environment, reducing the availability of experienced mentors, and negatively impacting student performance and outcomes. There have been many studies about teacher retention and the alarming rate at which some male

teachers quit the profession, especially in the public sector (Abioye, 2021; Ademola et al., 2021; Adigun, 2020; Bolapeju & Emmanuel, 2018). However, it appears that none of these studies has ever considered the effects of the onboarding process on the decision to exit the job. The lack of research in this area has created another gap. As research begins to show how effective onboarding can be in helping to keep teachers in their jobs, there is a good chance that more teachers, especially men, will want to stay in the profession longer.

Having established the foundation of the research problem, its limitations, and potential contributions, Chapter 2 builds on this by reviewing the relevant literature. This literature review provides a comprehensive overview of existing research related to the onboarding process and its effects on male teacher retention in public high schools in Lagos State of Nigeria, helping to contextualize the study within the broader academic and practical landscape. I analyze key conceptual frameworks and associated theories, identify gaps in the literature, and explore how this study's focus aligns with or diverges from previous research. This review sets the stage for understanding the theoretical framework and methodological approach in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review in this chapter situates the study within the context of existing knowledge and provides clarity to the theory, concept, and previous studies on the topic. It develops the conceptual framework and describes the factors responsible for teacher retention in public high schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. It provides a review of conceptual and empirical literature about the precursors of leaving the teaching profession and what is known about the motivation to leave teaching post-onboarding. Teaching is a multifaceted discipline grounded in a host of philosophical theories and principles designed to guide professional services and practice. Educators contend that the challenges incumbent in teaching are particularly severe for professionals in public secondary schools in urban areas like Lagos State (Angwaomaodoko, 2023).

The education system in Nigeria, particularly in Lagos State, faces significant challenges, including the retention of qualified teachers. The high turnover rate among teachers, especially male teachers in public-high schools, has become a pressing concern (Maigari et al., 2021; Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). Many male teachers leave the profession early, often within the first few years of their careers. This trend not only affects the quality of education but also disrupts the stability of the school environment (Alrawahi et al. 2020; Harron & Shakil, 2021). These teachers complained of heavy workload and high expectations from the governing and monitoring bodies without adequate support (Akdemir, 2020; Alrawahi et al. 2020). In addition, there seems to be a lack of motivation on the job for many male teachers, especially in urban cities (Akdemir,

2020). Understanding the factors contributing to this poor retention of male teachers in public-high schools is essential for developing strategies for teacher retention and improve the overall quality of education in Lagos State.

One critical aspect that has received limited attention in the Nigerian context is the onboarding process. Onboarding, which includes orientation, mentoring, and professional development, plays a crucial role in integrating new teachers into the school environment and equipping them with the skills and support necessary for their success (Chan et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Inadequate or ineffective onboarding may contribute to early career burnout and, ultimately, to teachers leaving the profession prematurely (Ibrahim et al., 2022). This study seeks to explore the lived experiences of male public-high school teachers in Lagos State during the onboarding process and how these experiences may have influenced their decisions to leave the teaching profession early. The onboarding process, which is meant to support new teachers, may not be adequately addressing the needs of male teachers, leading to their early departure from the profession. While previous studies have focused on factors such as low salaries, poor working conditions, and lack of professional development (Ofoegbu, 2004), there is a gap in the literature regarding the specific experiences of male teachers during the onboarding process (Frogeli et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022; Medina, 2024). This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the lived experiences of male public-high school teachers in Lagos State who left the teaching profession early.

Literature Search Strategy

The strategy used for the literature search in this study involved multiple attempts to locate sources that were initially difficult to find. The choice of databases proved to be just as critical as the organization of keywords for effective retrieval. Early on, despite extensive use of the Walden University Library and other resources, the combination of selected databases and keywords yielded limited results. Due to time constraints, assistance from a university librarian was sought. This proved beneficial, as the librarian helped identify specific databases that expanded the range of accessible literature, and refined keyword groupings that enhanced the focus on relevant materials for the study.

The databases consulted included ERIC, Education Source, SAGE Publications, EBSCO, and Google Scholar. Various keywords were employed during the search, such as "male teacher", "retention", "onboarding", "lived experience", "Lagos State", "public-high", and "Nigeria". Some keyword combinations were tested to ensure that the maximum amount of relevant literature was uncovered. These combinations included "public-high school" or "public-secondary school". While the specificity of the keyword search proved effective, other challenges in retrieving literature for this study persisted.

One critical area of concern was that research studies on teacher retention in Lagos State public-high school or in Nigeria were primarily focused on general factors such as poor wages and working conditions, infrastructural deficiencies, leadership issues (Abioye 2021; Ademola et al., 2021; Maigari et al., 2021). Limited or no attention has been given to the specific experiences of male teachers and the role of the onboarding process which form the focus of this research study. Meanwhile, all searches were limited

to peer-reviewed articles with more than 90% of these articles published between 2020 and 2024 inclusive.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study integrates elements from Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959, 1966), Bauer and Erdogan's Onboarding Theory (2011), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943, 1954, 1968), and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977, 2001) to explore how professional development influences male teacher retention. These theories inform the current study because they provide a broader societal lens through which teachers' decisions to leave their job posts. Furthermore, factors that contribute to teacher turnover can be linked back to the individual, relational, and structural or emerging systems that connect and interact at various levels.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory or (motivator-hygiene theory), formulated by psychologist Frederick Herzberg and his colleagues distinguish between factors that cause job satisfaction and those that cause dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivators, such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for growth, promote deep job satisfaction and engagement. On the other hand, hygiene factors, including salary, work conditions, and administrative policies, can lead to dissatisfaction if inadequate but do not necessarily boost satisfaction if improved. Recognizing the distinction between motivators and hygiene factors is key. Motivators are intrinsic, related to the content and nature of the job. For teachers, this could mean the joy of seeing students succeed. Hygiene factors are extrinsic, related to the job environment. For

instance, a clean and well-equipped classroom ensures that the lack of such basics does not detract from overall job satisfaction. In essence, the two-factor theory suggests that humans have two fundamental types of needs, and various aspects of the work experience can address these needs (Herzberg, 1966).

Bauer and Erdogan's Onboarding Theory (2011)

Onboarding theory revolves around the process of integrating new employees into an organization. The main objective of onboarding is to ensure that new hires feel welcomed, valued, and equipped to succeed in their roles. Effective onboarding can significantly enhance job satisfaction, organizational commitment, reduce turnover, and boost performance and productivity. This is achieved through several key components: clarifying job roles and expectations, providing necessary training and resources, building social connections within the organization, and offering continuous support and feedback (Baurer & Erdogan, 2011).

In relation to the two-factor theory, onboarding can enhance motivators by incorporating elements that provide new employees with opportunities for achievement, recognition, and growth. For instance, setting clear goals, offering challenging projects, and providing pathways for career development during onboarding can foster intrinsic motivation and a sense of fulfillment (Bauer, 2010). By integrating the principles of motivator-hygiene theory into onboarding programs, organizations can create a comprehensive approach that not only prevents dissatisfaction but also actively promotes job satisfaction and motivation from the outset of an employee's tenure. This dual focus

can lead to more engaged, committed, and productive employees, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the organization (Stein & Christiansen, 2010).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory vis-à-vis Teachers' Onboarding Process

The relationship between onboarding theory and motivator-hygiene theory lies in how onboarding can be designed to address both motivators and hygiene factors, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction and reducing dissatisfaction (Frogeli et al., 2023; Moser & McKim, 2020). During the onboarding process, addressing hygiene factors is essential. This involves ensuring that new hires understand organizational policies, receive fair compensation, and have a clear understanding of their working conditions and job expectations. By addressing these elements, organizations may mitigate potential sources of dissatisfaction right from the start (Cable & Staats, 2013; Klein et al., 2015).

Job autonomy and a sense of responsibility are critical motivators. Teachers who are given control over their curriculum and instructional methods tend to feel more empowered and satisfied (Opoku et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative for schools to foster an environment where teachers can innovate and implement creative teaching strategies without excessive bureaucratic constraints. Herzberg's theory is crucial for understanding what drives teacher satisfaction and retention. High school teachers play a pivotal role in shaping young minds, and their job satisfaction directly impacts student outcomes. By applying Herzberg's insights, schools can create a supportive environment that enhances teacher engagement, effectiveness, and longevity in the profession (Frogeli et al., 2023; Moser & McKim, 2020).

An effective onboarding program should integrate both Herzberg's motivators and hygiene factors. Initial orientation sessions can highlight the institution's recognition systems, professional development opportunities, and the autonomy given to teachers (Medina, 2024). Simultaneously, providing clear information about salary packages, benefits, and available resources helps address potential hygiene issues upfront. Striking a balance between motivators and hygiene factors is essential. While ensuring competitive salaries and a supportive work environment, schools must not neglect intrinsic motivators. Regular recognition, challenging but attainable professional development goals, and meaningful responsibilities should be part of the onboarding and ongoing professional life of teachers (Frogeli et al., 2023).

Implementing continuous evaluation and feedback systems ensures that the onboarding and retention strategies remain effective. Regular surveys, feedback sessions, and performance reviews can help identify areas of improvement and adjust strategies accordingly (Medina, 2024; Opoku et al., 2020). By fostering an open dialogue, schools can consistently enhance both job satisfaction and teacher retention. Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory provides an insightful framework for understanding and improving the onboarding process for high school teachers. By addressing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence job satisfaction, schools can create an environment conducive to teacher engagement, effectiveness, and retention, ultimately benefiting student outcomes (Medina, 2024).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943, 1954, 1968)

Maslow's theory of needs is based on the view that human beings have a complex structure that is not as easy to decipher as many people think (Levy, 2020; Pinder, 2008). Maslow's theory assumes, in part, that humans are aroused by biological and instinctive needs and they put up behaviors to meet those needs. These needs are further divided into physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization. Each person must cover their needs in a certain order, as if they were levels, from bottom to top. The closer you are to the top of the pyramid, the more a person feels self-satisfied and prepared. The process of meeting these needs generates a series of feelings and can lead to rejection towards individuals due to the harsh way in which those needs are addressed (Hakim, 2022).

The Maslow pyramid is as follows: at the base are the physiological needs, which a teacher must cover, such as salary, hours, etc. Gradually, we move on to the security needs, which include stability, job security, etc. Then a teacher climbs towards the belonging needs, seeking to assure themselves a good work experience, feeling part of a group, a community, a family. Later, esteem needs appear, and it is very important to treat a teacher as a professional and as a person, precisely to bolster the previously mentioned needs with higher self-esteem. At the upper level is self-actualization, which means a teacher who feels completely fulfilled in all the needs below and consequently will give their best performance in class, training for each person, growing academically, and continuing their development. (Medina, 2024; Oladayo, 2021).

Maslow's theory of needs places particular emphasis on human behavior and it describes different categories or types of needs and states that satisfying these needs generates motivation. Abraham Maslow believed that motivating people basically implies understanding human needs on one hand and driving behavior towards said needs on the other (Ihensekien & Joel, 2023; Levy, 2020). He stated the fact that the employer hires "work" does not make him the owner of the human being, which remains a person despite being "rented" by the employer. This means that people bring baggage that might or might not involve the commitment that recruitment considers. So, recruitment should focus on those candidates that best match the organization in addition to the organization understanding whether they are interested in working fully committed or just because they get paid for it (Yurdakul & Arar, 2023).

Meanwhile, there are needs that are not met and that generate psychological discomfort that drives individuals to act ceaselessly toward their satisfaction. These are the so-called stimulating needs, directly affecting the committed and effective behavior of employees. When not satisfied, the individual's commitment to work and their productivity drops. Consequently, the employer-employee relationship and the hiring and/or onboarding process are always of increased importance due to both the commitment to the tasks that the employer gives to the employee through the remuneration of the labor performed, as well as the commitment to the organization itself, knowing all of its goals and feeling like an integrated part of it: the employee goes to the company, but, more importantly, the company must also be present in the employee's life, in his daily routine. (Nobre & Morais-da-Silva, 2022).

Application of Maslow's Theory in Educational Settings

Maslow's approach to learning, especially metacognition and the process of resolving cognitive conflicts, are focal themes contributing to the educator's development objective (Ihensekien & Joel, 2023). Furthermore, his ideas of self-actualization, his hierarchy of needs, and components presented in Maslow's triangle should be guiding motifs in formulating effective strategies for pre-service teachers' training and the professional growth of teachers. In recent years, too little attention has been given to the problems and consequences of selecting and onboarding the best new recruits for teacher preparation programs in the complex area of attracting and selecting men and women into the teaching profession. These important preliminary processes influence the establishment of future relationships between teachers and learners and the construction of an effective learning environment (Da et al., 2020; Owusu-Ansah & Apawu, 2023).

Maslow's Theory and the Onboarding Process for Newly Recruited Teachers

Maslow's theory is closely connected to the process of onboarding teaching staff, emphasizing that the emotional state of a teacher significantly impacts their students (Ihensekien & Joel, 2023). It is essential to recognize this connection to ensure effective support and positive outcomes in the classroom. The model of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, by dividing needs into five categories: physiological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualization, presents the essential necessities that everyone is human, irrespective of race, age, gender, or status. The quality of the onboarding process by which a newly employed teacher is integrated into the schools and into the teaching profession has been recognized in recent years as an essential factor for the latter's commitment to the

profession, motivation, professional development, pedagogical improvement, and retention (Adelia & Sartika, 2023; Oladayo, 2021). Therefore, understanding and effectively managing historical-cultural factors, personality traits, and individual motivations behind a teacher's choice of the educational career are essential, as they directly impact the teacher's personal and professional satisfaction and well-being (Oladayo, 2021). The relationship between the teacher and the teaching institution, along with the intrinsic satisfaction derived from performing and developing their work, is therefore of paramount importance. These are modules within the onboarding process implemented in various schools, when transitioning new teachers within the institution is done in a fluid and productive way (Medina, 2024).

Clearly, the onboarding process for newly recruited teaching staff extends over a distributed, extended period. It can typically last between one year and 18 months. Since several major aspects of Maslow's theory connect directly with the development and completion of important onboarding aspects of newly hired employees, a basic theoretical model of the evolution of the onboarding process for newly recruited teachers was developed (Adelia & Sartika, 2023; Oladayo, 2021). This is sometimes referred to as the orientation program. It links together the growth development stages of Maslow's hierarchy with those of the onboarding process of newly recruited teachers. This model is an important part of the research. It is used to point out the many practical managerial applications the Maslow model has for onboarding newly hired employees (Webb, 2022). In another development, Ihensekien and Joel (2023) emphasized the importance of five categories of Maslow's theory basic needs, among which the need to be functionally

employed, possibly exercising one's skills, receiving good feedback, and having a certain level of self-esteem are necessary for the individual to consider themselves important and to be respected by others. Thus, an organization committed to fostering growth and fulfillment through work must prioritize valuing employees' personal development. This involves investing time and resources, facilitating continuous growth, and offering development opportunities that extend to both professional and socio-familial spheres. This principle is especially crucial for teachers, who are tasked with meeting the diverse needs of various individuals throughout each day (Webb, 2022).

These needs present a challenge that demands emotional involvement, as well as the ongoing acquisition and updating of teaching tools. As a result, the onboarding phase should be embedded within a framework that supports the social needs associated with work, as well as the relational and recognition needs of individuals (Frogeli et al., 2023; Moser & McKim, 2020). This is particularly relevant for those new to their roles in teaching, where learning often happens through experience, frequently in isolation, while managing a diverse and challenging audience. Effective qualification projects require training processes and professional development for teachers to be conducted within the school environment and be supported and guided by government programs (Hillman, 2010; Yurdakul & Arar, 2023).

The onboarding process has a high potential for efficiency in the retention of new teachers in the education sector. This has led to the common orientation program that was traditionally applied to recruitment and in-room, face-to-face care for each new hire being replaced with an increasingly more personal attention program, an orientation or

onboarding plan that considers the needs of new teachers and a process of this support. Therefore, successful planning of the onboarding of new teachers must integrate personalized aspects and be based on the needs of the newly recruited employees.

Challenges and Limitations of Applying Maslow's Theory in Onboarding Processes

After reviewing the literature related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the adaptation of the hierarchy to teacher retention, a few related problems and challenges emerged. The use of Maslow's theory of needs to satisfy teacher needs during the onboarding process of new teachers proved challenging due to the complex combination of the following factors: internal and external functional needs; individual dynamics of these needs; stigma of social desirability according to which the needs and wants of teachers are evaluated by society; the already established school culture and the unwillingness to change established norms and patterns of school life; the desire for rapid autonomy and the achievement of self-realization by new teachers (Frey et al., 2023; Manchanda, 2021). However, it is possible to increase the degree of satisfaction of new teachers by considering the experience and qualifications of newly recruited teachers, identifying the context of the workplace, which can cover at least one third of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, adapting the sequence of needs to real school life, mixing a combination of functional and spiritual needs, carefully evaluating the potential needed for the implementation of a direction that already exists, and using the existing hierarchy of needs in its entirety (Giovannella et al., 2020; Maki, 2023).

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977, 2001)

Albert Bandura is perhaps best known for his work on the Social Cognitive Theory, emphasizing the role of observational learning in shaping behavior. The theory is based primarily on reciprocal determinism, outcome expectation, behavioral capability, self-regulation, and self-efficacy (Sharma & Stol, 2020). It is centered on the assumption that cognitive processes play a role in mediating an individual's behavior. The model revolves around the concept of triadic reciprocality, which is formed by an interplay of the individual's thoughts and emotions and the external factors in their environment (Chong et al., 2023). Bandura claims that cognitive processes, along with other factors, determine one's motivations and behaviors. Central to Bandura's work is the concept of cognition and determining factors such as thoughts and emotions as factors in behavior change and maintenance. Additionally, Bandura identified a social context, a substitute for reinforcement, as an important driver of learning. (Abdullah et al., 2020; Bandura, 2021). The main idea is that individuals learn new behaviors and behavior change through the observation of others' behavior and its consequences.

Social cognitive theory (SCT) has been considered the cognitive approach to social learning theory. The theory posits that the environment and the individual's cognitive activities are integral in creating experiences that inform human learning. Important to understanding the theory is the concept of reciprocal determinism. Reciprocal determinism postulates that personal, behavioral, and environmental factors are causally related (Chong et al., 2023). Importantly, the individual and external environment continuously influence each other and have an effect on personal behaviors

and cognitive factors (Chai & Ye, 2024; Nordin & Yunus, 2021; Rahman & Sciara, 2022). Another vital concept within SCT that should be highlighted is the concept of self-efficacy is the extent or belief in one's ability to face and effectively perform behaviors to produce an effect or outcome, such as attaining a goal (Abdullah et al., 2020; Bandura, 2021). Self-efficacy is concerned with judgment about one's capability to succeed when faced with adversity. An individual with a high level of self-efficacy would be more able to face an adverse situation and would likely persevere (Syabarrudin et al., 2020; Ugwuanyi et al., 2020). Social learning in the observational learning processes involves the acquisition of new responses through the individual reproduction of the behavior of a model. Observational learning is prevalent to the human condition because there is often a need to learn things for which there is no available reinforcer.

Implications of Bandura's Theory to Teacher Education

In terms of teacher education implications, a teacher will model teaching techniques and methods such as explicit interactive instruction, error analysis, corrective feedback, partnership, extra support, and using appropriate pedagogical content knowledge (Mayer et al., 2020). Individuals learn by observing others, retaining the learned information, and using it in an appropriate setting. Most of what human beings learn comes from modeling the behavior of others. Modeling can have a powerful impact, as it can be positive or negative. Social persuasion has a significant impact, particularly when well-renowned and influential people approve and praise. Similarly, when children observe that another student has an opportunity to eat larger, sumptuous dishes, they too

tend to desire a larger portion. A caution should be well taken, however, so that modeling will not have a counterproductive effect.

Modeled responses that look artificially rehearsed or fake can affect self-efficacy (Bandura, 2021; Mayer et al., 2020). Authentically modeled actions with backing evidence will be more convincing and compelling. Modeling can make processes and desired responses more effective; through shows of capability, the lesson will convey both verbal and nonverbal messages. Modeled responses that are not relevant to the situation setting or task can have unforeseeable results, such as diluting the effects of the best model. (Bandura, 2021; Bikhchandani et al., 2024; Mayer et al.2020).

Application of Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning in Teacher Onboarding

The transition into the profession has always been quite challenging; yet, hiring quality teachers has never been more critical. Effective onboarding processes are essential to ensure that newly hired teachers quickly acclimated to their new environment and can become efficient contributors to immediate teaching demands, particularly those recently earning alternative teaching certificates. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory has direct application to the teaching context. Observational learning (or modeling) is one tool in a teacher's pedagogical toolbox. Seeing successful teachers model instructional and professional behaviors and best practices can be beneficial to new teachers during onboarding and enhances the likelihood that they will then model those effective practices with their own students in the classroom.

Self-efficacy is an aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory that undergirds much of what humans do. Essentially, self-efficacy theory holds that a person's belief in

their capabilities to produce a desired effect shapes their personal and professional success (Chong et al., 2023). Another principle of Bandura's social cognitive theory that has relevance for teacher onboarding is situating new teachers within a system and climate that supports rather than detracts from a positive self-efficacious view of their profession. It is essential to establish a community of practices where new educators can share knowledge and experiences (Medina, 2024; Sharma & Stol, 2020). Therefore, it is critical for our new and early-career teachers to receive ongoing support and professional development. The first few years of teaching are particularly difficult and present special challenges. These new teachers leave the profession, and unfortunately, at times, our students are left with substitute teachers in the middle of the term (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2022; Smith & Gillespie, 2023). Therefore, it is critical to prepare, onboard, and support our new educators effectively. Inducting quality beginning teachers can be facilitated with the involvement of a structured mentoring program where experienced, qualified educators offer continuous guidance and active induction activities (Milton et al., 2022). Induction during the first few months of employment can positively impact student learning. With this in mind, it is important to establish a professional learning community devoted to welcoming new teachers to the educational institution and providing support throughout the induction process (Milton et al., 2022).

The successful induction of new staff into the culture of the school can lay the groundwork for a positive, productive, long-term employment relationship (Abetang et al., 2020; Milton et al.2022; Noel & Finocchio, 2022). To ensure new staff members transition smoothly and meet with success, it is recommended that the onboarding

process be made a joint responsibility of all concerned. Social cognitive theory is important for early-career teachers, as they can learn new behaviors by observing others, the mentors or lead teachers in schools. The process through which these new behaviors are learned can shape the type of individuals and educators that new teachers become. It is therefore important for one's own professional development, but also because it assists others in interpreting and teaching early-career teachers as they embark on their new role as professionals. Building supportive networks immediately is essential in helping beginning teachers settle into their new roles as professionals. When these networks are established early, and early-career teachers are encouraged to share their experiences, they can effectively reflect on their practice and classrooms and improve their teaching and learning community (Noel & Finocchio, 2022).

Summary of Research Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a broad framework for understanding human motivation. It suggests that individuals are motivated by a series of hierarchical needs, ranging from basic physiological requirements to self-actualization. For male high school teachers, the onboarding process can play a crucial role in addressing these needs. At the most fundamental level, onboarding can help ensure that teachers' physiological and safety needs are met through job security and a stable salary. Moving up the hierarchy, the sense of community and belonging fostered during onboarding can fulfill social needs. Recognition and respect from peers and students, often bolstered by effective onboarding programs, can satisfy esteem needs. Ultimately, opportunities for

professional growth and fulfillment, which may be highlighted during onboarding, can drive teachers toward self-actualization, the pinnacle of Maslow's hierarchy.

Furthermore, Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be a useful framework to understand how to effectively support newly hired teachers as they transition into their new roles. Each level of Maslow's hierarchy can inform different aspects of the onboarding process to ensure that teachers feel secure, connected, and empowered in their new environment. Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a valuable framework for designing teacher onboarding programs that support the holistic well-being of new teachers. By addressing each level of the hierarchy: ensuring physiological comfort, safety, a sense of belonging, esteem, and opportunities for self-actualization, schools can create an environment where new teachers feel supported, valued, and motivated to succeed. This comprehensive approach not only aids in their transition but also enhances teacher retention, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

Herzberg's two-factor theory offers another lens through which to view teacher motivation. According to this theory, there are hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors, such as salary, work conditions, and school policies, do not necessarily motivate teachers but can cause dissatisfaction if they are inadequate. The onboarding process can address these factors by clarifying expectations and providing a supportive environment. More importantly, Herzberg identifies intrinsic motivators such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and opportunities for growth. These motivators can be deeply influenced by onboarding, which often introduces teachers to the rewarding aspects of their work, acknowledges their achievements, and lays the

groundwork for their future professional development. Therefore, when applied to a teacher onboarding program, Herzberg's theory can help schools design an approach that maximizes both teacher satisfaction and motivation. By addressing both hygiene and motivator factors, schools can ensure that newly hired teachers feel supported, valued, and motivated to perform at their best. The most effective teacher onboarding programs will not only address hygiene factors to avoid dissatisfaction but also emphasize motivators to inspire passion and commitment. For example, hygiene factors (like clarity in policies and adequate resources) ensure that teachers feel comfortable, secure, and well-supported, providing a stable foundation. On the other hand, motivators (like opportunities for recognition and personal growth) build on this foundation, helping teachers to feel connected, inspired, and motivated to stay in the profession and excel.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of observational learning, self-efficacy, and social reinforcement. During onboarding, new teachers observe experienced colleagues and mentors, learning effective teaching strategies and classroom management techniques. This observational learning is crucial, as it helps new teachers build confidence in their abilities. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy is particularly relevant here; onboarding programs that provide positive feedback and support can significantly enhance a teacher's belief in their own competence, which is critical for sustained motivation. Additionally, the social reinforcement from colleagues and mentors during the onboarding process can foster a supportive community, encouraging teachers to remain in the profession. The role models encountered during onboarding can also serve as powerful influences, shaping new teachers' attitudes and

behaviors in positive ways. Therefore, when onboarding new teachers, Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how they adapt to their roles and integrate into the school environment. Bandura emphasizes that people learn not just through direct experiences but also by observing others. This principle is particularly relevant to the induction of new teachers, as they often rely on observing seasoned colleagues to navigate their new professional environment. The onboarding process often formalizes these observational opportunities through mentorship programs, collaborative planning sessions, or professional development workshops. By providing structured environments where new teachers can observe and practice effective behaviors, schools align with Bandura's principles. Therefore, onboarding programs that incorporate observation, collaboration, and constructive feedback are essentially putting Bandura's Social Learning Theory into practice. These programs not only help new teachers learn from the experiences of others but also empower them to build confidence and develop their professional identity within a supportive framework.

By exploring these conceptual frameworks, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the various factors influencing male high school teachers' motivation to continue teaching after onboarding training. This multifaceted approach helps to uncover the complex interplay between individual needs, workplace conditions, and social influences that contribute to teacher motivation and retention.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Teacher Onboarding Processes and Best Practices

Teacher onboarding is a structured process designed to help new teachers transition smoothly into their roles. It is widely recognized that an effective onboarding process can significantly impact a teacher's job satisfaction, performance, and likelihood of remaining in the profession long-term (Medina, 2024). Studies suggest that when new teachers receive comprehensive orientation programs that include mentoring, peer support, and professional development, they are more likely to adapt to the demands of the profession (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Medina, 2024). Onboarding typically involves introducing new teachers to the school's policies, procedures, and culture, while also offering ongoing guidance from experienced colleagues (Medina, 2024).

Research in different educational systems shows a variety of best practices in teacher onboarding. In countries like Finland and Singapore, strong mentorship programs and collaborative professional learning communities are key components of onboarding processes (Tonga et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022). These systems emphasize the importance of giving new teachers the tools to succeed through structured support, practical resources, and ongoing feedback. In contrast, onboarding in many developing countries, including Nigeria, often lacks the depth and consistency needed to fully support new teachers, particularly in public school settings. Meanwhile, teachers who feel supported and valued during their transition into the profession are more likely to view teaching as a long-term career, as opposed to those who experience isolation and disillusionment (Medina, 2024). The onboarding process plays a crucial role in shaping

this early career experience, affecting both the teacher's self-confidence and sense of agency.

Challenges in Teacher Onboarding

Despite the importance of onboarding, many teachers report significant challenges during this initial phase (Medina, 2024). For new teachers, especially those working in under-resourced public schools, the transition into full-time teaching can be overwhelming. Challenges often include a lack of mentorship and guidance, leading to feelings of isolation and uncertainty. Research shows that inadequate induction programs leave new teachers to succeed only by their own efforts in their first years, which can negatively affect their long-term retention (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

One key challenge is the high expectation placed on teachers to immediately manage large, diverse classrooms with minimal support. In Lagos State public high schools, classrooms are often overcrowded, and teachers are required to meet the needs of students from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, often with limited resources (Sone, 2020). New teachers may feel unprepared to meet these challenges, which contributes to frustration and stress. Another significant challenge is navigating the bureaucracy inherent in many public-school systems. New teachers must manage administrative duties, adhere to curriculum mandates, and meet performance evaluation standards. These requirements, when not properly explained or supported during onboarding, can overwhelm teachers and contribute to early exit from the profession (Maigari et al., 2021; Sone, 2020).

Teacher Retention and Attrition

Teacher attrition is a global issue that poses significant challenges to education systems, and research shows that a high percentage of new teachers leave the profession within their first 5 years (Maigari et al., 2021; Sone, 2020). In Lagos State, this trend is particularly concerning among male teachers in public high schools (Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). Studies indicate that burnout, lack of administrative support, and poor working conditions are major reasons for teacher attrition in Nigeria (Adigun, 2020; Angwaomaodoko, 2023). Early career departures lead to a continuous cycle of recruitment and onboarding which weakens the stability and quality of education (Ademola et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022).

The financial and academic costs of high teacher turnover are immense. Schools must continually invest resources in recruiting and training new teachers, while students suffer from a lack of continuity and consistent instruction (Adigun, 2020; Oluwakemi, 2023). Moreover, the loss of experienced teachers affects the school culture and the professional development of the remaining staff. It also has a direct impact on student outcomes, as frequent teacher turnover disrupts the learning process and contributes to lower academic achievement (Abioye, 2021).

The reasons behind teacher attrition are complex and multifaceted. While salary and working conditions are commonly cited factors, the literature suggests that the quality of the onboarding process and the degree of support new teachers receive are crucial in determining whether they stay in the profession (Medina, 2024; Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). Teachers who feel disconnected from their colleagues, unsupported by

their administration, and overwhelmed by the demands of their job are more likely to leave early (Medina, 2024). However, this study is examining the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public-high school teachers about their onboarding programs that may have contributed to their decisions to quit the profession within their first 5 years.

Retaining Male Teachers in Nigerian Schools: Some Contemporary Issues

Recent studies on teacher retention in Nigerian schools reveal several interconnected factors affecting teacher persistence. While Abioye (2021) emphasizes organizational elements such as the need for effective school leadership; improved remuneration systems; provision of infrastructure; and provision of learning and information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, Adigun (2020) and Oluwakemi (2023) highlight the critical role of personal factors, particularly noting significant correlations between job satisfaction and several factors such as: gender, workload, work environment, organizational support.

Adigun (2020) and Oluwafemi (2023) found that the highest predictors of job satisfaction were found to be gender: $F(1, 91) = 18.899$, and organizational support: $F(1, 87) = 4.532$). The *F*-statistics indicate that both gender and organizational support significantly predict job satisfaction, with gender showing a stronger effect with ($F(1, 91) = 18.899$) compared to organizational support ($F(1, 87) = 4.532$). The *F*-value for gender, $F(1,91) = 18.899$ is substantially higher than for organizational support, indicating that gender differences have a pronounced effect on job satisfaction. This is because the higher the *F*-value, the more substantial the predictor's impact on job satisfaction. This

highlights some of the factors that influence job satisfaction among teachers, which is crucial for teacher retention.

Medina (2024) suggested that understanding these factors can help in designing professional development programs that address the specific needs and challenges faced by male teachers in Nigerian public high schools. The emphasis on organizational support and its impact on job satisfaction can inform strategies to improve the work environment and support systems for male teachers, thereby enhancing retention. Therefore, this study explores the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process. Learning from male teachers who participated in onboarding but still left the teaching profession early is crucial for understanding and addressing factors that contribute to teacher attrition, particularly among this demographic. Insights from their experiences can help improve retention strategies and create more supportive environments. Some of the key reasons why their perspectives are valuable include the understanding of the unique challenges faced by male teachers, evaluation of the effectiveness of the onboarding programs, and the creation of gender diversity in education.

Retention is strongly tied to opportunities for growth and professional development. Male teachers, like all educators, are more likely to stay in their roles if they feel they are developing professionally and have opportunities for advancement. Onboarding programs can set the stage for this by providing access to continuous professional development. For example**,** onboarding programs that introduce new teachers to available resources for professional growth, such as workshops, seminars, and

certifications, can help male teachers feel they are investing in their future within the profession. These findings are further supported by Ademola et al.'s (2021) work, which reinforces the importance of factors such as onboarding, ongoing professional development and instructional quality; however, their focus was on student outcomes. Collectively, these studies suggest that effective teacher retention requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses both institutional and personal dimensions of the teaching experience.

Retaining male teachers in Nigerian schools is closely tied to the effectiveness and design of their onboarding programs. The onboarding process plays a critical role in helping new teachers transition into their roles, feel supported, and find a sense of belonging within the school community. This is particularly important for male teachers, who may face unique challenges in certain educational environments. When tailored appropriately, onboarding programs can directly impact male teachers' job satisfaction, career commitment, and ultimately, their retention in the school system. For male teachers, especially in environments where teaching may traditionally be seen as a more female-dominated profession, onboarding programs can help integrate them into the staff community by facilitating mentorship and peer support and promoting gender equality in roles.

Medina (2024) investigated the impact of onboarding practices in schools on teacher retention and the schools' culture and climate. The study uses self-determination theory to assess how onboarding addresses teachers' basic psychological needs for

autonomy, belonging, and competence, and found that high school teachers have a greater need for relatedness and belonging.

Okeke and Nyanhoto (2021) examined the factors that negatively impact the presence of male educators in preschools in Nigeria and explored the reasons behind their low numbers. The study employed an interpretivist qualitative approach, using in-depth interviews to gather data. It was found that there were no male educators in the schools within the education district where the research was conducted because of factors such as misinterpretation of cultural roles, stigma and prejudice, fear of accusations or misbehavior, low status of educators within the school sector, and lack of male recruitment policies. This study provides insights into the challenges related to male teacher recruitment and retention, even in a different educational context. Understanding the barriers and societal perceptions that affect male educators can help in developing effective professional development and retention strategies for male teachers in Nigerian public high schools. The emphasis on gender balance and the need for targeted recruitment policies can inform similar initiatives in Nigeria.

Maigari et al. (2021) explored the influence of career satisfaction on teachers' attrition and retention in public secondary schools in Dass Local Government Area of Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study aimed to understand how career satisfaction affects teachers' decisions to stay or leave the profession and found that career satisfaction has a significant positive influence on teachers' attrition and retention. A proportionate stratified sampling technique was employed to select 186 teachers as sample respondents in the study out of a population of 356 teachers in public high schools in the local

government. The influence was quantified with a value of 26.226 against a P-value of 0.000, indicating a strong relationship between career satisfaction and both attrition and retention of teachers. The study underscores the critical role of career satisfaction in teacher retention. The findings highlight the need for improving working conditions, which can be directly addressed through targeted professional development programs and excellent onboarding system.

Challenges Faced by Male Teachers in Public High Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria

The teaching profession has evolved in terms of staff composition. Public high schools in Lagos State, like their counterparts anywhere else, have experienced a growing demography of male teachers. While women are predominant, quite a few men are working in various higher tiers within the educational system (Adigun, 2020; Oghenede et al., 2020; Onasanya & Faloyin, 2024). Indeed, gender and education intersect in intricate ways, making it difficult to discuss schooling without considering gender dynamics (Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). Therefore, to explore, comprehend, and tackle the persistent challenges faced by male teachers in public high schools in Lagos State, it is essential to examine their unique experiences.

One of the major ways to understand the challenges faced by male teachers is to understand the male teacher in Nigeria in relation to gender dynamics (Makinde et al., 2023). Male teachers' roles are greatly influenced by their gender since there are clear gendered perceptions and stereotypes attached to male teaching Abidogun, 2023; (Owoyemi & Adesina, 2021). In Nigeria, teaching, particularly at public high schools, is mostly seen as a female preserve. Analyzing this bias, Okeke and Nyanhoto (2021)

posited that several factors negatively affected the recruitment of male educators, including misinterpretation of cultural roles, stigma and prejudice, fear of accusations or misbehavior, low status of educators, and lack of male recruitment policies. This assertion upholds that no male teacher is above the gender stereotypes that exist in the teaching profession as a predominantly female domain. In addition, there is the wrong notion that most men who pursue a career in teaching hide under the profession as a refuge to escape from the responsibilities as heads of the family. These dominant beliefs and stereotypes affect the effectiveness of the male teacher in his stride toward professional practice (Makinde et al., 2023). Unfortunately, the school does not have institutional mechanisms to counteract the reproduction of gender-based social inequalities. Consequently, male teachers, who overcame these hurdles, are seen by both their male counterparts and their students as peculiar.

Furthermore, research has shown that male teachers often experience isolation and a lack of support, as they are typically outnumbered by female colleagues (Adigun, 2020). Additionally, societal expectations and stereotypes about gender roles can create additional pressure for male teachers, particularly in environments where teaching is perceived as a female-dominated profession (Oghenede et al., 2020). In the Nigerian context, male teachers in public high schools may also face challenges related to job security, professional development, and work-life balance. In addition, Adigun (2020) and Orunbon et al. (2021) identified lack of professional development opportunities, work-life lethargy, inconsistent salary payments leading to depression, occasional career stagnation or limited growth due to fewer opportunities, and the prevailing perception

that the teaching profession is unmanly as some of the woes male teachers encounter in the teaching profession. They submitted that this unique set of challenges prevent male teachers from the professional advancement and self-fulfillment that many female teachers enjoy.

Indeed, societal attitudes and stereotypes that are steeped in the ideology of masculinity and femininity have played a significant role in determining the experiences of men, including educators, within organizations. Traditional gender role expectations suggest that men must take on the dominant role, be strong, and never show vulnerability, especially emotions (Bhatti & Ali, 2020). These gendered views have resulted in societal pressures placed on male educators to fit into certain stereotypical roles, in which unrealistic and contradicting expectations have continued to be of increased concern. Male educators are expected to build relationships with learners in and outside the classroom with the aim of creating a sense of community and cultivating a safe emotional space for learners to engage with materials and with each other (Makinde, 2023).

Yet, teaching in public high schools is a demanding job because it requires emotional work in addition to time and commitment (Adigun, 2020; Oghenede et al., 2020). According to these scholars, many teachers experience burnout and stress due to the nature of different responsibilities in the workplace. Some of the responsibilities center on the irregular work hours for teaching, grading, and attending to students, which last beyond the regular school hours. Indubitably, the implications of these would impinge on their family, prompting a subtle differentiation between spillover and conflict of work. It is often challenging to separate the impact of one stressor from others, as

conflicts with family responsibilities can stem from demanding work activities or spill over from associated emotions.

In general, most male teachers present several reasons to support the notion that the perceived work-life balance is important, as balance would prevent low job satisfaction, absenteeism, and produce a sense of retention that would ensure greater quality in the classroom (Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). Thus, it implies that balancing between work and personal roles would improve the overall quality of teaching. Therefore, policy efforts seeking to reform and improve teaching practices could also be attentive to encouraging healthier work-life balance between teaching and the family.

In the same vein, many male teachers in public high schools feel that they are not adequately trained during the onboarding process in lesson planning, delivery, behavior management, or how to introduce, practice, and revise a new concept (Orunbon et al., 2021). The lack of access to professional development programs that are specifically designed to support teacher training and focus on classroom practice is causing harm. If they were developed, they would feel valued and more inclined to remain with and be loyal to the school. Meanwhile, even if a teacher faced rowdy classrooms, they would view the school positively if it invested in their development, seeing it as a source of support for their growth and resilience. This approach boosts morale, reduces staff turnover, and fosters a stable learning and teaching environment, promoting a supportive and caring culture regardless of external challenges (Orunbon et al., 2021).

Overall, male teachers in Lagos State's public high schools have encountered gender dynamics, job insecurity, feelings of isolation, professional development, and

societal challenges in the course of their job (Abosede & Adekunle, 2023; Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021). These challenges contradict efforts aimed at teachers' retention and students' overall performance and well-being and can contribute to the decision of male teachers to leave the profession early, particularly if they feel that their needs are not being adequately addressed during the onboarding process.

As a matter of fact, addressing these challenges would require creating equitable and commendable systems where all teachers can grow and thrive. Firstly, for a comprehensive shift to occur, the teaching profession must be recognized and promoted as a legitimate and rewarding career path for men as much as women, irrespective of the student demographics or challenges within schools (Abosede & Adekunle, 2023). This requires a strategic approach where men are not only active participants but also partners in gender-sensitive training and research that investigates the effects of gender dynamics on professional advancement. Engaging men in these efforts helps harness societal perceptions of masculinity to address and mitigate issues of promotional instability and career stagnation linked to gender disparities. Also, by positioning men as allies and active contributors in these initiatives, educational systems can work towards a more equitable and supportive environment for all educators, fostering a culture that values diversity and inclusivity (Adigun, 2020; Oghenede et al., 2020).

Gaps in Literature

While there is extensive research on teacher retention and the onboarding process, there are several gaps in the literature that this study aims to address. First, there is limited research on the specific experiences of male teachers in public high schools,

particularly in the Lagos State of Nigeria context. Second, few studies have explored the role of the onboarding process in teacher retention in Lagos State. This study aims to fill these gaps by focusing on the lived experiences of male public-high school teachers during the onboarding process and how these experiences may have influenced their decision to leave the profession early.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, this chapter has reviewed the literature on teacher retention and the challenges faced by male teachers in Lagos State public high schools, and the onboarding process. The review has highlighted the importance of effective onboarding programs in reducing the rate at which male teachers leave public high schools and the unique challenges faced by male teachers in Lagos State. Furthermore, the chapter has also discussed the theoretical framework guiding this study and identified gaps in the literature that this research aims to address. However, it is not known how the teacher onboarding process may have contributed to the decision of male teachers to leave the profession at an early stage in Lagos State which is the focus of this research study. Therefore, by exploring the lived experiences of the former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process, this will increase school leaders and the state ministry of education understanding of this population before designing onboarding programs that will take into consideration the needs of male teachers, which in turns would make them want to remain on the job for a longer period.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research methodology, examining both the study's design and its implementation. In addition to reviewing the design, this chapter addresses

the selection process for participants. It also covers essential aspects such as data collection, analysis, and considerations regarding the study's trustworthiness, validity, and ethics. Chapter 4 presents a comprehensive overview of the study's results. It highlights the lived experiences of the onboarding process of male public high school teachers in Lagos State who left the teaching profession early, as revealed through one-on-one interviews. This chapter examines the two research questions guiding the study, explains the participant selection process, addresses its limitations, and outlines the data collection methods. A summary of the key themes that emerged from the data is also provided. Chapter 5 reiterates the study's purpose and discusses the themes identified through data analysis, offering further insight into the participants' experiences. The chapter concludes with a summary of the study and recommendations for future research directions.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This study was designed with a focus on exploring the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process that may have influenced their decision to quit the teaching profession early. In this chapter, I presented the research methods design and rationale and my role as the researcher. I discussed the selection of participants and instrumentation along with research procedures. In addition, I explained all issues of trustworthiness and how they are dealt with and the study delved into the participants lived experiences with the onboarding process, examining how these experiences influenced their decisions to exit the teaching profession prematurely.

Research Design and Rationale

The study adopted the phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process. By exploring their lived experiences, the study aimed to uncover how the onboarding process might have influenced their decision to quit the teaching profession early. This approach was chosen because there were no predefined lists or categories available to measure such impacts, and the research goal was to deeply understand and articulate the essence of lived experiences, giving voice to participants' perspectives and uncovering insights that might not be captured through other research approaches, making phenomenology the most suitable method (Giorgi, 2009; Peoples, 2021). Secondly, I planned to employ a phenomenological methodology, as it enabled me

to explore and reveal the detailed descriptions and personal meanings of lived experiences surrounding the onboarding process of male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession prematurely.

The following research questions were developed to guide the study:

- **RQ1:** What are the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process?
- **RQ2:** How do Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years perceive the onboarding training provided to them when they were about to enter the teaching profession?

These questions align with the phenomenological framework, which seeks to capture the lived experiences of participants to conceptualize phenomena that have not been previously studied. The primary goal of the research was to understand how the onboarding process of male public high school teachers may influence their decision to leave the profession early. This method is consistent with the phenomenological tradition of exploring participants' experiences to gain insight into new or understudied phenomena.

Role of the Researcher

Burkholder et al. (2020), Giorgi (2009), and Peoples (2021) all highlighted the complex and multifaceted nature of the researcher’s role in qualitative studies, particularly in phenomenological research. Giorgi (2009) underscores the importance of the researcher as a data collector, ensuring that lived experiences are captured in rich detail while maintaining the integrity of participants' perspectives. In this role, the

researcher not only gathers data but also assumes a deeper responsibility for understanding and interpreting participants' experiences in an unbiased manner. Burkholder et al. (2020) expanded on this by emphasizing that the researcher's role extends beyond data collection to include active listening, ensuring that participants' perceptions and emotions are understood without the intrusion of the researcher's own assumptions or biases. This approach is particularly important in phenomenological research, where the goal is to explore the essence of lived experiences as described by the participants themselves, untainted by external influence. The researcher, in this sense, serves as a facilitator for participants' voices, rather than a filter through which the data is interpreted.

Peoples (2021) further argued that researchers must exercise caution in interpreting data, especially after being exposed to participants' experiences. Any projection of the researcher's own ideologies onto the data can distort the findings and introduce unintended bias. This risk not only compromises the integrity of the study but also has the potential to produce negative ripple effects, such as misrepresentation of participants lived realities or ethical violations.

Despite these potential challenges, the researcher's role, when carefully executed, can have a profound and lasting positive impact on both the participants and the broader field of study (Burkholder et al., 2020; Giorgi, 2009; Peoples, 2021). Burkholder et al. (2020) noted that if researchers are diligent in maintaining ethical standards, such as ensuring confidentiality, obtaining informed consent, and being transparent about the research process, they not only uphold the trust of their participants but also contribute to

the credibility and trustworthiness of the research itself. This trustworthiness is key to producing meaningful and valid outcomes that can advance the field. Ensuring trustworthiness and upholding ethical standards are fundamental obligations for any researcher (Burkholder et al., 2020). These responsibilities are critical to fostering a credible and ethically sound research environment. While the researcher exercises control over how data is collected, interpreted, and presented, the foundation of trust begins with clear, transparent communication with participants about the research process. From the outset, setting clear expectations regarding the study's purpose, methods, and confidentiality helps to establish trust. This openness is essential for participants to feel secure in sharing their experiences and perceptions.

An equally significant, though often overlooked, aspect of research ethics is the researcher's unwavering commitment to maintaining high ethical standards, particularly regarding participant welfare. As Peoples (2021) pointed out, the researcher must consistently prioritize the well-being of participants throughout the study. This includes not only protecting their confidentiality and ensuring informed consent but also being mindful of how the research process might affect participants emotionally or psychologically. Ethical integrity is not merely a checkbox in the research design; it is a continuous practice that guides all interactions and decisions within the study.

Reflecting on these ethical considerations, and informed by the literature, I recognize that my role in the research needs to be that of an observer-participant (Peoples, 2021). This dual role requires a careful balance between observing participants and engaging with them to gather meaningful data. During interviews, I should pay close

attention to nonverbal cues such as body language and emotional expressions, which often convey deeper insights into participants' experiences. Simultaneously, I will actively engage in the process by asking focused, probing questions to elicit detailed responses. This observer-participant approach will allow me to both witness and participate in the unfolding of the participants' narratives.

However, assuming this dual role may bring about the need to remain vigilant about potential conflicts of interest, which could compromise the objectivity of the study. One challenge I anticipate early on is the fact that I am a teacher who once worked in a public school although without an onboarding program. Participants might perceive my role as a researcher to be influenced by my professional position, potentially affecting the authenticity of their responses. To mitigate this, I will make it a priority to clearly differentiate my role as a researcher from my professional position. I will communicate explicitly to participants that their involvement in the study was entirely voluntary and that there are no direct or implied incentives for participation. This includes making it clear that their decisions to participate, or not, would have no bearing on any current or future professional interactions with me. By taking these steps, I aim to reduce any potential biases or misunderstandings and create a space where participants feel free to share their experiences openly and without reservation.

Methodology

The participant pool for this study comprised between 8 and 15 male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years after completing the onboarding process in Lagos State. This range aligns with the recommended sample

size for phenomenological research, as noted by Peoples (2021). While the number of participants is an important consideration, the primary focus was on achieving data saturation (i.e., reaching a point where no new insights or information emerge from the participants). The decision to cap the sample size at 15 ensures that the researchers can thoroughly investigate and understand everyone's experiences while maintaining the depth and rigor necessary for qualitative analysis.

Participant Selection Logic

Participants were recruited via professional networking sites like LinkedIn and social media platforms, such as Facebook's messenger using the following steps. Step 1: Define Participant Criteria

- Inclusion Criteria:
  - Male teachers who previously worked in Lagos State public high schools.
  - Individuals who quit the teaching profession early (e.g., within 1-5 years of starting).
  - Must have undergone an onboarding process during their employment.
  - Willingness to participate in in-depth interviews.
- Exclusion Criteria:
  - Current teachers or those who quit and did not go through an onboarding process.
  - Teachers from private or non-Lagos State schools.

Step 2: Develop a Recruitment Strategy

I created a recruitment post or message that includes:

- A brief description of the study's purpose and importance.
- Eligibility criteria.
- Expected time commitment and interview format (e.g., virtual).
- Assurance of confidentiality and ethical practices.
- Contact details for inquiries and a link to an interest form (e.g., Google Form).

Step 3: Join and Leverage Relevant Facebook Groups

- Search for and join groups such as:
  - Former teachers' networks.
  - Groups focused on Lagos education or ex-public servants.
  - Teacher professional development or alumni groups.
- Post the recruitment ad in these groups, adhering to group rules.

Step 4: Use LinkedIn for Professional Targeting

- Search Keywords: Use phrases like *"Former Lagos State Teacher," "Ex-Teacher,"* or *"Public School Teacher."*
- Identify and connect with individuals who fit the profile.
  - Send a professional and personalized message explaining the study and inviting them to participate.
- Post the recruitment ad on my profile and tag relevant organizations or groups (e.g., Lagos-based education associations).

Step 5: Screen Potential Participants

- Use a Google Form to pre-screen participants by asking questions like:
  - Did you teach in Lagos State public high schools?

- How long did you work as a teacher?
- Do you still teach in Lagos State public high schools?
- Did you go through an onboarding process?
- Are you comfortable discussing your onboarding experiences?

Step 6: Verify and Finalize Participant Selection

- Review responses to ensure participants meet the criteria.
- Aim for 10-20 participants, depending on the depth of the study.
- Follow up with eligible participants via email or messaging platforms.

Step 7: Obtain Informed Consent

- Share detailed information about the study, including:
  - Purpose and significance.
  - Participant rights (e.g., anonymity, right to withdraw).
  - The process for safeguarding their data.
- Provide a consent form for participants to sign electronically or physically as appropriate and convenient. An email response is also suitable for consent.

Step 8: Schedule Interviews

1. Coordinate convenient times for interviews, ensuring they are comfortable with the medium (e.g., Zoom).

Step 9: Build Rapport

- Begin interviews with a friendly introduction and reassurances about confidentiality to create a comfortable environment for open sharing.

Although the study did not place particular emphasis on demographic variables such as race or age, participants were asked to provide this information at the initial stage when declaring their interest using the Google form, and these details were recorded in the results for context. To ensure inclusivity and representativeness in my qualitative research, I adopted a comprehensive approach to address potential sampling biases. Recognizing the limitations of relying solely on social media for participant recruitment, I diversified my outreach efforts by incorporating alternative channels such as professional networks, teacher unions, community boards, and local organizations. This helped me reach individuals who might not be active online, ensuring a broader and more diverse participant pool.

Upon receiving all responses, the number of participants was narrowed down to no more than 15 individuals. This limit was established to ensure the depth and quality of engagement with each participant. Because fewer than eight eligible participants were identified initially and for an appreciable length of time, an additional recruitment effort was initiated through LinkedIn and Facebook messenger. All individuals, whether selected to participate or not, received a follow-up email with further instructions on the next steps.

Instrumentation

A central component of this study involved conducting one-on-one interviews with each participant. During these interviews, a self-designed semistructured set of questions (see Appendix D) was used to guide the conversations, allowing flexibility for follow-up and clarifying questions as needed. In some cases, and where necessary,

participants were asked to elaborate further on certain responses to gain deeper insight. These were open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to share their experiences freely. The questions were developed based on the theoretical insights that guided the study. They were designed to allow participants to reflect on the multiple layers of their experiences while aligning with the key constructs of the theories mentioned.

All interviews were conducted virtually via the Zoom platform. Additionally, a voice recorder was used as a back-up to ensure the conversation was recorded in case of any issues with the Zoom recording. The audio files and transcripts were securely stored on a protected drive, used exclusively for this research study, and kept in a locked safe to ensure confidentiality. Each transcript was reviewed twice for accuracy, and they were transcribed verbatim, capturing the participants' responses exactly as they were expressed.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The primary data collection method for this study was conducted through individual interviews with male public high school teachers who left teaching within their first 5 years after completing the onboarding process. All interviews took place virtually. A total of 12 potential participants who met the eligibility criteria were selected to take part in the study. Thereafter, these participants were invited to provide consent to participate in the study and to be interviewed. Once consent was obtained, each participant was asked to schedule a one-hour interview to explore the interview questions

already outlined. Each participant was promised a sum of 10 thousand naira (about $7.00) as an incentive and to compensate for their time.

Given that this study follows a phenomenological approach, participants were encouraged to provide candid and comprehensive responses. They were reminded of the confidentiality of their answers and were reassured that detailed and thoughtful responses are welcome. Open-ended interview questions were employed to encourage unprompted, in-depth reflections. In some cases, and where necessary, clarification or follow-up questions were asked to fully understand the participants' responses.

Interviews were conducted online using the Zoom platform. To ensure the conversations were securely captured, a voice recorder was used as a backup in case of technical difficulties with the Zoom recording. The following privacy policy on recording meetings was read out to all participants before interviews began: "Zoom will store and use your voiceprint and reference audio recording for these purposes while you have features that use your voiceprint enabled. You can disable these features and delete this data any time in your settings" (Zoom Video Communication, Inc., n.d.).

Each interview was meticulously transcribed. To ensure accuracy, the transcripts were reviewed twice. For confidentiality, participants were assigned pseudonyms and labeled as Participant 1 or P1, Participant 2 or P2, and so on, based on the order in which they were selected. Even when there were no instances where audio issues require further clarification, each participant was given the opportunity to review their transcript to ensure it accurately reflects their intended responses. A follow-up interview took place

where considered necessary. The goal was to conduct interviews with the selected participants, originally planned to be between 8 and 15, and transcribe immediately.

Data Analysis for the Study

Phenomenological data analysis is the process of transcending the mundane nature of each description to reveal the essence of the phenomenon (Peoples, 2021). Therefore, data source was the transcripts of the interviews on the lived experiences and perceptions of the onboarding process of anticipated 10 Lagos State male public high school teachers who took part in onboarding and left the job within their first 5 years. Peoples (2021) recommended a sample size of 8 to 15 for data saturation. However, a sample size of 10 was used before saturation was reached. The data collected from these sources were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data.

The data analysis process followed a series of steps as outlined by Giorgi (2009) and Peoples (2021), ensuring a thorough and structured approach:

1. **Initial Transcript Review**: The first step involves reading through the entire transcript and removing any unnecessary language, such as filler words like "you know" or "um," to streamline the data for analysis.
2. **Preliminary Meaning Units**: Given the length and complexity of the interview descriptions, they were divided into smaller, manageable segments known as preliminary meaning units. This allows for a more focused and detailed examination of the content.

3. **Final Meaning Units**: The preliminary meaning units were then further refined into final meaning units or themes. These were developed through a deeper understanding of each participant's responses, drawing out the core meanings from their descriptions.
4. **Situated Narratives**: The final meaning units were synthesized into situated narratives that organize participants' experiences thematically in response to specific interview or survey questions.
5. **General Narratives**: The situated narratives were then integrated into broader, general narratives that encapsulate the major themes across all participants, highlighting the collective meanings derived from their experiences.
6. **General Description**: Finally, the major phenomenological themes were united into a cohesive general description, summarizing the key findings of the study.

Although this study adopted a descriptive phenomenological framework informed by Giorgi (2009), it also incorporated elements of thematic analysis to structure the presentation of findings. Therefore, after bracketing preconceptions, I segmented transcripts into phenomenological meaning units, coded and clustered using thematic analysis, allowing for the systematic development of themes that remained faithful to participants' lived experiences. This hybrid approach ensured fidelity to the phenomenological essence of the data while enabling a structured and transparent analysis process.

Throughout this process, any discrepant or deviant cases were carefully considered and included in the analysis rather than discarded. These cases offered alternative perspectives or unique experiences that challenge or expand the primary themes. As noted by Patton (2015), acknowledging these variations enriches the overall findings, providing a more credible and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Discrepant cases may offer valuable insights that enhance the depth and accuracy of the research.

NVivo, a widely used tool for qualitative analysis, was used to organize data. NVivo supports coding, thematic analysis, and the organization of large datasets, and it allows the import and analysis of data from interviews, focus groups, and surveys, providing robust tools for working with text, audio, and visual data (Limna, 2023). To ensure coding consistency, a detailed codebook with clear definitions and inclusion/exclusion criteria was developed. During analysis, practice like memo was used to document reflective thoughts and emerging insights. Saturation was reached when additional data no longer yields new codes or themes, ensuring that the analysis comprehensively captures the depth and breadth of participants' experiences.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Concerns regarding the trustworthiness of a phenomenological study are numerous. As Burkholder et al. (2020) explained, a study may lack credibility if participants are not allowed to express their views freely during the interview process, if the researcher’s biases influence the interpretation of the data, or if the study fails to gather sufficient information. To address these concerns in this study, the interview

process was carefully explained to each participant. One-on-one virtual interviews was conducted, and all sessions were recorded to ensure that the transcripts accurately capture the participants' words, without any additional content introduced by the researcher.

Since the participants in this study were anticipated to be male high school teachers, a profession I am also involved in, I worked to establish a natural level of rapport and trust. However, to ensure objectivity, the study was framed within the context of the teachers' onboarding experiences that might have influenced their decisions to leave the profession early. This prevented my personal biases from impacting on the analysis. All interview responses were carefully transcribed and reviewed twice - first during transcription and again by comparing the transcripts with the original audio recordings to ensure accuracy. During the interviews, I asked for clarification when necessary to ensure that the participants' experiences are represented as accurately and authentically as possible.

The first dimension of trustworthiness is credibility, which parallels internal validity in quantitative research. Credibility involves demonstrating that the data collected are as accurate and representative as possible (Stadtlander, 2019). To ensure credibility, strategies such as triangulation and member checks were employed. Since the only source of data collection was by interview, therefore theoretical triangulation was employed. That is, multiple theories were used to interpret the data (Natow, 2020). Therefore, I applied Herzberg's two-factor theory, Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding theory, and Maslow's hierarchy of needs to analyze the reasons for male teachers leaving the teaching profession early. Member checking was ensured by giving the participants

the transcripts as well as the interpretations of their experience to review for accuracy and agreement. That is, feedback was sought from selected participants after their interviews to confirm that their views and perspectives on the phenomenon were correctly understood and interpreted. Additionally, data collection continued until saturation was achieved.

The second dimension is dependability, analogous to reliability in quantitative studies. Dependability focuses on the consistency and stability of the research process (Stadtlander, 2019). To address dependability, a detailed explanation of the process involved in the research was provided and this process was rigidly followed.

The third dimension, transferability, corresponds to external validity in quantitative research. It concerns the extent to which the findings can be generalized or applied to other contexts and populations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Transferability was addressed by providing rich, detailed descriptions of the data. This included comprehensive accounts of participant interviews, supported by direct quotes, to help readers evaluate the applicability of the findings to other settings.

The fourth dimension is confirmability, which refers to the extent to which the findings are shaped by the participants and the research context rather than the researcher's personal biases (Stadtlander, 2019). To ensure confirmability, a robust audit trail was maintained. Therefore, a detailed and transparent record of all the steps, decisions, and processes undertaken during the study was kept. It serves to document and justify the research methodology, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ensuring that the study is credible, trustworthy, and reproducible. This trail documents the research

process thoroughly, enabling others to verify whether the conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations were rooted in the data and supported by evidence.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations in research are widely regarded as essential to the success of any study, just as important as methodological or analytical decisions (Burkholder et al., 2020). Various organizations, such as the American Psychological Association (APA), provide guidance through documents like the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (APA, 2023), emphasizing the importance of integrity, respect, fairness, and justice in research conduct. Additionally, Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) offers a *Research Ethics Approval Checklist* (Walden University, n.d.), which was used in this study to mitigate potential ethical issues.

To safeguard the study against ethical concerns, I maintained a professional and respectful demeanor in all interactions with participants, and they were encouraged to reciprocate this approach. Recognizing that the study may explore sensitive topics related to participants' experiences as male teachers, steps were taken to minimize any potential discomfort. I ensured that no discomfort was reported, and participants openly answered all questions. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and were encouraged to share only what they feel comfortable disclosing. I provided a safe and supportive environment to facilitate open and honest responses. In addition to these measures, several steps were implemented to ensure strict compliance with ethical standards. This includes obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity by securely storing data and

removing any identifiable information, and adhering to Walden University's IRB guidelines. Walden University's approval number for this study is 02-27-25-1120525. It expires on February 26, 2026.

To protect participants' identities, pseudonyms were assigned to maintain anonymity. All data collected from emails, consent forms, interviews, and recordings were securely stored on a protected drive by the researcher, with hard copies locked in a safe which will be for a minimum of 3 years. Any information that was not directly relevant to the study was promptly deleted to ensure data integrity and confidentiality.

Summary

This chapter outlined a thorough review of the phenomenological approach, emphasizing the importance of capturing participants' lived experiences to understand their perspectives more deeply. By maintaining a qualitative stance, the study was positioned to explore subjective experiences without reducing them to quantifiable data, allowing for a richer and more nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The discussion on participant selection elaborated on the rationale behind choosing specific individuals, ensuring that those selected could provide insights relevant to the study's focus. The criteria for selecting participants were rooted in both the specific characteristics of the population of interest and the research objectives, ensuring that the sample was both representative and meaningful.

Additionally, the chapter explored the role of the researcher, underlining how the researcher's positionality, reflexivity, and interactions with participants could influence both the data collection process and the interpretation of findings. This section

emphasized the importance of maintaining trustworthiness throughout the study, including how the researcher ensured credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability in line with qualitative research standards. Ethical considerations were also carefully examined, with an emphasis on the ethical responsibilities of the researcher to protect participants' rights and ensure informed consent. Moreover, the chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the data collection and analysis procedures. Special attention was paid to thematic analysis, which followed the guidelines of Giorgi (2019) and Peoples (2021), highlighting the systematic approach used to identify, analyze, and report patterns within the data.

Chapter 4 offers an in-depth presentation of the study's results, shedding light on the lived experiences of male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession early, with a particular focus on their onboarding processes. Through one-on-one interviews, the study captured the personal narratives of these individuals, providing a detailed account of the challenges and factors that may influence their decisions to leave the profession. The chapter explores two primary research questions: first, what aspects of the onboarding process contributed to the participants' early departure from teaching; and second, what broader factors within the teaching profession impacted their decision to leave. These research questions guide the exploration of participants' experiences, allowing for a focused and systematic analysis of the data.

The participant selection process will be revisited in this chapter, explaining how individuals will be chosen based on specific criteria, such as the length of time they spent in the profession, their experiences with onboarding, and their ultimate decision to leave.

The chapter will also delve into the data-gathering methods, highlighting how interviews will be conducted in a way that encourages participants to share their stories openly and reflectively. The use of semistructured interviews will allow for flexibility in exploring various aspects of the participants' experiences while ensuring that the core research questions are addressed. Within the chapter, tables detailing the participant key themes that emerged from the data will be presented. These themes offer insights into the challenges faced during the onboarding process, any support systems, the cultural and systemic issues within the education sector, and the personal factors that influenced the participants' decisions to leave. A summary of these themes will be provided, offering a coherent picture of the primary findings from the data analysis.

Chapter 5 will restate the purpose of the study, reiterating the focus on understanding the lived experiences of male high school teachers who left the profession early. It will expand on the themes that are identified in the data analysis, providing deeper insights into the specific factors that led to the participants' departure. This chapter will go beyond simply presenting the themes, delving into the personal and professional contexts of the participants' experiences and offering a richer interpretation of the data. The chapter will explore the implications of the findings for the teaching profession, particularly in relation to how onboarding processes and institutional support can be improved to retain new teachers.

The chapter will also emphasize the significance of understanding the personal perspectives of the participants, acknowledging the complex interplay between individual experiences and broader systemic issues. The study will conclude with a comprehensive

summary, synthesizing the key findings and drawing connections between the participants' narratives and existing literature. Recommendations for future research will be provided, suggesting areas where further investigation could help address the challenges identified in this study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter includes a description of the results of this study on the lived experiences of Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process. The study focuses specifically on male teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years after onboarding. It begins with a brief review of the purpose of the study, the restatement of the research questions, a description of the study setting, participant demographics, and the selection process. Data collection and analysis are explained while tables showing the participants' age range, years of teaching experience before leaving the teaching profession, distribution across the six educational districts of Lagos State are presented. This chapter concludes with a synopsis of the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Restatement of the Study Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative research study was to explore the lived experience of former Lagos State male public high school teachers regarding their onboarding process, and to understand their perception of the entire onboarding process in Lagos State.

The following research questions were developed to guide the study:

- **RQ1:** What are the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process?

- **RQ2:** How do Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years perceive the onboarding training provided to them when they were about to enter the teaching profession?

Setting

This study was conducted in Lagos State, Nigeria, focusing on the lived experiences of former male teachers who taught in public high schools across the state for 5 years or less. Lagos, as a densely populated and culturally diverse urban center, hosts a wide array of public educational institutions with varied onboarding practices. While district coverage ensured a representative spread of schools, it is important to acknowledge the broader contextual factors influencing the onboarding experience. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Lagos State public schools faced ongoing challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teaching materials, and overstretched infrastructure (Oghenede et al., 2020). These issues were particularly evident in urban and semiurban schools where rapid population growth outpaced investment in school facilities. For newly recruited male teachers, these conditions affected how they integrated into the school system, accessed mentorship or support, and developed confidence in their teaching roles (Ibrahim et al., 2022). As such, the socio-economic and post-pandemic realities served as a critical backdrop shaping participants' perceptions and lived experiences of onboarding.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding, participants were drawn from all six education districts in Lagos State, representing both urban and semiurban school environments. Given that the participants are no longer actively teaching in public

schools, interviews were conducted on Zoom virtual platform. This flexible approach ensures participant comfort, preserves confidentiality, and fosters an environment conducive to open and reflective sharing of experiences related to their onboarding processes. Data collection took place in March and April of 2025.

Demographics

Fifteen former Lagos State male public high school teachers indicated their interest in participating in this study. However, only 12 of them satisfied the laid down criterion of 5 years of teaching experience or less after their onboarding process. Meanwhile, at the point at which data saturation was achieved, only 10 participants had completed the process. All 10 participants met the established inclusion criteria: they were all males who had taught in Lagos State public high schools and left the profession within their first 5 years after completing the onboarding process. The age range of the participants is from 21 to 50 years (see Table 1). Table 2 shows the participants' years of teaching experience before quitting the profession. Table 3 represents the number of participants from each education district of Lagos State that took part in the study. Notably, 40% of the participants were aged between 36 and 40. This age range typically represents individuals making mid-career transitions, often bringing with them prior professional experiences, mature expectations, and perhaps a clearer sense of professional identity. Several participants' accounts (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P9, and P10) revealed that expectations of onboarding support varied depending on their career stage or prior professional experience. For instance, some mid-career entrants referenced more structured induction programs they had encountered in noneducation sectors and noted

the relative informality of the onboarding processes in Lagos State public schools. Participant 4 who had previously worked in the banking sector remarked, *"I was expecting something more organized, maybe with manuals or scheduled sessions, but here it was more like, 'just get started.'"* Conversely, younger teachers, especially those entering the profession directly from teacher training institutions (P1, P7, and P10), tended to be more accepting of the informal orientation practices. These observations suggest that professional background and career trajectory shaped how participants perceived and responded to the onboarding support available in their schools.

Table 1

Age Range of Participants

	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50
Number of participants	1	1	2	4	1	1
Percentage of participants	10	10	20	40	10	10

Table 2

Participants' Years of Teaching Experience Before Quitting

	1	2	3	4	5
Number of participants	1	1	4	2	2
Percentage of participants	10	10	40	20	20

Table 3

Participants' Distribution Across Lagos State Six Educational Districts

District	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Number of participants	1	2	3	1	1	2
Percentage of participants	10	20	30	10	10	20

Data Collection

Data were primarily collected via semistructured and audio-recorded interviews complemented by handwritten field notes. Data were collected between March and April 2025 with 10 participants. That was a timeline determined largely by the participants' availability to be interviewed, a process that took some time.

Conduct of interviews was on the Zoom platform as approved by the Walden University IRB. Interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis, and participants chose their time slots based on their own individual convenience and work commitments. Data were collected using audio recordings and handwritten notes during the interview process, as per the data collection plan described in Chapter 3. Moreover, all the audio recordings were done with an Apple iPhone or smartphone, aside from the Zoom recording, ensuring that the collected data is not lost. Data collection occurred over 6 weeks between March and April 2025 since transcriptions were done by hand, and manual transcription required systematic procedures to ensure accuracy.

The manual transcription of qualitative interview data presented several notable challenges throughout the research process. On average, each hour of recorded interview

required approximately 4 to 5 hours to transcribe fully. This time burden significantly extended the overall data processing timeline. Audio quality also posed consistent difficulties. In one instance (Participant 5), background noise, low volume, overlapping speech, and unclear articulation hindered accurate interpretation of the participant's responses. These issues often necessitated repeated playback and close listening, further increasing the time and effort required.

Transcription also imposed significant cognitive demands. The necessity of sustained concentration and precision over extended periods often led to mental fatigue, which could affect accuracy and consistency. Moreover, capturing the interviews verbatim, including the process of filtering out fillers, repetitions, false starts, and informal speech patterns, required meticulous attention to detail, adding to the cognitive load. Despite these challenges, the transcription process remained a critical step in ensuring the depth and integrity of the qualitative data analysis. All interviews were first transcribed and subsequently rigorously reviewed, edited, and formatted into clean datasets for qualitative analysis.

The participants answered 10 open-ended, semistructured questions. The interview format enabled the use of both standardized and adaptive follow-up questions based on individual participants' responses. Interviews lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to 1 hour. To comply with ethical standards and the Walden University IRB data security guidelines set forth for the study, all data collected were stored only on password-protected personal devices owned and operated by the researcher. These devices were

maintained in secure physical locations, and no data was stored on cloud storage or shared with unauthorized third parties.

Data collection continued until thematic saturation was reached, in line with the principles of qualitative inquiry. After analyzing the eighth interview, no new first-order codes or significant variations in meaning were identified. Interviews nine and 10 further reinforced the categories already developed, confirming that the core themes had been fully captured. The recurrence and consistency of the participants' perspectives suggested that additional interviews were unlikely to yield novel insights. As such, saturation was deemed to have been achieved. Consequently, data collection was concluded, even though two additional eligible participants had expressed willingness to participate. This decision reflects a deliberate and reflective approach to sampling, prioritizing depth and richness of data over quantity.

The original Walden University IRB approval also included capabilities for follow-up member-checking. Consequently, transcripts were distributed to participants through encrypted digital means for remote member-checking and rapid participant feedback in a timely fashion. Thus, participants were then approached for member-checking after transcription. Six out of the 10 participants verified their transcripts without demanding changes. A participant did come back with slight edits, including some wording discrepancies with a significant concept on conflict resolution. Upon review, I agreed that the revisions more accurately reflected the participant's intended meaning and incorporated them accordingly. The remaining three participants received their transcripts but did not provide any feedback. In the absence of feedback or revision

requests from these participants, it was determined that their silence indicated agreement with the transcripts and therefore, the transcripts were deemed final. In line with practices documented in qualitative research, nonresponse after repeated contact was treated as tacit consent, under the assumption that participants did not object to the contents of their transcripts and chose not to be further involved in the study (Birt et al., 2016).

Data Analysis

The process of analyzing qualitative interview data involved systematic and iterative progression from raw transcripts to codes, then to categories, and ultimately to the development of themes. This approach was grounded in inductive reasoning, allowing findings to emerge organically from the data rather than imposing a priori knowledge or reasoning that is independent of experience (Morgan & Nica, 2020). The data analysis process followed a series of steps as outlined by Giorgi (2009) and Peoples (2021), ensuring a thorough and structured approach. The first stage in the analysis involved becoming thoroughly familiar with the interview transcripts. Each transcript was read multiple times to gain a holistic sense of each participant's experience. Listening to the audio recordings alongside the transcripts allowed for a deeper appreciation of tone, context, and emotional nuance (Barnwell, 2025). Reflective notes and analytic memos were made in the margins to capture initial thoughts, patterns, or striking statements. This stage served as the foundation for generating meaningful insights during coding. Consequently, data analysis commenced immediately after the completion of the fifth interview, consistent with the intended practice of analyzing data as data collection

proceeded, which allows the tracking of the attainment of a point of saturation (Giorgi, 2009; Peoples, 2021).

After the transcription of interviews, for which data were verified, a more complex phase of data analysis commenced in the form of coding. Each level of coding required a greater degree of reflexivity and intention to reduce the potential for personal bias (Giorgi, 2009; Peoples, 2021). The transcripts were of varying lengths, from five pages to 22 pages. During this process, sensitive personal information (names and contextual information that would identify contributors) was excluded. Transcripts were line numbered serially to facilitate specific references and easy data retrieval for further reviews.

Creating Codes From Interview Transcripts

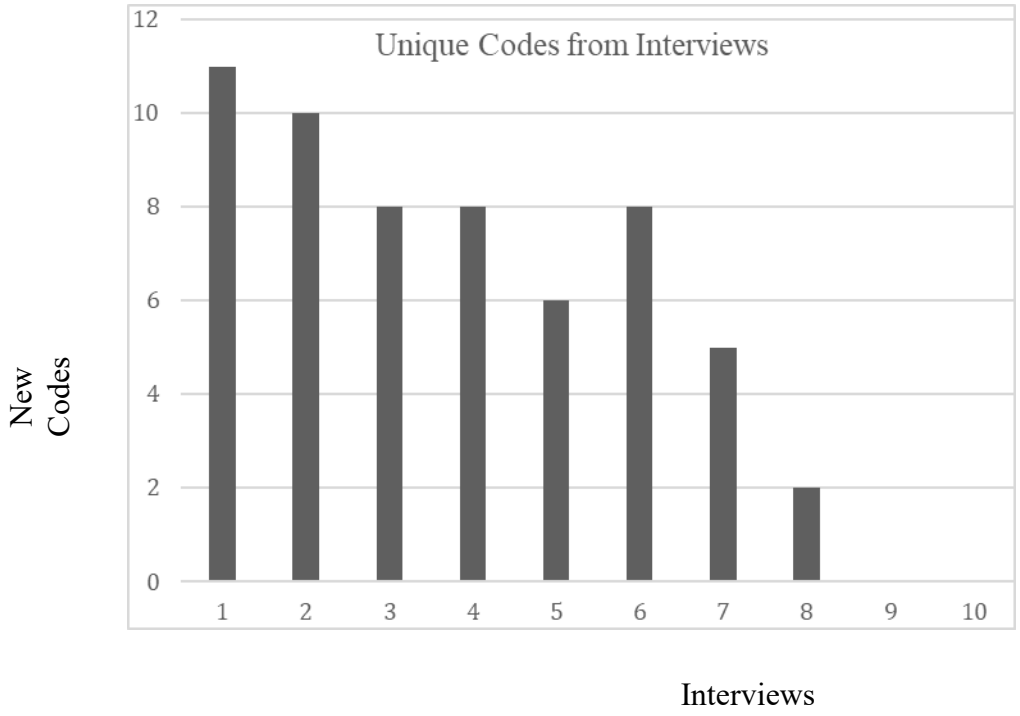
After becoming familiar with the data, each of the transcripts was open coded. This consisted of looking at the data line by line and adding brief labels - or "codes" - to lines that seemed important or that captured important aspects of the onboarding experience. Coding was mainly descriptive or in vivo (e.g., in participants' words) and aimed to encapsulate specific ideas, activities, or attitudes (Saldana, 2021). At this point, manifold codes were generated which reflected the complexity and richness of the data rather than being overly structured at a premature point in the analysis (Saldana, 2021).

First-level codes were then applied to unique units of meaning in the transcripts while also using Microsoft Excel. If the new idea-unit fits into a previously established encoding, then it was coded as such. On the other hand, new concepts which no longer fit in previous codes were coded, and new categories (where appropriate) were introduced to

separate columns. With each iteration of this iterative process, broader categories emerged, which in the end converged into themes that were representative of the collective experiences and views of the participants (Peoples, 2021). This iterative process was applied to every subsequent transcript until no new codes emerged from the data. Saturation was deemed to have occurred on completion of the final two interviews (P9 and P10) with no new codes generated. Most codes and categories were generated from the first six interviews. Interviews seven and eight produced five and two new codes respectively, with the last two interviews bringing no further conceptual understanding. This suggested that thematic saturation had been achieved. Figure 1 below shows a pictorial representation of new codes from interviews.

Figure 1

Unique Codes From Interviews



The analysis of responses to the 10 semistructured interview questions generated a total of 132 codes out of which 58 codes are unique, each contributing to the interpretation of the phenomenological data and facilitating a deeper understanding of participants lived experiences in relation to the research questions. The complete list of codes was presented under Appendix C. Codes corresponding to responses for Question 1 begin with the number 1; similarly, codes for Question 2 begin with the number 2, and this pattern continues through to Question 10.

Code Allocation and Category Development

In the next phase, the initial codes were reviewed and refined to identify patterns and relationships. Codes that appeared conceptually similar or related were grouped together under broader categories. For example, codes such as inconsistent guidance, unstandardized peer support, and informal peer mentoring were organized under the category of mentorship and peer support gaps. Final codes were then reviewed and reorganized after the initial codes had been generated. Codes with similar or related concepts were combined within the higher-order categories. During this stage, the process of constant comparison between transcripts was kept rigorous to assure internal validity in the categories (Saldana, 2021). Categories formed the basis for thematic development and allowed data reduction into meaningful analytic units. This stage involved constant comparison across transcripts to ensure consistency and coherence in category development. Categories served as the building blocks for theme construction and helped condense the data into manageable analytical units (Saldana, 2021).

Description of the Code Sheets Summary for the Interview Questions

Interview data were presented in tables, with corresponding unique identifiers using pseudonyms and transcript line and page numbers. Figure 2 shows an example of the code sheet summary for the interview questions.

Figure 2

Code Sheet Summary for Interview Questions

Name	Page	Line	Interview Question/Response	Code	Categories							

Once categories were established, they were examined for overarching meanings that addressed the central research questions. Categories were compared across cases to determine whether they reflected similar experiences or divergent viewpoints. To allocate a code to a category, I employed a numerical allocation; that is, the number "1" was inserted into the relevant cell (i.e., for the cell of the row that corresponded to the specific coded data segment and underneath the category column that was valid). This marker was the indication of the inclusion of the code in that category.

To protect the participants' identities, confidentiality was maintained by giving each participant a code or pseudonym (e.g., P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, and P10)

reflecting the sequence in which the participants were interviewed. These codes were used in analyzing data, and I am the only person who knows the identities of the participants. These codes were then applied throughout the code sheets for interview summary as in Figure 5 above.

Assigning a code to a category involved placing the number “1” in the corresponding row under the appropriate category column as an indicator. In many instances, a single interview response contained multiple relevant points addressing the question. Each response was carefully reviewed to determine whether it aligned with an existing code. If it did, the existing code was assigned, along with a “1” marker to indicate its inclusion in the relevant category. This process revealed that a single code could represent multiple ideas, and multiple relevant responses could lead to several allocation markers for that code within a category. Ultimately, the individual codes were synthesized into 15 distinct categories, as presented in Appendix D. The same code could occur more than once, given that one idea or theme might be echoed across responses or participants. The summary of codes and categories is presented in Appendix D.

It was observed that 12 pairs of codes and their associated meanings intersected (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Intersecting Codes

Code 1	Code 2	Associated Meaning
1.01	3.11	Inadequate onboarding reflects institutional limitations
1.03	6.01	Lack of mentorship linked to senior teachers' nonsupport
1.04	4.02	Immediate teaching responsibilities contribute to overload
2.01	5.06	Poor formal communication mirrors one-directional communication culture
2.05	6.02	Indifferent colleagues reinforce a cynical school culture
3.01	5.02	Peer support exists but remains unstructured
4.05	7.16	Manual tasks contribute to teacher exhaustion
5.01	6.04	Isolation linked to lack of inclusion in peer networks
6.06	10.03	Lack of consultation reflects teachers' voicelessness
7.01	4.01	Overwhelming workload stems from lack of training
8.04	9.01	Mentorship helps build confidence and is a key need
10.01	10.04	No formal conflict systems lead to unresolved grievances

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In phenomenological qualitative studies, trustworthiness is important to establish that what has been found corresponds to the ways it is, in fact, experienced by participants. Burkholder et al.'s (2020) framework of trustworthiness was used to establish trustworthiness under four major criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These dimensions were incorporated in the entire

research process through methodological approaches based on the phenomenological paradigm. Trustworthiness denotes the conclusion truly reflecting what participants mean.

Credibility was strengthened in several ways in the present study. Credibility involves demonstrating that the data collected are as accurate and representative as possible (Stadtlander, 2019). The first phase consisted of in-depth semistructured interviews that would enable participants to discuss their experiences in their own words. This unstructured method enabled participants to provide rich, detailed stories, which is central in a phenomenological investigation. Credibility was further supported through prolonged engagement with the data and participants. Approximately 10 hours were spent conducting interviews, with an additional 3 hours dedicated to follow-up contacts, clarifications, and informal check-ins. This sustained interaction allowed for deeper understanding and more nuanced interpretation of the participants lived experiences. The second phase involved the use of epoche throughout the research. As the main tool of inquiry, I deliberately suspended my preconceptions and prior knowledge not to interfere with the reading of participants' responses and experiences. Among the assumptions I bracketed were beliefs about the adequacy of public teacher orientation in Lagos State, the presumed reasons for early-career teacher attrition, and expectations shaped by my own professional experience in education. By consciously setting these aside, I remained open to the meanings emerging from the participants' narratives. This was supplemented with the reflexive journal in which I recorded personal thoughts, biases, and evolving insights throughout data collection and analysis. Third, the findings were member-

checked by providing participants with a copy of the transcripts and allowing them to validate responses or provide additional information. All participant feedback and any corresponding changes made to the data were documented to maintain a clear audit trail and ensure transparency. This was useful in maintaining interpretation in terms of participants' intended meanings.

Transferability, akin to external validity, refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other settings or populations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Transferability involves an abstract process through which insights obtained from specific individuals, contexts, or time periods are extended to others that were not directly studied (Drisko, 2024). It is closely related to the concept of generalization, a more commonly discussed term in social science research. In both qualitative and quantitative paradigms, transferability and generalization concern the extent to which research findings or concepts can be applied across different populations, settings, or time frames. Transferability was enhanced by providing rich, thick descriptions of the research context and participants' experiences. Comprehensive narratives of interview data were supported with direct quotations, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings to their own contexts/populations. Furthermore, I ensured that participants were selected across all the six education districts in Lagos State to document diversity and identify important common patterns that are common across the diversity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The concept of dependability is concerned with the repeatability of results. It focuses on the consistency and stability of the research process (Stadtlander, 2019;

Armour & Williams, 2022). Dependability was maintained by ensuring that the research procedure was open and systematic. In addition, a full description of methods such as participant selection, interview methods, transcription, and analysis of data was retained to have a clear audit trail (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Finally, an audit trail that included detailed records of interview procedures, coding decisions, category development, and analytical memos was also created.

Confirmability, which refers to the extent to which the findings are shaped by the participants and the research context rather than the researcher's personal biases (Armour & Williams, 2022), was addressed by developing findings specific to the data and not influenced by my own disposition. Confirmability seeks to establish how confident we are that the reported results are based on truth and not subject to the biases of the researcher. Therefore, confirmability was maintained by stating direct quotations from participants in addition to having a detailed and transparent record of all the steps, decisions, and processes undertaken during the study. It serves to document and justify the research methodology, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ensuring that the study is credible, trustworthy, and reproducible. This trail has documented the research process thoroughly, enabling others to verify whether the conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations are rooted in the data and supported by evidence (Armour & Williams, 2022).

The present study was also subject to a process of independent review by my dissertation chair and the second committee member, who are my academic supervisors at intervals, and have oversight in relation to data analysis and interpretation. Audit trails,

reflexive journaling, and supervisor input resulted in objectivity and credibility of the research outcomes. The dissertation supervisor played a pivotal role throughout the research process, providing continuous oversight and critical feedback. The supervisor acted as a peer debriefer, reviewing methodological decisions and the analysis process to ensure that the study maintained credibility. Through regular consultations, my dissertation chair and the second committee member helped to refine data collection instruments, such as the interview guide, to ensure neutrality and clarity, thereby minimizing my own bias.

Results

This present study was designed with a focus on exploring the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process. The phenomenological approach was used, and by exploring their lived experiences, the study aimed to uncover how the onboarding process may have influenced their decision to leave the teaching profession within their first 5 years after participating in the onboarding process. This study constructs the experiences of beginning public high school teachers in Lagos State, by studying thematic content as derived from qualitative coding. Two research questions that guided this study and addressed gaps in existing literature include:

- **RQ1:** What are the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process?

- **RQ2:** How do Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years perceive the onboarding training provided to them when they were about to enter the teaching profession?

The outcomes of the participants' responses serve to answer the questions above, which, as noted, pertain to how teachers find experience in their onboarding, the factors (both structural and interactive) that play into that experience, and the impact of that experience on their motivation, retention, and integration, and in particular, their decision to quit teaching early. Some of the key areas highlighted during the interview sessions are presented below.

Addressing the Research Questions

Research Question 1

What are the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process?

The findings revealed that most participants experienced a lack of structured onboarding, inconsistent communication, and minimal administrative or psychosocial support during their transition into the teaching profession. These lived experiences were characterized by uncertainty, self-reliance, and limited institutional guidance. Participant 2 described the onboarding process as largely informal, and he had to rely on his own initiative to understand how things work. Similarly, Participant 1 reflected,

> Overall, my onboarding experience felt rushed and disorganized. It did not adequately prepare me for the realities of teaching in a public school, where

> challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching aids, and administrative workload make the job even more demanding.

This sentiment was echoed by others who expressed that they received little to no formal orientation, training, or mentoring to help them acclimate to the school environment or pedagogical expectations.

Additionally, Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 11 reported feelings of isolation, especially in their early weeks. For example, Participant 1 stated, "The lack of structured support left many new teachers feeling isolated and unsupported, contributing to frustration and, in some cases, the decision to leave the profession." Similarly, Participant 5 reported that:

> I remember certain days when I would leave school feeling completely exhausted, only to have to go back the next day and repeat the cycle. It became clear to me that the emotional and physical toll of teaching, combined with the lack of resources and support, was taking a significant toll on my well-being.

These experiences reflect a broader pattern of administrative neglect and limited role clarity, which contributed to early frustration and diminished morale.

Research Question 2

How do Lagos State male public high school teachers who left the teaching profession within their first 5 years perceive the onboarding training provided to them when they were about to enter the teaching profession?

Participants generally perceived onboarding training as ineffective, informal, or absent, and they strongly associated this with their decision to exit the profession early.

Participants 2, 6, and 9 explained that while they received brief administrative instructions or introductory meetings, these interactions lacked depth and did not address classroom realities, professional development, or psychological preparedness. For example, Participant 2 stated,

> During my onboarding period, the handling of policies, administration, and interpersonal relationships was somewhat formal yet inconsistent in depth and application. The school had a handbook that outlined important policies, including attendance, discipline, grading systems, and professional conduct. However, there was little direct training on how to apply these policies effectively in the classroom setting.

Whereas Participant 6 said,

> Upon joining the school, I was given a handbook outlining the general policies, including attendance expectations, grading systems, disciplinary measures, and teacher responsibilities. While this document was helpful, there was little effort to provide in-depth explanations or training on how to apply these policies in real-world situations.

In his own remark, Participant 9 commented,

> I struggled with understanding administrative processes. Tasks such as lesson note submissions, record-keeping, and student performance tracking were not standardized, making it difficult to know if I was meeting expectations. Unlike a structured onboarding program where these aspects would be covered in detail, I was often left to interpret vague instructions or learn through mistakes.

On the other hand, it is equally important to illuminate the structural dimensions that shaped how participants consciously experienced and interpreted these events. Participants described onboarding training as "ineffective" and "informal," but these judgments were not formed in a vacuum. Their consciousness was oriented toward onboarding through the lens of prior professional expectations, personal aspirations, and identity as emerging educators. For instance, Participants 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 said they entered the teaching profession with the expectation that professional development would be systematic, empowering, and reflective of the value placed on teachers as professionals. When onboarding failed to meet these standards, their cognitive frameworks resulted in a perception of disappointment, inadequacy, or neglect. Emotionally, this dissonance often triggered frustration or resignation, revealing an affective structure that shaped their meaning-making processes. By integrating these structural elements, that is, expectational frameworks, emotional responses, identity orientation, and interpretive consciousness, this analysis moves beyond what participants experienced to how their consciousness actively shaped the construction of meaning during their transition into the teaching role.

In another development, participants' perceptions point to systemic gaps in onboarding, including absence of feedback mechanisms, lack of mentorship, and poor alignment between what was expected of them and the support they received. For many, this mismatch led to disillusionment and attrition. Participant 7 stated candidly, "*There was no structured system for new teachers to access materials, making the process of gathering resources frustrating and time-consuming*." Overall, Six participants (P1, P2,

P4, P6, P7, and P10) stated that onboarding was minimal or delayed, with several describing it as lacking structure or importance within the school system. This led to low commitment and early burnout, confirming concerns in the literature about the relationship between inadequate induction and teacher attrition.

Cross-Cutting Observations and Thematic Links

Across both questions, several themes emerged consistently:

1. Structural and systemic shortcomings in onboarding programs: Participants highlighted institutional weakness such as poor orientation programs, lack of mentorship, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inadequate resources, all of which contribute to disjointed and ineffective onboarding.
2. Social and emotional dimensions of the onboarding experience: The interview transcripts captured the relational and emotional challenges teachers face, including feelings of isolation, burnout, and struggles with professional identity. However, supportive social environments were identified as key but inconsistently present.
3. Professional practice and classroom realities: Many of the participants focused on the practical demands of teaching, including managing diverse classrooms and navigating unclear or unsupported curriculum expectations. This evidently highlights the disconnect between preparation and real classroom demands.
4. Coping mechanisms, resilience, and exit decisions: Participants described how teachers developed resilience or adopted coping strategies. Furthermore, some

participants expressed their disappointment in how unresolved challenges and lack of support often led to early exit from the teaching profession.

The Onboarding Structure and Experience

Orientation & Training Gaps

A common issue of the 10 respondents or participants interviewed was the insufficient onboarding process. However, three participants (P1, P3, and P9) emphasized the category of insufficient orientation and training under the following nine codes:

1.02 General orientation, one-day program, and lacked depth

1.04 Immediate teaching, no preparatory training, and heavy workload

3.03 Introduction to school policies

3.04 Understanding administrative structure

3.07 Child protection training

3.08 Role-playing for real-world teaching situations

3.12 No practical exposure

3.14 No bridge between theory and practice

9.04 Professional development

Participants 1, 3, and 9 did not attend any focused workshops or training, and of those who did, reported short, generic workshops that lacked depth. For example, Participant 1 said, “On my first day, I was given my class schedule and introduced to a few senior colleagues, but there was no formal induction program.” There was no pre-service or organized in-service preparation, and in many cases teachers were assigned to full teaching duties without a transition period. This was confirmed by Participant 3 when he

stated that “Without any mentor or HOD at sight to put me through, I quickly put myself together…”

In addition, sensitive subject areas such as child protection, discipline, and large class sizes were only touched on or not presented at all. Furthermore, practical skill development was not possible and the transfer from theory to practice was not legitimized, which contributed even more to the divide between training and requirements. Participant 9 remarked that, “The absence of a structured onboarding program made the process even more challenging, leaving me with a sense of uncertainty about my role and expectations.”

Insufficient Mentorship and Peer Support

Six participants (P1, P3, P6, P8, P9, and P10) reported that new teachers frequently talk about the absence of an assigned mentor and variability of mentor support under the following nine interrelated codes:

1.03 Overwhelming, no mentorship, and lack of structure support

1.07 Inconsistent guidance

3.01 Unstandardized peer support

3.10 Peer support from experienced teachers

6.01 Lack of support from senior teachers

6.03 Informal peer mentoring

8.04 Mentorship

9.01 Mentorship program

10.15 Mentorship during onboarding

Participant 1 said, “Unlike private schools where onboarding is often formalized with orientation sessions, mentorship programs, and training workshops, my experience in the public school system was more of a “sink or swim” situation.” On the other hand, peer support was nonstandardized, but it was voluntary or nonexistent. For example, Participant 6 remarked that, “While there was no structured mentorship program, a few senior teachers took it upon themselves to guide me through lesson planning, classroom management, and handling difficult students.”

Although there were reverse mentoring and co-teaching possibilities, they were somewhat haphazardly done, more dependent on the enthusiasm of interested individuals rather than a systematic approach. Participant 9 said, “Administrators were more concerned with enforcing rules than mentoring teachers.” However, formal mentorship indicates an expectation for formalized support structures.

Resources & Preparation

Four participants (P1, P3, P7, and P9) expressed their concerns about this category as described using the following five codes:

1.01 Unstructured and inadequate onboarding system

1.09 Lack of teaching resources

3.02 Reliance on outdated textbooks

9.07 Resource provision and workload planning

7.15 Teacher self-funding teaching materials

Teaching materials, especially textbooks, were found to be inadequate and out-of-date, couple with lack of training for preparation. Participant 1 said, “There were no

resources provided beyond a chalkboard and a few outdated textbooks. I had to spend my own money to print additional learning materials for my students." Similarly, Participant 7 said, "There was no structured system for new teachers to access materials, making the process of gathering resources frustrating and time-consuming." On many occasions, teachers were routinely expected to create all educational materials on their own, a practice that was inefficient and contributed to burn-out and calls for better stock support and planned work highlights a systemic lack of material support. Participant 9 remarked, "Building and maintaining confidence as a new teacher is one of the most challenging aspects of the onboarding process, particularly in public schools where resources are limited, class sizes are large, and structured mentorship is lacking."

Teaching and Pedagogical Challenges

Classroom Management and the Differentiated Classroom

Three participants (P1, P3, and P7) described their experiences under this category as summarized using the following five codes:

1.05 Lack of behavioral management and administrative guidance

1.06 Diverse student needs

3.15 No training on discipline or large classes

7.04 Discipline issues

7.13 Low motivation and disruptive behavior

Behavior management was an issue for Participant 1, who said,

> As a new teacher, I had no formal instruction on how to handle large class sizes, engage students effectively, or deal with behavioral issues. This lack of

preparation made my first few months particularly challenging, as I had to rely on trial and error to manage my students.

Participant 7 commented, “I often felt overwhelmed by the workload, unsure of how to keep up with lesson planning, grading, and administrative tasks, inadequate in handling student discipline, as I had no structured training on classroom management techniques.” In addition, Participant 2 observed that he faced a broad range of student needs, which added to their teaching burden. An absence of support in dealing with confrontational parents and disruptive behavior management compounded these difficulties. Participant 7 said, “classroom discipline was a major challenge, as I lacked proper training on handling disruptive behavior. Without guidance from administrators, I often felt alone in dealing with these issues.” These facts highlighted the necessity for focused training in behavioral and inclusive teaching techniques.

Practicum and Curriculum Matters

Two participants (P3, and P7) reported a poor linkage of theoretical learning to practical realities of the classroom, and this left young teachers ill-prepared. The codes that captured the participants’ responses in this category are:

3.14 No bridge between theory and practice

3.11 Limited institutional capacity to support teachers

3.13 Workload issue

7.20 Misalignment between urgency and content

7.19 Exposure to alternative career paths

Participant 7 said, “I quickly realized that transitioning from theory to practice in a public school setting was far more complex than I had anticipated” whereas Participant 3 said, “My own case was that of a new teacher that needed consolidation of good practices rather than improvement on areas of concern.” Furthermore, Participants 3 and 7 also expressed some degrees of mismatched urgency in teaching with student readiness as part of the interview. This underscores a systemic mismatch between what the curriculum mandates and the modus operandi.

Corporate Culture and Relationships

Style of Leadership & Bureaucracy

Participants 2, 6, 9, and 10 reported hierarchical management styles and bureaucratic inefficiency as key challenges to successful onboarding as captured with the following 11 codes:

2.01 Lack of formal communication

2.02 Bureaucratic inefficiencies

2.04 Policy changes at short notice

2.10 Handbook with general policies

2.11 Outdated or inconsistent policies

2.12 Hierarchical structure and expectation of conformity

6.06 Absence of consultation in decision-making

6.09 Administrative dismissive comment

9.03 Administrative support

10.16 Top-down conflict resolution

10.17 Principal as authority figure

Participant 2 said,

> The administrative structure was clear in terms of reporting lines and hierarchy, but interactions with the administration depended on the school's leadership style. Some administrators were approachable and willing to offer guidance, while others maintained a more distant relationship with teachers.

In his account, Participant 10 said, "There was minimal formal communication, and the expectation seemed to be that new teachers would absorb everything by osmosis. This lack of clear guidance left me constantly second-guessing my actions and unsure of the proper procedures." Furthermore, the communication was usually top-down in nature. Participant 10 went further to say, "The school leadership operated with a very top-down approach. Decisions were made without much input from teachers, and new staff were expected to comply without question."

On policy implementation, Participant 2 reported that policy change was sudden, and handbooks were out of date or were inconsistently used. In his words, "There were instances where important policy changes were communicated at short notice, requiring quick adaptation." Similarly, Participant 10 reported, "Understanding the school's disciplinary policy was particularly challenging. When students misbehaved, I had no clear protocol to follow. The head teacher's advice was vague, and senior colleagues offered conflicting suggestions, ranging from strictness to personal discretion." However, Participant 6 had a different experience as he said, "Having access to a policy handbook helped in situations where I needed clarity on certain issues." Participant 6 concluded,

"The lack of structured support, the overwhelming workload, delayed salaries, and a frustrating administrative system all contributed to a sense of burnout and disillusionment."

Divergent Experiences and Their Interpretive Significance

In qualitative research, particularly within a phenomenological framework, the presence of divergent or contradictory accounts offers a valuable opportunity for deepened interpretation rather than an obstacle to thematic coherence (Peoples, 2023). Participant 6 presented an experience that, while not representative of the dominant narrative, provides critical insight into the complexity and variability of onboarding experiences among former Lagos State male public school teachers. Unlike most participants who described onboarding as ambiguous and unsupported, Participant 6 reported, *"Having access to a policy handbook helped in situations where I needed clarity on certain issues."* This comment indicates an instance of institutional foresight or localized competence, suggesting that certain onboarding components may have been in place, albeit inconsistently across schools or regions. However, it is essential to note that this initial advantage did not shield the participant from broader systemic challenges. His concluding statement: *"The lack of structured support, the overwhelming workload, delayed salaries, and a frustrating administrative system all contributed to a sense of burnout and disillusionment"* mirrors the dominant emotional and structural struggles articulated by others.

From a phenomenological standpoint, Participant 6's experience illuminates how consciousness remains oriented toward the whole of one's professional environment, not

just isolated features. Although a policy handbook provided momentary clarity, it was insufficient to shape a meaningfully positive onboarding experience because the participant's interpretive framework, informed by expectations of holistic support, professional respect, and systemic efficiency, was ultimately unmet. This contrast between partial support and cumulative dissatisfaction points to how meaning-making is formed relationally, not solely through the presence or absence of individual resources.

Comradeship & Social Atmosphere

Four participants (P2, P5, P6, and P10) expressed that the school social culture was diverse as indicated under this category. The interview transcripts were summarized under the following 10 codes:

2.05 Indifferent colleagues

2.06 Relation-building through individual efforts

5.01 Isolated and disconnected

5.03 Some colleagues indifferent or too busy

5.12 “Figure it out yourself” teachers

5.13 Cliquish teachers

6.02 Detachment and cynicism among experienced teachers

6.08 Staffroom cliques

10.02 Authority bias

10.04 Ignored grievances

While Participants 2 and 5 found ways to build relationships with their colleagues, Participants 6 and 10 experienced their fellow teachers as noncaring or in

cliques. For example, Participant 2 said, “Social interactions, such as staff meetings, professional development sessions, and informal gatherings, helped me integrate into the community.” Participant 5 echoed, “Teachers would interact freely, share ideas, and discuss concerns without any strict formalities, making it very easy.” On the other hand, Participant 6 remarked,

> The onboarding process did not include formal sessions on workplace culture or relationship-building. Instead, new teachers were left to navigate the school’s social dynamics on their own. This lack of structured interpersonal integration made it challenging to build strong professional relationships with colleagues.

In addition, Participant 10 explained, “Many colleagues seemed overworked and demoralized, which affected their willingness to engage in positive social interactions. Instead of a collaborative environment, there was a sense of individual struggle.”

Positive Social Interactions (if Any)

Four participants (P2, P5, P6, and P10) responded to this category and appeared under the following 10 codes:

2.09 Cordial teacher relationships

5.02 Friendly senior teachers offered advice

5.11 Lasting friendships

6.07 Supportive colleagues

6.10 Willingness to share best practices

10.06 Encouragement of open communication

10.10 Active listening

10.11 Empathy and understanding

10.13 Use of restorative circles

10.14 Collaborative problem-solving

Participants 2 and 5 had enriching relations at work and social anchorage was maintained through co-teaching and sharing best practices, and supportive senior advice. They were not systemic, but rather personalized, representing the need for intentional community-development efforts. While reflecting, Participant 2 said, “Social interactions, such as staff meetings, professional development sessions, and informal gatherings, helped me integrate into the community. When administrators encouraged open communication and recognized my contributions, it boosted my morale.” On the other hand, Participant 10 expressed some difficulties navigating through his peers, and he exclaimed,

> The lack of a formal mentorship system meant that any support I received was based on chance rather than a structured process. This made it difficult to build professional relationships, as I often hesitated to ask for help, fearing I would be perceived as incompetent. The attitude of the school administration further contributed to my feelings of isolation.

Emotional/Psychological Effects

Burnout and Exhaustion

Participants 4 and 7 reported burdensome teaching responsibilities, manual administrative routines, and insufficient wellness support, which in turn resulted in

emotional and physical exhaustion. The Burnout and exhaustion category consists of seven codes, which are:

4.01 Lack of structured workload training

4.02 Immediate heavy teaching responsibilities

4.05 Manual administrative tasks

7.01 Overwhelming workload

7.02 Burnout

7.16 Emotional and physical exhaustion

7.17 Inadequate salary

Burnout was often cited, which was further compounded by poor salary and no formal training in how to manage the workload. In addition, stress was frequently discounted or interpreted as a personal deficit. Participant 4 said, “However, the workload often left me too exhausted to fully engage in building deeper relationships with my students and colleagues,” while Participant 7 remarked, “The school’s failure to address workload management and teacher stress contributed to low morale, high turnover, and burnout among new teachers.” Participant 7 further commented,

> After months of frustration, exhaustion, and disillusionment, I finally realized that the workload was overwhelming, with no structured support system, salary delays made financial stability impossible. No professional development, no incentives, no long-term plan for teachers. I was constantly stressed, undervalued, and mentally drained. I began researching alternative careers where my skills could be better appreciated and fairly compensated.

The Lonely, Frustrating, and Unsupported Isle

Participants 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 explained their frustration with the feeling and sense of loneliness, disillusionment, and alienation in addition to the experience of emotional difficulties about uncaring leaders, fear to ask for help and being viewed as inexperienced. The isolation, frustration and lack of support category comprises hosted the following nine codes:

2.03 Feelings of frustration, isolation, and lack of support

4.06 Dismissive responses to stress-related concerns

5.04 Hesitant to ask for help

5.05 Leadership unapproachable

5.06 Communication one-directional

6.04 Feeling of isolation

7.12 Disillusionment and frustration

7.03 Indifference from administration

7.14 Absence of collaborative effort

To further compound the reported situation, there was a lack of consultation in decision-making, and dismissive responses to concerns further entrenched alienation. For example, Participant 5 said, “Communication from the state government was a different story altogether. There's no robust way of doing things”, and Participant 6 reported that, “There were instances where teachers’ concerns, particularly those raised by new staff, were not given adequate attention, leading to frustration and a feeling of isolation. In addition, Participant 7 stated, “Salary payments were often delayed, with no clear

communication from the finance department. New teachers were left in the dark about when to expect their first paycheck."

Self-Perception and Identity Battles

Three participants (P5, P7, and P8) spoke concerning this category. Their responses were summarized using the following five codes:

5.07 Viewed as inexperienced

7.09 Impact on confidence

7.21 Staying teachers express regrets

8.10 Acting confidence to gain authority

8.11 Emotional coping strategy (humor)

One thing that the participants P7 and P8 reported was that staying teachers always expressed regrets as they took the failure of the systems as their own incompetence. Participant 7 said, "Overall, my onboarding experience was a trial by fire. While I eventually adapted to my new role, the lack of structured guidance made the transition unnecessarily difficult", and Participant 8 remarked,

> But amidst the chaos and struggles, I did learn resilience. I learned how to think on my feet, how to adapt to unpredictable situations, and most importantly, how to find humor in the madness (because if you don't laugh, you'll cry).

All these highlight the emotional labor of entering teaching in hard high schools.

Factors for Retention and Motivation

Reasons for Leaving

While all participants gave some reasons that birthed their decisions to quit the teaching profession early, three participants (P1, P3, and P7) were specific with the occasions that made them take the decision while undergoing the onboarding process. Participant 7 expressed vividly his major reason for leaving the teaching profession early. The reason for leaving category was captured in the following six codes:

7.05 Neglect impact on career satisfaction

7.08 Lack of recognition

7.06 Systemic failures

7.18 Unhelpful advice from senior teachers

7.11 Educational politics

7.07 Work-life balance

Participant 7 exclaimed,

> Instead of feeling welcomed and supported, I felt overwhelmed and completely unprepared. When I asked for guidance, the response was “You'll get used to it”, which was neither helpful nor reassuring. That first week set the tone for what would follow: a constant struggle to keep up, with little to no institutional support

In addition, Participant P3 said: “I was sincerely disillusioned, and this made me question my presence in the profession.” Participant 1 expressed serious concerns about the lack of a support system for new teachers. He stated, “There were no workshops or training

sessions on managing stress, maintaining work-life balance, or dealing with burnout. Teachers were simply expected to cope with the pressure."

Development of Confidence and Resilience

Two participants (P8 and P9) described their experiences fully under the category of development of confidence and resilience. The following 10 codes were used to describe the category.

8.01 Passion for teaching

8.02 Student feedback

8.03 Self-directed learning

8.05 Constructive feedback

8.06 Peer collaboration

8.07 Positive relationship

8.08 Developing problem-solving skills

8.09 Mistakes as learning opportunities

9.02 Emotional support

9.08 Career retention strategies

Participants 8 and 9 were able to express in detail how they built confidence and resilience during their onboarding process. For example, Participant 8 said, "The few amazing teachers who encouraged me helped build my confidence. One teacher told me - teaching is like acting. Pretend you're in control, and eventually, you will be. And she was right" while Participant 9 remarked that "I allowed myself to be authentic—sharing personal stories, using humor, and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect." One

general comment that was made by all participants was that their passion for teaching kept them going. Furthermore, participant P4 said, “Developing problem-solving skills, learning to think on my feet, and staying adaptable in unpredictable situations helped me maintain my confidence.”

Conflict Resolution and Voice

No Effective Mechanisms and Delays

Eight participants (P1, P2, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, and P10) reported that there was no proper conflict resolution process, as authority bias tended to determine outcomes from their own perspectives. The no effective mechanisms and delays category consists of four codes, namely:

10.01 Lack of formal mechanisms

10.03 Lack of voice in decision-making

10.08 Delayed intervention

10.09 Inconsistent conflict resolution

While Participant 1 remarked that, “During my onboarding process, conflict resolution was largely an ignored issue rather than an actively managed one”, Participant 2 said, “The effectiveness of conflict resolution varied depending on the facilitators’ approach”, and Participant 4 submitted that, “Conflict resolution was handled in a way that often felt inconsistent and ineffective, making it difficult to navigate challenges smoothly.” Meanwhile, Participant 9 gave a full account of the nature of the conflict resolution mechanism in his high school when he said,

> However, my experience with conflict resolution during onboarding was almost nonexistent. There was no structured training on handling conflicts, and when issues arose, the way they were addressed varied widely, often depending on who was involved and how much influence they had within the school.

The summary of interview excerpts on conflict resolution shows that instead of having clear frameworks for resolving disputes, participants were left to navigate conflicts on their own, often through trial and error. The absence of formal guidance made conflicts feel more personal, more stressful, and more frustrating than they should have been.

Positive Tactics (if Any)

Two participants (P3 and P5) explained that restorative circles, open communication, active listening, and empathy-led leadership helped in situations that posed some challenges to them. Seven interrelated codes emerged under the positive tactics category. These codes are:

10.06 Encouragement of open communication

10.07 Use of mediation sessions

10.10 Active listening

10.11 Empathy and understanding

10.12 De-escalation techniques

10.13 Use of restorative circles

10.14 Collaborative problem-solving

Participant 5 said, “There were moments of misunderstanding but with patience and openness I learned to navigate these difficulties” while Participant 3 commented that:

> Conflicts cannot be handled alone by individuals even though you might be the only witness. Among the strategies used for conflict resolution, teachers must be used to - restorative circles where every party involved comes together to express in an understandable manner his/her view, apologize and make amends.

Furthermore, Participant 7 noted,

> Had conflict resolution been a core part of onboarding, I would have handled student behavior more effectively, navigated workplace disagreements professionally, approached administrators without fear of being dismissed, managed parent-teacher relationships more confidently. Instead, the lack of structured conflict resolution strategies made my experience far more difficult, contributing to stress, burnout, and ultimately, my decision to leave teaching.

Conclusion

This exhaustive analysis uncovers a disjointed onboarding process, riddled with inconsistency and a lack of support and professional growth opportunities. And although there were some positive experiences, they tend to be due to individual efforts rather than institutional structures. When we consider how, all told above, teachers should be integrated and retained in the long term, policy interventions need to focus on the provision of organic mentorship, inclusive training, emotional well-being, and systemic support structures that address not only their instructional but relational onboarding as teachers.

Synthesizing Categories Into Themes

Following the initial coding of interview transcripts, related codes were grouped into broader analytical categories that reflected recurring ideas across participant responses. These categories served as an intermediate step in organizing the data and identifying patterns. Through an iterative and reflective process, these categories were further examined for underlying meanings and connections. This process of synthesizing categories into themes allowed for the emergence of cohesive, higher-level themes that captured the essence of participants' onboarding experiences. These themes not only reflected individual narratives but also revealed shared experiences and systemic patterns relevant to the onboarding of new teachers within the public education sector.

From this process, some themes were developed. These themes represented recurrent patterns that captured the essence of participants' onboarding experiences. For instance, the category "orientation and training deficits", along with related categories such as mentorship and peer support gaps and resources and preparation, led to the emergence of the theme "inadequate onboarding structure and experience." Each theme was distinct, yet interrelated, offering a multidimensional understanding of the data. Furthermore, each theme was defined in terms of its scope and significance to the research questions. Descriptions were drafted to clarify what each theme represented and how it contributed to the overall understanding of teachers' onboarding experiences. Themes were assigned concise and meaningful labels to facilitate interpretation and presentation.

Table 4 below presents the key themes and their associated research questions that emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts collected as part of the qualitative study on the onboarding experiences of the Lagos State male public high school teachers who left teaching within the first 5 years of their recruitment into the teaching service.

Table 4

Emergent Themes, Their Associated Categories, and Related Research Questions

Categories	Emergent themes	Aligned RQ(s)
Orientation and training deficits	Structural and systemic shortcomings in onboarding programs.	RQ1, RQ2
Mentorship and peer support gaps		RQ1, RQ2
Resources and preparation.		RQ1, RQ2
Leadership and bureaucracy		RQ1, RQ2
Lack of mechanisms and delay		RQ1, RQ2
Peer relations and social climate	Social and emotional dimensions of the onboarding experience	RQ1 RQ1
Positive social interactions (when present)		RQ1
Isolation, frustration, and lack of support		RQ1
Burnout and exhaustion		RQ1
Self-perception and identity struggles		RQ1
Classroom management and diverse learners	Professional practice and classroom realities	RQ1
Teaching practice and curriculum issues		RQ1
Building confidence and resilience	Coping mechanisms, resilience, and exit decisions	RQ2
Positive strategies (when present).		RQ2
Reason for leaving		RQ2

Phenomenological Synthesis: The Essence of Teacher Onboarding

This phenomenological study sought to explore and interpret the lived experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria, with particular attention to how they navigated the onboarding process and made meaning of it. Drawing on the integrated textural and structural descriptions across individual cases, a core, universal essence of the phenomenon emerged. At the heart of the onboarding experience was a pervasive sense of disillusionment born from misaligned expectations. Participants 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 said they began their professional journeys with the hope - (offering clarity of expectations, access to mentorship, and affirmation from school leadership) - that onboarding would serve as a structured, supportive bridge in their teaching roles, offering clarity, mentorship, and institutional affirmation. Instead, the reality they encountered was characterized by systemic ambiguity, bureaucratic inertia, and fragmented support mechanisms. Onboarding, where it existed at all, was largely informal and inconsistently delivered, leading to confusion and a lack of preparedness for the complex demands of the classroom.

Participants' consciousness was shaped by an interpretive tension between what they anticipated and what they encountered. This tension often manifested in feelings of professional isolation, frustration, and emotional fatigue. Participants 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 described being left to navigate their roles without adequate mentoring, practical training, or timely communication, prompting a growing sense that their presence and development were not institutionally prioritized. As Participant 7 articulated, the experience was less a "welcome" into the profession and more a "trial by fire."

Nevertheless, within this overarching structure, participants also demonstrated agency and adaptation. For example, Participants 4 and 6 forged informal support systems with peers, developed personal strategies for coping, or relied on internal motivation to remain resilient. However, even these efforts were often insufficient to counter the broader organizational challenges. For many, onboarding became a transitional space that failed to anchor them to the profession, ultimately informing their decisions to exit within the first few years.

The fundamental essence of onboarding, as experienced by these former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, can thus be understood as: a disorienting and largely unsupported entry into the teaching profession, marked by unmet expectations, emotional and professional vulnerability, and a search for stability and meaning in an environment that offered limited guidance or affirmation, culminating in a fractured relationship with the profession itself. This essence reflects not only the descriptive content of participants' experiences but also the structures of consciousness through which these experiences were filtered, interpreted, and remembered. It encapsulates how these teachers navigated, made sense of, and ultimately responded to the onboarding process in the context of Lagos State's public high school system.

Summary

This chapter presented a comprehensive overview of the findings derived from this phenomenological qualitative study, organized around the two primary research questions. The chapter explored the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers who left teaching early after going through the onboarding process,

offering detailed insights into their perspectives and onboarding challenges. The chapter began with a presentation of participant demographics and an explanation of the participant selection process. It also acknowledged limitations related to the recruitment strategy and the composition of the participant pool. A clear explanation of the data collection and data analysis procedures followed, ensuring transparency and methodological rigor. Tables were used to illustrate critical aspects of the study, including participant characteristics and the major codes, categories, and themes that emerged from the data. The chapter concluded with a summary of these themes, synthesizing the key patterns identified through the participants' narratives.

Chapter 5 interprets the themes presented in the preceding chapter and further explores the lived experiences of the former Lagos State male public high school teachers from their own perspectives. This chapter discusses how these findings address the study's central research questions and offers an in-depth interpretation grounded in the data. In addition, Chapter 5 revisits the study's limitations and delimitations, providing a reflective assessment of its scope and boundaries. Recommendations for future research are presented, informed by the study's findings and current trends in higher education. Finally, this chapter highlights the potential for positive social change, emphasizing how the insights gained from this research may inform institutional practices and suitable onboarding process for public high school teachers.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This phenomenological study set out to explore the onboarding experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, it investigated how newly recruited teachers are inducted, supported, and integrated into the public high school education system. The central aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the processes, practices, and challenges associated with teacher onboarding, with a view to identifying how these experiences influence their professional adjustment, instructional effectiveness, long-term commitment to the teaching profession, and how the onboarding process contributed to their decision to leave the teaching profession early (i.e., within their first 5 years after completing the onboarding process).

The motivation for this study stemmed from growing concerns regarding male teacher attrition in public high schools in Lagos State, persistent job dissatisfaction among educators, the inconsistent quality of support provided to newly recruited teachers, and, perhaps most critically, the evident gender imbalance within the teaching workforce (Abioye, 2021; Adigun, 2020; Maigari et al., 2021). In many public high schools across the state, female teachers significantly outnumber their male counterparts (Okeke & Nyanhoto, 2021), raising important questions about gender representation, equitable professional support, and the availability of diverse role models for students. This imbalance is particularly concerning given the potential implications for student engagement, especially among male learners, and for the broader goals of gender inclusivity in education. Moreover, in developing contexts such as Nigeria, structured

onboarding programs, designed to facilitate the professional integration of new teachers, are often weak, sporadically implemented, or altogether lacking (Ibrahim et al., 2022). As a result, novice teachers frequently encounter challenges in adapting to their roles, navigating institutional expectations, and accessing necessary professional and emotional support. These inconsistencies in onboarding practices contribute not only to varied and, at times, negative early-career experiences but also to broader issues such as reduced teacher morale, increased attrition rates, and compromised student learning outcomes (Chan et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Considering these challenges, this study seeks to examine the onboarding experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State through a gender-informed lens, with the aim of identifying critical gaps and informing more equitable and effective induction and onboarding practices.

Through qualitative inquiry involving interviews with former public high school teachers in Lagos State, this present study uncovered rich insights into the realities faced by new teachers from initial orientation and mentorship to administrative support and professional development opportunities. The findings serve to illuminate both the strengths and shortcomings of current onboarding practices and provide a basis for practical recommendations to enhance teacher support and retention. Therefore, this chapter presents a critical discussion of the key findings in relation to existing literature and the conceptual framework guiding the study. It also interprets the implications of the results for policy, practice, and future research.

Male Teachers' Onboarding in Lagos State: A Fragmented Experience

The key findings of the study reveal that the onboarding experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State are predominantly informal, inconsistent, and lacking in coherent structure. Seven participants out of 10 that were interviewed (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, and P8) consistently described their induction into the school system as ad hoc, with little or no formal orientation to the policies, expectations, or culture of their respective schools. This section discusses the findings through the lens of the core phenomenological essence that emerged from the analysis: a disorienting and largely unsupported entry into the teaching profession. This essence reflects the shared experience articulated by participants, who consistently described onboarding as fragmented, informal, and insufficient in preparing them for the realities of their roles. The discussion that follows explores how this essence manifested across thematic patterns and aligns or contrasts with existing literature. Participants' descriptions of ad hoc or absent orientation processes (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, and P8) directly contributed to the disorienting nature of their onboarding experiences. Without clear guidance on institutional expectations, they were left to rely on informal cues and trial-and-error.

This study followed the process of phenomenological reduction, which involved bracketing preconceptions and focusing on participants lived experiences as described in their own words. Through iterative readings and thematic clustering, meaning units were extracted from each transcript and then compared across cases. These were coded and later grouped into categories and themes such as structural and systemic shortcomings in onboarding programs – unstructured and inadequate system, no mentorship and lack of

structure, and heavy workload which appeared consistently across most narratives. These themes were then synthesized to form an invariant structure: regardless of contextual differences, all participants recounted an initial period marked by emotional uncertainty, limited institutional support, and an overwhelming sense of having to "figure things out" on their own. This convergence of individual meanings into a shared experiential pattern is what constituted the core phenomenological essence of the onboarding experience for these male participants.

The absence of active mentorship deepened participants' sense of professional isolation, reinforcing the feeling of unsupported entry noted in the essence. For male teachers entering a female-dominated environment, the lack of onboarding structure was compounded by perceived gender-based assumptions. These dynamics added to the disorientation, as participants struggled to reconcile their identities with the institutional culture.

In many cases, newly appointed teachers were left to navigate the professional environment on their own, relying on personal initiative rather than institutional guidance. Reports of inadequate mentoring were widespread, with six participants (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, and P7) indicating that they had no assigned mentors or structured opportunities for professional support. Administrative backing was often limited to routine procedural matters, while peer support, though occasionally present, was highly dependent on the individual school context and the goodwill of colleagues.

Furthermore, while three participants (P2, P4, and P8) recounted positive experiences, particularly where school leaders took a proactive interest in their

integration, these were exceptions rather than the norm. Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8 felt ill-prepared for the complexities of the classroom and the broader demands of the school system. A pervasive sense of being overwhelmed was common during the initial months of teaching, exacerbated by unclear job expectations, limited feedback mechanisms, and an absence of formalized professional development tailored specifically for novice teachers. Furthermore, there appeared to be no coordinated strategy at the state or district level to standardize onboarding processes across schools. These systemic gaps not only contributed to feelings of professional and social isolation but also delayed the development of teaching confidence and classroom effectiveness (Manchanda, 2021). Over time, such experiences fostered growing disillusionment with the public education system and created uncertainty about long-term career sustainability within the sector (Ibrahim & Ibrahim, 2022). Collectively, these findings underscore the urgent need for a more structured, supportive, and gender-responsive onboarding framework to enhance teacher retention and performance, particularly among male educators who are underrepresented in the profession.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of this study confirm and extend existing knowledge on teacher onboarding by highlighting the persistent challenges faced by new teachers in adapting to their roles, particularly in under-resourced public high school systems. Consistent with prior research, the study reinforces the importance of structured orientation, mentoring, and institutional support in shaping positive early-career experiences (Medina, 2024). However, it also challenges some prevailing assumptions in the literature, particularly the

notion that informal support networks can adequately compensate for the absence of formal onboarding structures (Angwaomaodoko, 2023; Oluwakemi, 2023). In the context of Lagos State public high school education system, where systemic inconsistencies and gender dynamics are often overlooked, this present study reveals unique contextual factors that complicate the onboarding process and call for a more localized, policy-driven response (Medina, 2024).

Addressing the Research Questions

The findings of this study respond to the two research questions through the thematic interpretation of participants lived experiences. The themes: structural and systemic shortcomings in onboarding programs; social and emotional dimensions of the onboarding experience; professional practice and classroom realities; and coping mechanisms, resilience, and exit decisions - together revealed the core phenomenological essence of a disorienting and largely unsupported entry into the teaching profession. This section discusses how each research question was answered through the participants' narratives.

The first research question explored the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers regarding their onboarding process. Participants consistently described onboarding as fragmented, informal, and insufficient in preparing them for their teaching roles. Many of them, particularly Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8, reported that they were given little or no orientation upon arriving at their respective schools. Instead of structured support, they encountered what one participant described as "just being handed a timetable and shown the class." This absence of clear procedures or

documentation contributed to an initial sense of confusion and professional insecurity. The theme of structural and systemic shortcomings reflects these accounts, showing that onboarding was often treated as a formality or afterthought rather than a deliberate, sustained process.

Complementing this was the theme related to the social and emotional dimensions of onboarding. Participants not only spoke of logistical or structural gaps, but also about the emotional toll of entering the profession without affirmation, guidance, or community. Some described feelings of isolation or marginalization. For instance, Participant 6 reflected, “Nobody really checked how I was doing. You just had to tough it out.” The emotional climate of onboarding, or the lack thereof, played a significant role in shaping their early teaching experiences.

The first research question is also illuminated through participants’ accounts of the classroom realities they faced. Many entered with expectations shaped by teacher training or assumptions about public education, only to be met with overcrowded classes, limited instructional resources, and administrative inconsistency. Several participants noted that onboarding had done little to prepare them for these daily demands. As Participant 4 explained, “I thought I would be taught how to handle large groups or deal with behavioral issues, but I was left to figure it out on my own.” This clash between expectations and reality further reinforced the sense of being unprepared and unsupported.

In addressing the second research question, how these teachers perceived the onboarding training they received prior to entering the profession. The findings pointed

to significant dissatisfaction and a perceived disconnect between training and practice. Eight participants recalled attending induction sessions organized at the state or district level. However, they described these as theoretical, brief, and lacking relevance to their specific school environments. Participant 2 noted, “We were taught things that sounded good, but nothing that prepared me for the school I was posted to.” The theme of structural shortcomings recurs here, with participants highlighting the absence of school-based follow-up, practical orientation, or contextual adaptation.

Crucially, these perceptions were not neutral; they were strongly linked to participants’ ultimate decision to leave the profession. The final theme, coping mechanisms, resilience, and exit decisions, captures the ways in which participants attempted to adapt to their circumstances. Some relied on informal peer support or previous work experiences to navigate challenges, but many described reaching a breaking point. For example, Participant 5 shared, “I managed for a while, but I was just surviving. There was no growth. No support.” Six other participants explicitly stated that a more structured and supportive onboarding experience might have altered their professional trajectory. Participant 7 remarked, “If I had someone to guide me or even check in with me back then, I would probably still be in the classroom today.”

Taken together, the four themes answer both research questions by offering a detailed, emotionally grounded, and institutionally contextualized picture of onboarding as experienced by male teachers who exited the Lagos State public school system early in their careers. The findings demonstrate that onboarding was not just insufficient in content, it was experienced as a critical gap that contributed to early attrition. These

insights underscore the importance of designing onboarding programs that are structured, emotionally supportive, and responsive to both individual and contextual realities.

Confirmation of Existing Literature

The study confirms a widely recognized view in the literature that effective onboarding is essential for supporting new teachers as they transition into the profession, develop professional confidence, and cultivate a sense of belonging within the school community (Chan et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022). This sense of inclusion is not only critical for teacher morale but also plays a significant role in shaping long-term commitment to the profession and promoting positive student outcomes. Consistent with findings from international studies (Frey et al., 2023; Medina, 2024) eight participants (P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, and P10) strongly emphasized the importance of structured orientation programs, access to experienced mentors, and ongoing administrative support during their formative months in the profession. Meanwhile, five participants (P1, P2, P6, P7, and P8) frequently expressed that the absence of these foundational elements left them feeling isolated, underprepared, and disconnected from both their colleagues and the institutional culture of their schools.

The lack of coordinated onboarding processes in many public high schools across Lagos State reflects a broader trend identified in the literature on developing countries, where systemic inefficiencies, weak policy enforcement, and limited resources collectively undermine the implementation of comprehensive induction programs (Frogeli et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022; Medina, 2024). In particular, the findings suggest that the onboarding of teachers is often treated as a low-priority administrative

task rather than a strategic initiative aimed at teacher retention and professional growth. This mirrors a recurring pattern in contexts where educational systems face chronic underfunding and where leadership structures may lack the capacity or training to support effective teacher integration (Angwaomaodoko, 2023). Therefore, this present study reinforces the urgent call for policymakers and education stakeholders to develop and institutionalize consistent onboarding frameworks (Ademola et al., 2021; Medina, 2024). Additionally, the reported consequences of inadequate onboarding, such as teacher frustration, isolation, and lack of instructional confidence, align with prior research indicating that weak induction practices contribute to high attrition rates and poor job satisfaction among early-career teachers (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Medina, 2024).

Challenging Established Assumptions

This study challenges a common assumption found in much of the Western literature that onboarding is a relatively standardized, formalized, and policy-driven process (Bauer, 2010; Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). In educational systems such as those in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, onboarding and induction programs are often underpinned by robust institutional frameworks and clear policy mandates designed to ensure consistency and quality in teacher integration (Tonga et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022). These programs typically include structured orientations, assigned mentors, and formal evaluation mechanisms, all of which are intended to facilitate the professional adjustment of new teachers and reduce early attrition. In sharp contrast, the findings of this study, according to this small population, indicate that teacher onboarding in Lagos State is largely informal, fragmented, and highly dependent on the initiative of

individual school administrators or the goodwill of experienced colleagues. This divergence highlights the significant contextual differences in educational governance and policy implementation between high-income and low- or middle-income countries. Specifically, it underscores the realities within the Nigerian public high school education system, where well-intentioned national policies often fail to translate into effective practices at the school level due to limited resources, weak accountability structures, and inconsistent leadership (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Moreover, while mentoring is widely recognized in the literature as a core component of successful onboarding, providing professional guidance, psychosocial support, and a sense of community for novice or newly recruited teachers (Medina, 2024), this present study, according to the 10 participants interviewed, reveals that mentoring in Lagos State public high schools is rarely formalized or systematically organized. When it does occur, it tends to be informal, unstructured, and initiated on an ad hoc basis by individual teachers rather than being embedded in institutional policy. These disconnects between globally endorsed best practices and the lived realities of teachers in the local setting points to a critical need for context-sensitive onboarding models that account for the systemic limitations and cultural dynamics of the Nigerian educational landscape.

Extension of Existing Knowledge

This study extends existing knowledge by providing a nuanced understanding of onboarding in a developing country context, particularly from the perspective of teachers themselves. While prior studies have focused on onboarding policies or school-level

practices (Chan et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022), this research contributes original empirical evidence by documenting former male public high school teachers' lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies within their first 5 years of employment. It also adds to the discourse on how broader systemic issues, such as, lack of funding, inadequate teacher training, and bureaucratic inefficiencies, directly impact onboarding quality. In doing so, the study suggests that effective onboarding cannot be isolated from the larger structural conditions of public education, a perspective that is less emphasized in much of the onboarding literature focused on high-income countries (Chan et al., 2021). Furthermore, the identification of peer support and school leadership as occasional yet crucial sources of relief for new teachers extends the literature by showing how informal social networks partially compensate for institutional deficiencies. This insight highlights the resilience of teachers and the potential for grassroots-level innovations in the absence of formal policy enforcement.

Theoretical Integration and Interpretation of Findings

The integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Bandura's social cognitive theory, and Bauer & Erdogan's onboarding framework offers a layered understanding of the onboarding experiences of the participants. While Maslow and Herzberg both emphasize foundational needs, they do so through slightly different lenses: Maslow presents a progression from physiological and safety needs to self-actualization, whereas Herzberg distinguishes between hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction (e.g., pay, working conditions) and motivators that promote satisfaction (e.g., recognition, professional growth).

In this study, participants' unmet basic needs, such as inadequate salaries or uncertain job security, suggest they remained at the lower tiers of Maslow's hierarchy and were dominated by Herzberg's hygiene factors, never reaching the stage where intrinsic motivators could flourish. Bandura's social cognitive theory complements this by highlighting how low self-efficacy, due to lack of modeling or guidance, further impeded motivation and adaptation during onboarding. Finally, Bauer and Erdogan's model provides the structural lens, identifying how poor implementation of onboarding practices, such as role clarity, social integration, and organizational support contributed to the disorienting entry experience. Together, these theories do not conflict but rather reinforce one another, creating a synergistic explanation: systemic neglect of both human needs and institutional responsibilities suppresses self-belief and job satisfaction, making the onboarding experience both psychologically and professionally destabilizing, as explained by the participants in the study. This theoretical convergence sheds new light on why many teachers in the study felt ill-prepared, unsupported, and emotionally strained, pointing to the need for more holistic onboarding designs that account for both personal and organizational variables.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory: Absence of Motivators and Hygiene Factors

Herzberg's two-factor theory distinguishes between motivators, factors that lead to job satisfaction, such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for professional growth; and hygiene factors, which, although not necessarily sources of satisfaction, are essential to prevent dissatisfaction (Pinder, 2008). These include elements like working conditions, quality of supervision, administrative support, and organizational policies.

The findings of this study indicate that both categories were insufficiently addressed during the onboarding process for the participants in this study. Participants 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 consistently described their early experiences as marked by a lack of formal orientation, inadequate instructional resources, unclear role expectations, and limited guidance from school administrators, highlighting the absence of critical hygiene factors necessary to create a supportive work environment.

Specifically, six participants (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, and P7) frequently reported poor administrative support, minimal collegial interaction, and restricted access to basic teaching materials, which fostered a sense of professional neglect and disconnection. Simultaneously, the onboarding process failed to incorporate key motivators such as recognition of early contributions, structured feedback, or clearly defined opportunities for advancement and skill development. As a result, five participants (P1, P3, P5, P6, and P7) expressed feelings of frustration, emotional fatigue, diminished morale, and a general sense of professional stagnation. These experiences affirm Herzberg's proposition that when both hygiene factors and motivators are absent, the work environment becomes a source of dissatisfaction rather than engagement, leading to reduced job commitment and increased risk of attrition (Alrawahi et al., 2020). Thus, the theory provides a valuable lens for understanding how inadequately designed onboarding systems can negatively impact teacher retention and overall effectiveness in the Lagos State public high school education context.

Bauer and Erdogan's Onboarding Theory: Incomplete Integration Across the Four Levels

According to Bauer and Erdogan (2011), effective onboarding unfolds across four interrelated domains: compliance, clarification, culture, and connection. Each domain plays a critical role in ensuring that new employees, particularly in complex professional environments like public high school education, are adequately equipped to adjust, integrate, and perform in their roles. However, the findings of this study reveal that these domains were inconsistently addressed in the onboarding experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, with significant implications for their early career satisfaction and long-term retention.

Compliance

Compliance, which refers to the new teacher's awareness and understanding of formal rules, policies, procedures, and legal requirements, was largely neglected. Six participants (P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, and P8) frequently reported that they were not formally introduced to the institutional regulations, codes of conduct, or expectations that governed their professional duties. The absence of a structured orientation program meant that teachers were often left to figure out critical administrative procedures and workplace expectations on their own, resulting in confusion and errors that could have been avoided with proper guidance.

Clarification

Clarification, which refers to the process of helping new teachers understand their specific roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations, was also insufficiently

addressed. Six participants (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, and P7) described their early days as marked by ambiguity, with little to no direction from school leaders regarding teaching assignments, lesson planning standards, classroom management expectations, or assessment protocols. This lack of clarity contributed to heightened anxiety, reduced confidence, and delayed role adaptation (Faremi, 2021), especially among those with no prior teaching experience in the public school system.

Culture

Culture, which is the transmission of organizational values, norms, and informal practices, was not intentionally communicated during the onboarding period. Teachers were rarely introduced to the underlying ethos or shared values of their schools, making it difficult to align with the existing professional culture or understand implicit behavioral expectations. Without deliberate efforts to foster cultural alignment, seven participants (P1, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, and P10) reported feelings of alienation, disconnection, and uncertainty about how to navigate relationships with both students and staff.

Connection

Connection involves the development of interpersonal relationships and professional networks, occurred sporadically and was typically initiated by the new teachers themselves or through informal interactions with colleagues. While four participants (e.g., P1, P2, P4, and P5) mentioned instances of peer support, these were isolated and not part of a systematic effort to foster collaboration or mentorship. The absence of a coordinated strategy to facilitate social integration limited opportunities for

new teachers to build meaningful professional relationships, which are vital for emotional support, knowledge sharing, and overall job satisfaction.

This partial and uneven implementation of the onboarding domains supports Bauer and Erdogan's (2011) assertion that effective onboarding must be both comprehensive and intentional to foster successful role adjustment, social integration, and performance. As noted by Medina (2024) and Opoku et al. (2020), when any of these domains are neglected, the onboarding process becomes fragmented, reducing its effectiveness in building organizational commitment and professional competence. The findings of this study thus reveal a largely informal and reactive onboarding culture in Lagos State public high schools, one that undermines teacher adaptation and fails to harness the strategic potential of onboarding as a tool for workforce development and retention (Frogeli et al., 2023).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Unmet Psychological and Professional Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory posits that individuals must first satisfy lower-level needs, such as physiological and safety requirements, before they can effectively pursue higher-order needs related to belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Hakim, 2022; Oladayo, 2021). Within the context of this study, findings reveal that five participants (P1, P2, P5, P6, and P7) struggled to meet even the foundational needs of safety and belonging during the onboarding period. Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 also reported feelings of insecurity due to a lack of clear communication, absence of structured support systems, and inadequate access to essential resources such as teaching materials and classroom space. Furthermore, the failure to cultivate a welcoming and

inclusive school environment meant that many new teachers felt isolated and disconnected from their colleagues and school leadership. As a result, five participants (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P6) were unable to progress toward higher-level psychological needs such as professional recognition or fulfillment, underscoring how the neglect of basic needs during onboarding can significantly hinder personal development, motivation, and long-term engagement in the teaching profession. This interpretation reinforces the notion that onboarding must address a broad range of teachers needs to facilitate full engagement and long-term professional satisfaction (Frey et al., 2023; Webb, 2022).

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory: Limited Support for Self-Efficacy and Observational Learning

Bandura's theory emphasizes the role of self-efficacy, observational learning, and reciprocal determinism in behavior and motivation (Chong et al., 2023). A key finding in this present study is that participants often lacked guided opportunities to observe effective practice or receive feedback, limiting their ability to build confidence in their instructional roles. Moreover, the weak presence of structured mentorship reduced opportunities for modeling, a central mechanism in Bandura's theory through which individuals learn by observing others (Sharma & Stol, 2020). The lack of institutional reinforcement and recognition also impeded the development of self-efficacy, especially for teachers facing large class sizes and unfamiliar curricula.

Despite the systemic limitations identified in the study, some participants (notably P4 and P5) exhibited adaptive behavior by actively seeking out informal support from peers or engaging in self-directed learning to navigate their new professional

environments. These actions reflect Bandura's social cognitive theory, particularly the principle of human agency, the capacity of individuals to exercise control over their behavior, even within constraining environments. Participants who took the initiative demonstrated a belief in their self-efficacy and attempted to mitigate the impact of a weak onboarding system through personal effort and observational learning. However, while such self-motivation and peer-based strategies are commendable, they were often insufficient in the absence of formal structures, institutional support, or consistent feedback mechanisms. The burden of adjustment fell almost entirely on the individual, rather than being shared by the organization, which contradicts the collaborative and guided learning processes that Bandura envisioned as central to professional development. This imbalance between individual agency and environmental support underscores a critical gap in how onboarding is conceived and implemented in the Lagos State public school system.

In conclusion, the findings of this study not only align with but also extend the insights provided by the four theoretical frameworks employed: Herzberg's two-factor theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding theory, and Bandura's social cognitive theory. Collectively, the evidence demonstrates that when onboarding processes are fragmented, informal, and inconsistent, they fail to address both the psychological and professional needs of new teachers. Such inadequacies limit opportunities for social learning, hinder teachers' sense of belonging and competence, and ultimately undermine motivation, job satisfaction, and retention (Abioye, 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022). This present study contributes to theory by emphasizing the importance of

institutional structures that not only recognize individual agency but also provide a supportive environment conducive to professional growth. Importantly, the interpretations presented here remain firmly grounded in the lived experiences and narratives of the study's participants. They are not generalized beyond the data but rather used to illuminate how theoretical constructs manifest in the specific and localized context of public high school education in Lagos State.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations may have influenced the findings and interpretations of this study, and they should be considered when assessing the scope and applicability of the results. First, transferability presents a notable challenge. Although deliberate efforts were made to provide thick description of the research context, including participant selection criteria, delimitations, and procedural details, there is no assurance that similar conditions would produce comparable onboarding experiences elsewhere. The study's focus on former male public high school teachers in Lagos State offered depth and specificity but also limited the applicability of findings to other states or school systems with different administrative structures, gender dynamics, or onboarding practices. As a result, the themes and conclusions generated may reflect particular local conditions rather than universal trends across Nigeria's education sector. Second, variation among participants' experiences introduces further complexity. While seven participants described onboarding as limited or informal, two (Participants 4 and 6) reported structured mentorship and ongoing support during induction. These positive accounts served as outliers, but they also suggest that onboarding practices are not uniformly

applied across the state. Their inclusion enriches the dataset by offering contrast, but they also caution against overgeneralizing the findings. This variability suggests that systemic inconsistencies may be more influential than a singular onboarding model, and it complicates the interpretation of onboarding as universally deficient.

Third, the study may have been affected by social desirability bias. Some participants appeared cautious when discussing institutional weaknesses, possibly moderating their responses despite assurances of confidentiality. This concern is particularly relevant in discussions around leadership practices or administrative neglect, where participants may have feared identification. If present, this bias could have muted the depth of critique and skewed interpretations toward more neutral or surface-level insights. Fourth, recall bias is an inherent limitation in retrospective phenomenological studies. Because participants entered the profession at different points within a five-year window, their recollections of onboarding may have varied in clarity, detail, and emotional tone. Some memories may have faded, while others may have been unconsciously reshaped by later experiences. This temporal distance could have influenced how consistently participants described similar events and, in turn, how themes were constructed. Fifth, practical constraints during data collection, such as background noise, time limitations, and the researcher's workplace responsibilities, occasionally restricted the depth of individual interviews. These environmental factors may have led to shorter responses or missed opportunities for probing, ultimately affecting the richness of the data and the nuance of the analysis.

Finally, the study relied exclusively on interview data, without triangulation from document analysis or direct observation. This methodological choice limited confirmability, as findings could not be cross-verified through multiple sources. Consequently, the study's interpretations rest solely on self-reported accounts, which, while valuable for phenomenological insight, are subject to personal framing and subjectivity. Taken together, these limitations do not negate the significance of the study, but they do shape how its conclusions should be understood. Rather than viewing the findings as definitive, they should be seen as grounded insights into a specific group's experiences, influenced by contextual, methodological, and individual factors. Future research could build on this work by incorporating observational methods, expanding to other states or demographic groups, or exploring variations across different entry periods to further illuminate the complexities of teacher onboarding in Nigeria's public school system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, strengths, and limitations of this present study, as well as the contextual realities of public high school education in Lagos State, several important directions for future research are proposed. These recommendations are also aligned with the gaps identified in the reviewed literature, particularly regarding male teacher retention, onboarding practices, and institutional support mechanisms in developing contexts. The following suggestions aim to deepen understanding, inform policy, and guide the design of more effective induction frameworks for new teachers.

Expand Contextual Scope Across States or Regions

Given that this study focused exclusively on former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, future research could usefully extend its scope by exploring onboarding experiences in other Nigerian states or across different geopolitical zones. This study was limited to former male public high school teachers in Lagos State. While rich insights were generated from this focused context, the administrative structure, urban density, and policy implementation in Lagos may differ significantly from other states. Expanding the research to include diverse geographic and socio-political contexts, such as rural areas, northern states, or educationally underserved regions, would allow researchers to examine whether the onboarding challenges identified here are systemic or context-specific. This would also strengthen the transferability and comparative relevance of future findings.

Investigate Perspectives of School Leaders and Policy Makers

A key limitation of this study was its exclusive focus on teachers' perspectives. However, the systemic nature of onboarding, shaped by leadership decisions, policy directives, and resource allocation, necessitates the inclusion of school administrators and education officials in future research. Understanding how these stakeholders perceive, design, and implement onboarding programs can reveal structural explanations for the inconsistencies and shortcomings reported by participants. This line of inquiry would also help bridge the gap between policy and practice in teacher induction.

Explore Longitudinal Experiences of Early-Career Teachers

This present study relied on retrospective accounts, which may have been influenced by recall bias or participants' subsequent experiences. Future research could

adopt a longitudinal design, tracking early-career teachers over their first 3 to 5 years. Such a study would offer real-time insights into how onboarding experiences evolve, how coping strategies develop, and how institutional support (or lack thereof) influences decisions to remain in or leave the profession. This would enhance dependability by reducing memory distortion and deepening understanding of the onboarding-retention connection over time.

Examine the Role of Informal Support Structures in Teacher Adjustment

While formal onboarding was often described as lacking, some participants relied on informal support, such as sympathetic colleagues, peer networks, or previous professional experience, to navigate early challenges. However, this theme was underdeveloped due to limited probing and absence of triangulated data. Future studies could focus specifically on how informal systems operate as compensatory mechanisms in weak formal onboarding environments. This would illuminate adaptive strategies that are otherwise overlooked and could inform policy aimed at cultivating peer-based mentorship and teacher communities.

Investigate the Link Between Onboarding and Instructional Effectiveness

This study focused primarily on emotional, structural, and professional adjustment, without assessing how onboarding experiences might have impacted instructional quality or student learning. However, several participants indicated that their lack of preparation affected their classroom confidence and pedagogical decision-making. Future research could explore whether teachers who receive structured onboarding

perform differently in terms of classroom management, lesson delivery, or student engagement, thereby linking onboarding more directly to educational outcomes.

Study Onboarding Experiences in Primary or Private Schools

The current research was limited to male teachers in public secondary schools. This narrow focus excluded potentially valuable insights from primary schools, where teaching conditions and expectations often differ, and private schools, where onboarding policies may be more localized or commercialized. Investigating these other sectors could provide a broader picture of how onboarding is understood and implemented across the Nigerian education landscape. This expansion would also help assess whether the issues revealed in this study are unique to the public secondary school system or reflective of wider educational practices.

Further Study in Male Educators

Future research could explore how gender influences onboarding experiences and the professional identity formation of male educators, particularly in contexts where they are underrepresented. Such studies could examine the specific challenges male teachers face in navigating induction processes within school cultures that may implicitly align with female-dominated norms. Investigating how gender dynamics intersect with mentorship access, peer relationships, administrative support, and perceptions of role legitimacy could provide deeper insights into the unique needs of male educators. Additionally, longitudinal studies tracking male teachers from recruitment through their early years in the profession could shed light on how early onboarding experiences impact their sense of belonging, teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and long-term

retention. By focusing on gendered dimensions of teacher induction, future research can inform the design of more inclusive and responsive onboarding policies that acknowledge and address the distinctive experiences of male teachers within the broader educational workforce.

Implications

The findings of this study have meaningful implications for positive social change at multiple, but appropriate, levels. Firstly, at the individual level, improved onboarding practices, when informed by this study's findings, may help new teachers feel more supported, confident, and professionally competent. This may lead to increased self-efficacy, better classroom engagement, and stronger commitment to the profession. Supporting teacher adjustment at this early stage enhances not only professional identity but also personal well-being and job satisfaction. Secondly at the organizational level, that is, at the school and district levels, the study highlights the urgent need for structured onboarding systems that include clear orientation, mentoring, feedback mechanisms, and role clarification. Institutionalizing such practices may enhance staff integration, reduce early attrition, and improve school climate. This aligns with the organizational goals of staff retention, instructional continuity, and academic performance. Thirdly at the policy level, findings provide evidence that may inform education policy reforms at the state and national levels, particularly regarding induction frameworks for newly appointed public school teachers. By institutionalizing evidence-based onboarding strategies, education authorities may promote teacher quality, support professional development, and

ultimately contribute to improved public education outcomes, a foundational element of national development.

Furthermore, the findings of this study carry significant implications for addressing gender disparity in public high schools. Where gender-based differences in onboarding experiences were evident, there is a clear need for more equitable and responsive support structures during the induction period. Schools and education policymakers should consider implementing gender-sensitive onboarding programs that account for the unique challenges faced by teachers, particularly those belonging to the underrepresented gender within their school setting. Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of targeted recruitment and retention strategies that promote balanced gender representation in the teaching workforce.

In another development, there could be some methodological and theoretical implications of this present study. For example, this study demonstrates the value of using a qualitative phenomenological approach to uncover in-depth, lived experiences of newly recruited male teachers. It also underscores the need for triangulated data sources in future research to enhance trustworthiness and contextual validity. Subsequent studies might build on this by combining qualitative and quantitative methods to yield richer and more generalizable insights. Furthermore, by integrating Herzberg's two-factor theory, Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Bandura's social cognitive theory, the study reinforces the interdependence between psychological, motivational, and social dimensions of onboarding. The findings support the relevance of these theories in educational settings and suggest the need for further theoretical

refinement that considers the unique contextual realities of public education systems in developing countries like Nigeria.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study offers a unique contribution to the discourse on teachers onboarding by foregrounding the lived experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, a population and context often overlooked in mainstream literature. Unlike prior research that largely emphasizes policy implementation or program outcomes, this study adopts a phenomenological approach to uncover the emotional, psychological, and social dynamics that accompany the transition into the teaching profession. It reveals how the lack of structured support, ranging from inadequate orientation, absence of mentorship, poor communication, to unmet basic needs creates a sense of disorientation and professional isolation. What was previously underexplored is how these institutional shortcomings intersect with teachers' personal agency and socio-cultural realities to shape their adjustment, or lack thereof, during the onboarding period. By articulating the invariant structure of these onboarding experiences, this research not only fills a conceptual gap in Lagos State educational studies but also enriches the global literature on teacher onboarding with insights rooted in Nigerian public-sector contexts. The findings offer fresh theoretical and practical implications for the design of culturally responsive and psychologically attuned onboarding programs.

In addition, this present study, according to the participants, contributes new and context-specific knowledge to the literature on teacher onboarding, attrition, and male teacher experiences in public education systems, particularly within sub-Saharan African

contexts. While existing scholarship has examined onboarding in broader terms, few studies have focused specifically on the lived experiences of former male public high school teachers in Nigeria. Even fewer have applied a phenomenological lens to unpack how these teachers make sense of their induction into the profession, the emotional and institutional barriers they encounter, and how these shape their eventual decision to exit.

One of the most significant contributions of this research lies in its revelation of the disorienting and unsupported nature of onboarding as experienced by male teachers in Lagos State. By employing phenomenological methods, this study goes beyond procedural critiques of onboarding programs to explore how these experiences were felt, interpreted, and internalized by individuals. The study captures the emotional texture of onboarding, its moments of isolation, frustration, and ambiguity, which is often overlooked in policy or outcomes-driven onboarding research.

This research also expands the understanding of gendered dynamics in onboarding, offering insight into how male teachers, who are underrepresented in the profession, often experience unique challenges related to identity negotiation, social integration, and professional affirmation. These findings contribute to the emerging discourse on gender and teacher retention, an area that remains underexplored in the Nigerian context. Additionally, the study reveals that onboarding is not experienced as a one-time event, but rather as a complex, ongoing process that interacts with broader structural, social, and psychological factors. These challenges simplified notions of induction as merely a training or administrative task and calls for onboarding to be

reimagined as a relational, identity-forming experience, especially for professionals entering under-resourced or bureaucratically rigid systems.

Furthermore, the study contributes methodologically by demonstrating how phenomenology can be used in educational research in Nigeria to uncover deeply embedded institutional and emotional realities that would not be visible through surveys or post-hoc evaluations alone. It also introduces Lagos State as a case study for examining the intersection of policy, practice, and personal experience, thus offering a reference point for comparative research across other regions and systems.

As education systems across Africa continue to grapple with issues of teacher retention, equity, and quality, the importance of structured, evidence-informed onboarding cannot be overstated. The findings of this study, rooted in the voices of those who have lived through the gaps, serve as both a diagnostic and a call to action. Strengthening onboarding processes is not only vital for supporting teacher adjustment and morale but also for enhancing student outcomes and institutional stability. Future research, building on this foundation, can continue to bridge the gap between policy rhetoric and classroom realities, ensuring that teacher induction becomes a transformative, rather than transactional, phase of the professional journey.

This study has provided valuable insight into the onboarding experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State, highlighting the inconsistencies and informalities that hinder early professional adjustment. The potential for positive social change is evident at several levels. At the individual level, improved onboarding may empower teachers with the confidence, clarity, and professional identity needed for

success in their roles. At the organizational level, schools and education districts may benefit from enhanced staff morale, reduced turnover, and stronger instructional delivery through intentional onboarding practices. At the societal and policy level, the findings may inform evidence-based reforms in teacher induction policies, ultimately contributing to a more stable and effective public education system. Methodologically, the study affirms the value of phenomenological inquiry in capturing nuanced teacher experiences, while also suggesting the need for triangulated data in future research. Theoretically, the findings reinforce the relevance of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Bandura's social learning principles, and Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding dimensions in explaining teacher adaptation. Empirically, this work addresses a significant gap in the Nigerian education literature and provides a foundation for broader comparative and longitudinal studies.

Addressing the onboarding challenges faced by male teachers is not only critical for improving individual teacher experiences and performance but also for tackling the broader issue of gender disparity within the teaching profession. As male educators remain significantly underrepresented, particularly in early and secondary education settings, targeted efforts to understand and support their induction into the school system can contribute to a more balanced and diverse educational workforce. Developing gender-responsive onboarding strategies that acknowledge the unique perspectives and needs of male teachers may help attract, support, and retain more men in teaching roles, thereby fostering greater equity and inclusivity within the profession.

When schools adopt gender-responsive onboarding strategies that attract and support more male teachers, male students stand to benefit in meaningful ways. The presence of male educators provides much-needed role models, particularly for boys who may lack positive male figures in their lives. This representation can influence their character development, encouraging respect, responsibility, and emotional intelligence. Male teachers often bring relatable perspectives that can enhance boys' engagement and motivation in the classroom, while also contributing to a more balanced approach in mentorship and discipline (Owoyemi & Adesina, 2021; Preece & Bullingham, 2022). Their presence helps challenge stereotypes about masculinity and broadens boys' views on career possibilities, including roles in education and caregiving. Ultimately, such inclusivity fosters a learning environment where male students feel seen, supported, and inspired to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Practical Implications and Recommendations

Based on the participants' lived experiences and grounded in the research questions and emergent themes, several practical actions are proposed to address these systemic gaps. Some practical recommendations are highlighted in this section. First, the Lagos State Ministry of Education (LSMoE) and Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) should establish a standardized onboarding policy across all public secondary schools. Seven participants described their induction as informal or absent. A unified framework, outlining timelines, role clarification, and orientation procedures, would ensure consistency, especially in addressing *structural and systemic shortcomings* (Theme 1) and answering Research Question 1 on onboarding experiences.

Secondly, principals and vice principals should be trained in induction leadership through modules integrated into school leadership programs. These should include strategies for school culture building, emotional support, and staff supervision. Participants frequently cited weak or absent leadership engagement, which aligns with *Theme 2: Social and Emotional Dimensions of Onboarding* and directly links to both Research Questions.

Third, structured mentorship should be implemented in all schools. TESCOM should assign experienced teachers as mentors for each new teacher, with clearly defined expectations for support, meeting frequency, and feedback. This recommendation addresses *Theme 4: Coping Mechanisms and Exit Decisions*, as the absence of mentorship contributed significantly to early attrition (Research Question 2).

Moreover, preservice training programs should be revised to include onboarding readiness modules. Institutions regulated by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should prepare future teachers for the challenges of working in bureaucratically complex and resource-constrained environments. This aligns with *Theme 3: Professional Practice and Classroom Realities* and bridges the gap between training and field realities. Additionally, the Lagos State Quality Assurance Department should monitor onboarding implementation through periodic evaluations. Given the inconsistencies in onboarding quality reported by participants, a system of feedback and accountability would encourage best practices and address variation in experiences. The success of newly recruited public high school teachers in Lagos State is not determined by their qualifications alone, but by the quality of support they receive upon entry.

Conclusion

This study explored the lived experiences of former male public high school teachers in Lagos State regarding their onboarding processes, focusing on how these experiences shaped their early career journeys and decisions to exit the profession. Through a phenomenological lens, the study uncovered a complex interplay of institutional neglect, emotional disorientation, and professional ambiguity, conditions that rendered onboarding less of a bridge into teaching and more of an unstructured survival test. Theoretically, this research offers a novel contribution by integrating Herzberg's two-factor theory, Bauer and Erdogan's onboarding framework, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Bandura's social cognitive theory to interpret the onboarding experience not just as a policy gap but as a motivational, emotional, and identity-shaping process. This multidimensional framework reveals that ineffective onboarding affects not only retention but also a teacher's sense of professional self-worth, social belonging, and perceived efficacy. It challenges linear or procedural understandings of onboarding, advancing a more holistic and human-centered model.

In terms of policy, the findings call for systemic rethinking. The study demonstrates that without a state-wide onboarding policy, capable educators may enter schools where support structures are dependent on leadership discretion or school culture. It recommends that onboarding be reframed as a critical institutional responsibility, with clearly defined roles for TESCOM, school leaders, and teacher preparation institutions. Key policy interventions should include standardized induction frameworks, principal training in teacher support, structured mentorship programs, and pre-service curriculum

reforms. These changes are vital for preventing early attrition and strengthening the professional pipeline.

Methodologically, this study contributes to the growing body of phenomenological research in Nigeria educational contexts by offering a rich, interpretive account of teachers' subjective realities. It demonstrates the power of phenomenology not just to document experiences, but to reveal their meaning, how individuals internalize systemic failures, interpret institutional silence, and construct their professional identities in real time. By surfacing this inner landscape, the study opens new directions for how we understand, and improve, the relational, emotional, and organizational dimensions of school systems.

In summary, this study sheds light on an overlooked dimension of teacher development: the critical, formative window of onboarding. It reveals that male teachers in Lagos State are often left to navigate their early careers without the structural or emotional scaffolding necessary for long-term success. Their stories expose a system in which teachers are hired, but not truly welcomed; assigned, but not adequately prepared. By centering these lived experiences, this research not only informs theory and practice—it gives voice to the quiet exit of professionals whose departure speaks volumes about the invisible costs of institutional neglect. The takeaway is clear - onboarding is not a box to tick, it is the first chapter of a teacher's professional story. If that chapter is incoherent, unsupported, or isolating, the rest of the narrative may never be written.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

Exploring The Lived Experiences of Former Lagos State Male Public high School Teachers About Their Onboarding Process

Volunteers Wanted for A Research Study

You are being invited to participate in a doctoral research study that seeks to explore the lived experiences of former Lagos State male public high school teachers about their onboarding process. You will be asked to participate in an individual interview (approximately 60 minutes). The interviews will be conducted over the Zoom platform and audio recorded and not video recorded.

In order to participate, you must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a male teacher who previously worked in Lagos State public high schools.
- Must have quit the teaching profession early (e.g., within 1-5 years of starting).
- Must have undergone an onboarding process during their employment.
- Willingness to participate in in-depth interviews.

Please message (email redacted) privately to let them know of your interest.

Appendix B: Final Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your experience during the onboarding process when you first started teaching in a public school in Lagos State?
2. How did the school handle issues such as policies, administration, or interpersonal relationships during your onboarding period?
3. What aspects of the onboarding process, if any, did you find particularly helpful or inadequate in preparing you for the challenges of teaching?
4. How did the school handle concerns like workload management and stress during your onboarding period?
5. Tell me how you felt about the school community during the first year of teaching while going through the onboarding process?
6. How did the behavior and attitudes of other teachers or administrators influence your own experience during the onboarding process?
7. Reflecting on your onboarding experience, are there specific moments that stand out as pivotal in shaping your decision to quit teaching?
8. During the onboarding process, what helped you build and maintain your confidence as a new teacher?
9. If you could change one thing about your onboarding experience, what would it be, and how do you think it would have impacted your career decision?

10. Explain how the facilitators handled the matter of conflict resolution during your onboarding process.

Appendix C: Full Code List

1	Experience during onboarding
1.01	Unstructured and inadequate onboarding system
1.02	General orientation, one-day program, and lacked depth
1.03	Overwhelming, no mentorship, and lack of structure support
1.04	Immediate teaching, no preparatory training, and heavy workload
1.05	Lack of behavioral management and administrative guidance
1.06	Diverse student needs
1.07	Inconsistent guidance
1.08	Confusion, trial-and-error learning, and gradual adaptation
1.09	Lack of teaching resources
1.10	Unclear processes
1.11	Vague instructions
2	School handling policies, administration, or interpersonal relationships
2.01	Lack of formal communication
2.02	Bureaucratic inefficiencies
2.03	Feelings of frustration, isolation, and lack of support
2.04	Policy changes at short notice
2.05	Indifferent colleagues
2.06	Relations-building through individual efforts
2.07	Lack of team building
2.08	Periodic review of policies

2.09 Cordial teacher relationships

2.10 Handbook with general policies

2.11 Outdated or inconsistent policies

2.12 Hierarchical structure and expectation of conformity

3 Aspects of onboarding that were helpful or inadequate

3.01 Unstandardized peer support

3.02 Reliance on outdated textbooks

3.03 Introduction to school policies

3.04 Understanding administrative structure

3.05 Reverse mentoring

3.06 Consolidation of existing strengths

3.07 Child Protection Training

3.08 Role-playing for real-world teaching situations

3.09 Peer observation and co-teaching

3.10 Peer support from experienced teachers

3.11 Limited institutional capacity to support teachers

3.12 No practical exposure

3.13 Workload issue

3.14 No bridge between theory and practice

3.15 No training in discipline or large classes

3.16 No support for confrontational parents

4 Workload management and stress

4.01 Lack of structured workload training

4.02 Immediate heavy teaching responsibilities

4.03 Focus on compliance over teacher welfare

4.04 Teachers developing all materials

4.05 Manual administrative tasks

4.06 Dismissive responses to stress-related concerns

4.07 Teachers are expected to adjust naturally

4.08 Encouragement of team teaching

4.09 Shared lesson planning efforts

4.10 Wellness programs

4.11 Stress left to individual management

4.12 Stress seen as inevitable

4.13 Struggling teachers perceived as incapable

5 School community

5.01 Isolated and disconnected

5.02 Friendly senior teachers offered advice

5.03 Some colleagues are indifferent or too busy

5.04 Hesitant to ask for help

5.05 Leadership unapproachable

5.06 Communication one-directional

5.07 Viewed as inexperienced

5.08 Excited and anxious

5.09 Important and indispensable

5.10 Stretched thin and questioned sustainability

5.11 Lasting friendships

5.12 “Figure it out yourself” teachers

5.13 Cliquish teachers

6 Behavior and attitudes of other teachers or administrators

6.01 Lack of support from senior teachers

6.02 Detachment and cynicism among experienced teachers

6.03 Informal peer mentoring

6.04 Feeling of isolation

6.05 Unwelcoming school culture

6.06 Absence of consultation in decision-making

6.07 Supportive colleagues

6.08 Staffroom cliques

6.09 Administrative dismissive comment

6.10 Willingness to share best practices

7 Specific moments that stand out in decision to quit

7.01 Overwhelming workload

7.02 Burnout

7.03 Indifference from administration

7.04 Discipline issues

7.05 Neglect impact on career satisfaction

7.06 Systemic failures

7.07 Work-life balance

7.08 Lack of recognition

7.09 Impact on confidence

7.10 Disrespect from leadership

7.11 Educational politics

7.12 Disillusionment and frustration

7.13 Low motivation and disruptive behavior

7.14 Absence of collaborative effort

7.15 Teacher self-funding teaching materials

7.16 Emotional and physical exhaustion

7.17 Inadequate salary

7.18 Unhelpful advice from senior teachers

7.19 Exposure to alternative career paths

7.20 Misalignment between urgency and content

7.21 Staying teachers express regrets

8 Building and maintaining confidence

8.01 Passion for teaching

8.02 Student feedback

8.03 Self-directed learning

8.04 Mentorship

8.05 Constructive feedback

8.06 Peer collaboration

8.07 Positive relationship

8.08 Developing problem-solving skills

8.09 Mistakes as learning opportunities

8.10 Acting confidence to gain authority

8.11 Emotional coping strategy (humor)

9 One thing to change

9.01 Mentorship program

9.02 Emotional support

9.03 Administrative support

9.04 Professional development

9.05 Peer collaboration and community

9.06 Principal's engagement

9.07 Resource provision and workload planning

9.08 Career retention strategies

10 Conflict resolution

10.01 Lack of formal mechanisms

10.02 Authority bias

10.03 Lack of voice in decision-making

10.04 Ignored grievances

10.05 Frustration and disengagement

10.06 Encouragement of open communication

10.07 Use of mediation sessions

10.08 Delayed intervention

10.09 Inconsistent conflict resolution

10.10 Active listening

10.11 Empathy and understanding

10.12 De-escalation techniques

10.13 Use of restorative circles

10.14 Collaborative problem-solving

10.15 Mentorship during onboarding

10.16 Top-down conflict resolution

10.17 Principal as authority figure

10.18 Mutual respect culture

Appendix D: Summary of Codes and Categories

Codes	Description	Categories
1.02	General orientation, one-day program, and lacking depth.	Orientation and training deficits.
1.04	Immediate teaching, no preparatory training, and heavy workload.	.
3.03	Introduction to school policies.	
3.04	Understanding administrative structure.	
3.07	Child protection training.	
3.08	Role playing for real-world teaching situations.	
3.12	No practical exposure.	
3.14	No bridge between theory and practice.	
9.04	Professional development.	
1.03	Overwhelming, no mentorship, and lack of structure	Mentorship and peer support gaps.
1.07	Inconsistent guidance.	
3.01	Unstandardized peer support.	
3.10	Peer support from experienced teachers.	
6.01	Lack of support from senior teachers.	
6.03	Informal peer mentoring.	
8.04	Mentorship.	
9.01	Mentorship program.	
10.15	Mentorship during onboarding.	
1.01	Unstructured and inadequate onboarding system.	Resources and preparation.
1.09	Lack of teaching resources.	
3.02	Reliance on outdated textbooks.	
7.15	Teacher self-funding teaching materials.	
9.07	Resource provision and workload planning.	
1.05	Lack of behavioral and administrative Guidance.	Classroom management and diverse learners.
1.06	Diverse student needs.	
3.15	No training on discipline or large classes.	
7.04	Discipline issues.	
7.13	Low motivation and disruptive behavior.	
3.11	Limited institutional capacity to support teachers.	Teaching practice and curriculum issues.
3.13	Workload issues.	

Codes	Description	Categories
3.14	No bridge between theory and practice.	
7.19	Exposure to alternative career paths.	
7.20	Misalignment between urgency and content.	
2.01	Lack of formal communication.	Leadership style and bureaucracy.
2.02	Bureaucratic inefficiencies.	
2.04	Policy changes at short notice.	
2.10	Handbook with general policies.	
2.11	Outdated or inconsistent policies.	
2.12	Hierarchical structure and expectation of conformity.	
6.06	Absence of consultation in decision-making.	
6.09	Administrative dismissive comment.	
9.03	Administrative support.	
10.16	Top-down conflict resolution.	
10.17	Principal as authority figure.	
2.05	Indifferent colleagues.	Peer relations and Social climate.
2.06	Relation-building through individual efforts.	
5.01	Isolated and disconnected.	
5.03	Some colleagues are indifferent or too busy.	
5.12	“Figure it out yourself” teachers.	
5.13	Cliquish teachers.	
6.02	Detachment and cynicism among experienced teachers.	
6.08	Staffroom cliques.	
10.02	Authority bias.	
10.04	Ignored grievances.	
2.09	Cordial teacher relationships.	Positive social interactions (when present).
5.02	Friendly senior teachers offered advice.	
5.11	Lasting friendships.	
6.07	Supportive colleagues.	
6.10	Willingness to share best practices.	
10.06	Encouragement of open communication.	
10.10	Active listening.	
10.11	Empathy and understanding.	
10.13	Use of restorative circles.	
10.14	Collaborative problem-solving.	
4.01	Lack of structured workload training.	Burnout and exhaustion.
4.02	Immediate heavy teaching responsibilities.	

Codes	Description	Categories
4.05	Manual administrative tasks.	
7.01	Overwhelming workload.	
7.02	Burnout.	
7.16	Emotional and physical exhaustion.	
7.17	Inadequate salary.	
2.03	Feelings of frustration, isolation, and lack of support.	Isolation, frustration,
4.06	Dismissive responses to stress-related concerns.	and lack of support.
5.04	Hesitant to ask for help.	
5.05	Leadership unapproachable.	
5.06	Communication one-directional.	
6.04	Feeling of isolation.	
7.03	Indifference from administration.	
7.12	Disillusionment and frustration.	
7.14	Absence of collaborative effort.	
5.07	Viewed as inexperienced.	Self-perception and
7.09	Impact on confidence.	Identity struggles.
7.21	Staying teachers express regrets.	
8.10	Acting confidence to gain authority.	
8.11	Emotional coping strategy (humor).	
7.05	Neglect impact on career satisfaction.	Reasons for leaving.
7.06	Systemic failures.	
7.07	Work-life balance.	
7.08	Lack of recognition.	
7.11	Educational politics.	
7.18	Unhelpful advice from senior teachers.	
8.01	Passion for teaching.	Confidence and
8.02	Student feedback.	Resilience building.
8.03	Self-directed learning.	
8.05	Constructive feedback.	
8.06	Peer collaboration.	
8.07	Positive relationship.	
8.08	Developing problem-solving skills.	
8.09	Mistakes as learning opportunities.	
9.02	Emotional support.	
9.08	Career retention strategies.	

Codes	Description	Categories
10.01	Lack of formal mechanisms	Lack of mechanisms and delays.
10.03	Lack of voice in decision-making.	
10.08	Delayed intervention.	
10.09	Inconsistent conflict resolution.	
10.06	Encouragement of open communication.	Positive strategies (when present).
10.07	Use of mediation sessions.	
10.10	Active listening.	
10.11	Empathy and understanding.	
10.12	De-escalation techniques.	
10.13	Use of restorative circles.	
10.14	Collaborative problem-solving.	