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The Experiences Of Black Male Teachers In International Schools In East And Southeast Asia

Myson Jonathan Sheppard

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THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK MALE TEACHERS IN INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

by

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A Dissertation Proposal
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of
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This dissertation, submitted by Myson Jonathan Sheppard in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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This dissertation is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.

Chris Nelson
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

Data

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Myson Jonathan Sheppard
March 6, 2023

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For Alice

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ABSTRACT

Although substantive research examines the issues surrounding the lack of Black Male Teachers (BMTs) nationally, limited studies involve their experiences in international schools. This is troubling when juxtaposed with their experiences researched and documented during teacher training, hiring practices, and on the job in the U.S. Although the issue is complex, many stem from explicit and implicit racial discrimination from the white racial majority. Given the problems preservice and eventual BMTs face in the U.S., examining BMTs narratives in the international school industry was necessary. Kanter's token theory suggests that any slice of a social group comprised below 15% of a whole hold no power amongst their respective groups. Currently, the entire Black male teacher population sits at just below 2% in the U.S. This dissertation aimed to explore BMTs experiences in international schools in East and Southeast Asia, where their numbers are likely lower than in the US, and where international schools are often touted as having and being inclusive of a diverse stakeholder community. Practitioner-based narrative interviews with six BMTs found that all participants appreciated and benefited from the knowledge and networking opportunities that supported the development of their international school teaching careers. However, despite being content with their decision to work abroad, they all encountered or took measures to address potential racial discrimination during the hiring process and while teaching. The implications of these findings, along with Kanter's token theory, which served as the theoretical framework for the study, suggest a pressing need to increase the number of BMTs and overall minority teachers and teacher leadership staff by implementing more equitable hiring practices and specific human resources directives. These measures would help to protect minority teachers against racial discrimination and implicit bias.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Black male teachers (BMTs) hold 2% of all teaching positions in the United States, and prospective BMTs often face challenges entering college (Sandles, 2020). Once there, many Black teacher candidates find their preservice teacher programs have teaching standards targeted at majority teachers and lack acceptance of different races. Many Black students who graduate and apply for teaching positions experience racial discrimination in the hiring process and, when hired, often find themselves working in lower-resourced inner-city schools. Wherever they find employment as teachers in the United States, BMTs have cited experiences of microaggressions, stereotypes, and being tagged as the go-to disciplinarian for Black boys. Some BMTs have decided to leave the U.S. teaching industry and move internationally for work.

Outside of the U.S., there is a niche but large international school industry. These schools, situated all over the world, offer a unique educational approach and a prominent pathway for international students to enter elite educational systems. The international school industry differs significantly from U.S. public schools, but in many ways, they remain the same. The apparent difference is that most students are host-country nationals, those born in the country they attend school in. Although international schools today are becoming less international by student racial composition, based on peer-reviewed research and a compilation of data from faculty databases on international school websites in East and Southeast Asia, the international teacher population remains overwhelmingly Western and White. A search of 100 international schools in East and Southeast Asia found eight BMTs.

International school leadership constituencies also remain overwhelmingly White, with only one school shown as having a Black male head of school principal). There is also a

historical trend of international schools recruiting that market towards white staff who hail from Western, English-speaking countries, such as South Africa, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. Many international schools staff local teachers and teachers from other countries; however, there are suggestions that the former frequently earn less than their Western counterparts. This chapter presents the need and purpose of the study, the key terms, and the research questions.

Positionality Statement

I am a Black male teacher from the US who, from when this research was conducted, has taught internationally for 14 years in South Korea and Vietnam. I have experienced both implicit and explicit bias throughout my career. From encountering discriminatory hiring practices to experiencing microaggressions from colleagues, I have witnessed firsthand how systemic biases in the international education industry disproportionately impact minority teachers. These experiences are ongoing. Consequently, they have fueled my passion for advocating for greater equity and inclusivity in the international education sector. As a result of my experiences as a black male teacher who has faced discrimination and bias from educational employers throughout my career, there are limitations to this research as my perspective is biased. My experiences may influence my interpretation of the data and my ability to analyze the findings objectively. Therefore, readers should approach the conclusions and recommendations with the understanding that my personal biases and experiences have played a role in shaping them.

Need for the Study

This study's need stems from international schools' lack of diverse foreign staff. The appeal of many international schools is their Western curriculum and diverse student and teacher body. However, a sampling of international school faculty directories revealed few foreign

teachers from outside Western countries and even fewer Black men from the U.S. Few BMTs at international schools could be due to the same reasons for their low representation in the United States. Regardless, there is a need to determine BMTs' experiences teaching internationally to find how their interactions in international education are affected by working with White Western coworkers, many from the United States, a country with a low BMT representation and a long history of their experiences with racial discrimination.

Like other professionals, teachers learn tips and techniques from their counterparts (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Grossman et al., 2001). Although sharing best practices is often a contractual requirement for educators, sharing optimal teaching and learning methods is strengthened when colleagues trust and understand each other (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019). This is heightened when colleagues who have formed friendships with one another share their nuanced information and strategies for navigating the profession. As a rule, when people form social groups organically, there is an affinity for those of the same race or gender (McPherson et al., 2001). Individuals are more likely to interact with others with similar characteristics, such as gender and race, a tendency known as homophily (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; McPherson et al., 2001; Mollica et al., 2003; Monge & Contractor, 2003). This is not an indictment on a natural behavior but a critical point to acknowledge and understand when dealing with equity amongst professional groups. Race and gender homophily have a small but statistically significant relationship with work-related advice and information interactions among school staff (Spillane et al., 2015). White teacher overrepresentation in international schools could influence not only the daily experiences of teachers of color (Gist, 2018) but “their opportunities to increase their social capital” (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019, p. 872).

International schools are not inherently racist and discriminatory institutions; instead, they have cultures formed by the majority positionality represented in dominant White foreign teacher staff numbers. Therefore, White Western teachers inform many international schools' mindsets and cultures (Bailey & Cooker, 2019). Historically, White Western teachers, particularly those from the United States, have exhibited discriminatory and racist behaviors toward BMTs. This study was significant because schools and students benefit from diverse teaching staff because more potent problem-solving abilities and a better ability to predict issues in international education directly result from the decrease of racial homogeneity of foreign staff (Page, 2007). There has been significant research on international schools, including the absence of minorities in leadership, teacher mindsets, and location's role in international school recruitment and retention; however, there has been no research on BMTs in an international school context.

Additionally, international schools remain heavily staffed with White Westerners. Minimal research has focused on BMTs' experiences. A literature search found one study on BMTs' experiences (Dos Santos, 2020), but the study did not focus on BMTs in international schools. In Dos Santos' (2020) study, 61% of the participants were teachers, 22% were nurses, and 17% were counselors; the gender breakdown was 66% female and 44% male. Regarding nationalities, 44% of the participants came from North America, 28% from Africa, 17% from Oceania, and 11% from Europe. Out of 18 participants, only three were Black men from North America, which includes the United States and Canada. Canadians' teacher certification paths could have differed significantly from their American counterparts. There was no way to know if the three BMTs held teaching licenses.

It is unknown how international schools' teacher demographics break down by race and citizenship, but it is possible to examine the experiences of BMTs working in international schools. Considering the historical context of BMTs in the U.S., and the large amount of literature on this group, this research hopes to add to the experiences of BMTs in international schools. In preparation, the researcher initially conducted a preliminary examination of 100 international school faculty directories in South and Southeast Asia, indicated overwhelming numbers of White teachers from Western countries. With this information, it seemed necessary to identify whether BMTs face the same implicit bias, lack of support, race-related hiring practices, microaggressions, stereotype threats, and discriminatory practices in international schools, all of which are present in U.S. schools.

The current study used a practitioner-based research approach that used narratives to interpret the real-life experiences of participants, enabling a transparent and authentic understanding of BMTs' experiences in international schools in South and Southeast Asia. In many international schools, White foreign staff hold the majority of head leadership positions, inadvertently and in some instances advertently upholding the creation and maintenance of a school culture that negatively affects minority staff members with very little cultural capital (Gardner-McTaggart, 2018). International White teachers and administrators setting the standards for international schools is "symbolic violence," as they continue to maintain their privileged positions without challenge or input from minority foreign staff whose voices are often overlooked (Gardner-McTaggart, 2018, p. 149).

Research Questions

The guiding research questions include:

RQ1: What are Black male teachers' experiences in international schools?

RQ2: How can these findings improve and standardize international schools' departments of human resources equitable recruitment practices and work environment?

Theoretical Framework

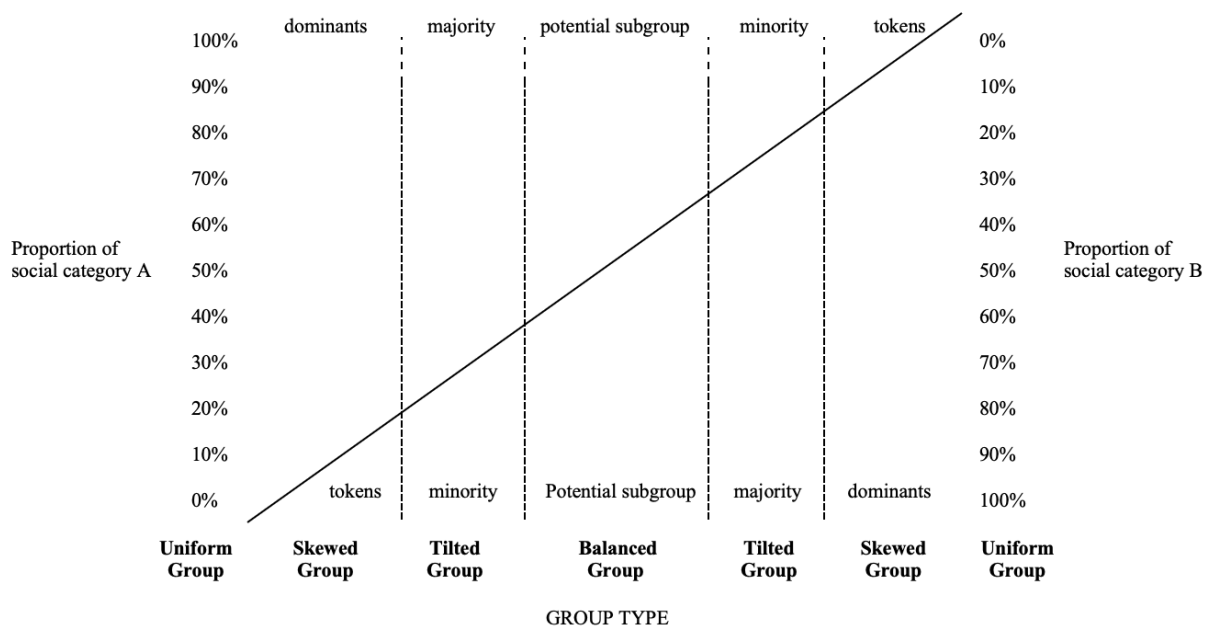
There seems, as it stands, that the issue of Black male teachers is linked in many ways to their low numbers in any learning community. Powerlessness remains since “numerically dominant types also control the group and its culture in enough ways to be labeled ‘dominants’” (Kanter, loc. 4422). Research using Kanter’s token theory as its theoretical framework suggests that a BMT who works in a school with few or a single other Black staff member is likely to be forced into limited roles and face other less-than-ideal and exclusionary conditions (Bristol & Goings, 2019; Stichman et al., 2010). Without at least 15% representation, minorities will not be taken seriously or heard, but rather as a token representation of a diverse staff that does not exist. (Kanter, 1977).

According to Kanter (1977), any human organization has four possible groups: uniform, skewed, tilted, and balanced. The first is a uniform group, meaning each member has the same characteristics, with 100% representation in an organization (Kanter, 1977). Importantly, for all groups, these characteristics often represent themselves in “salient external master statuses,” such as race, ethnicity, or gender (Kanter, 1977, loc. 4421). In a skewed group, members of a social group comprise 85% of a positionality such as race, with the other 15% representing those from other races or a single race. According to Kanter, skewed or “dominant groups” are far past majority numbers, which would be a 65:35 ratio (loc. 4422). And in international schools in East and Southeast Asia, all signs point overwhelmingly to international schools comprised of skewed White foreign groups.

Kanter classifies a majority group as a titled group of 65:35. However, it is more than likely that more than 65% of foreign staff in international schools are white, representing not a majority but again, a skewed or dominant group. The fourth group, or what Kanter has called the balanced group, is comprised of a 60:40 to 50:50 member ratio, and it is amongst these numbers where the power dynamics start to change. With these numbers, the provision of power distribution begins to permeate on its own. Balanced groups provide more equitable opportunities for minority foreign international school staff members and provide them with a level of comfort they have likely yet to experience. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1

Kanter's Token Theory Dichotomy

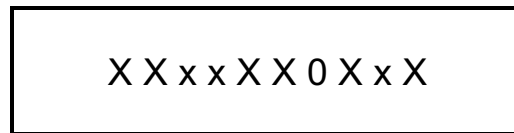


The token theory applies to BMTs in East and Southeast Asia which comprise much less than 15% of the foreign staff. Consequently, data gleaned from participants' narratives for this study and Kanter's token theory suggest that foreign international school staff are likely to feel hyper-visible and uncomfortable in skewed and possibly tilted groups (Bristol & Goings, 2019;

Kanter, 1977). As Figure 2 shows below, “If one sees nine Xs and one 0, the 0 will stand out” (Kanter, loc. 4445).

Figure 2

The “0” Sticks Out From the Group



Note. Concept from *Men and Women of the Corporation*, by R. M. Kanter, 1977. Copyright 1977 by Basic Books.

Unless there are more Black educators, staff, students, and parents at international schools, distorted perceptions of Black people and their competency for leadership positions will remain in question (Kanter, 1977). This information alone suggests the importance of BMTs in international schools. Realistically though, BMTs internationally are often tokens, being the sole Black teacher or amongst a few others in schools. The result is that BMTs are both highly visible as different people yet not permitted the individuality of their own unique, non-stereotypical characteristics” (Kanter, loc. 4471). Amongst educational career groups regardless of region, a Black educator’s willingness to fight for their dignity and individuality can do nothing but logically erode over time, sped up by the acceptance that their White counterparts’ power, represented in staff representation, solely hold the power to shape and dictate the cultural composition of the group or organization. From there, pragmatism suggests deference and conformity to the powers that be. According to Storr (2017), 'wherever you track trails of influence—of people deferring, altering their beliefs or behaviours to match those of the people above them—you'll find status games being played and won' (loc. 840). This quote suggests that the lack of representation of Black educators in international schools can contribute to a culture

of deference and conformity, which can be detrimental to creating an inclusive and equitable environment.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to explore the experiences of Black male teachers (BMTs) in international schools in East and Southeast Asia. Many international schools have a skewed White foreign staff, and what consists of the remaining foreign staff racial makeup BMTs in international schools in East and Southeast Asia are barely visible. Kanter's (1977) token theory was the framework used to interpret participants' narratives for the study, while literature regarding BMTs U.S. experiences as possibly being transplanted overseas in international schools. This study focused on BMTs certified to teach in the United States who have chosen to teach in international schools in East or Southeast Asia, which includes China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Mongolia, South Korea, Taiwan, Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

East and Southeast Asia are two of the most popular destinations for foreign staff. The countries in these regions have an exponentially growing need for international teachers and economically inviting locations. In addition, a burgeoning upper-middle class in countries such as China, Singapore, and Indonesia has also contributed to growth.

Definition of Terms

Bias: "When we have a preference or an aversion toward a person or a category of person as opposed to being neutral, we have a bias" (Johnson et al., p. 10, n.d.).

Black male teacher: Black men born in the United States with teaching licenses from a U.S. state who worked in international schools in East or Southeast Asia at the time of this study.

Culture: “A system of shared assumptions and beliefs, values and behaviours in a given group, community or nation” (Cheong, 2000, p. 209).

Implicit: “A thought or feeling about which we are unaware or mistaken” (Johnson et al., p. 10, n.d.).

International school: “An independent school that promotes international education, in an international environment, either by adopting an international curriculum such as that of the International Baccalaureate or Cambridge International Examinations, or by following a national curriculum different from that of the school’s location. At the same time, the school must offer a significant portion of the curriculum in a language other than the official or national language of the country in which it is located.” (ISC Research, n.d., para. 2)

Racial discrimination: “The...unfair and differential treatment determined by race [which] is a behavioral characteristic of racism” “Mouzon et al., 2017; Ong et al., 2009; Andoh-Dawson & BeLue, 2011, as cited in Armstrong et al., p. 31, 2019).

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation has five chapters. Chapter I presented the problem of the study, as well as its implementation, purpose, research questions, and definitions of terms. Chapter II, the literature review, addresses the low number of BMTs in the United States to provide context for the participants’ responses, as BMTs face similar concerns in international education. The topics discussed include racial discrimination and national BMT candidate selection, the role of Black male teachers in the U.S., BMT recruitment, retention/faculty practices, teacher education, and teacher credential programs and policies. Chapter III presents the study’s methodology, process, and methods. Finally, after the findings in Chapter IV, Chapter V presents the conclusions and recommendations for international schools and future research.

CHAPTER II

Introduction

According to Wong et al. (2013), conducting a literature review is a critical step in the research process, providing a foundation of knowledge and insights that can inform the design and implementation of a research study. This literature review presents the research related to the study and the need for the study, including issues related to BMTs in international schools in East and Southeast Asia. Research has yet to focus on BMTs in East and Southeast Asia. Consequently, researching BMTs in international schools in East and Southeast Asia is critical due to the lack of research in this area. While studies have been conducted on international school-focused issues such as teacher identities, experiences, global citizenship, international school leadership, and turnover and retention of foreign staff in international schools, there has been a dearth of research on BMTs in this context. As such, this study fills an important gap in the literature by exploring the experiences of BMTs in international schools in East and Southeast Asia. Understanding their experiences can provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by other foreign staff minority teachers in international school settings and inform strategies to promote equity and inclusion in them for all stakeholders. This study aims to identify and synthesize the central issues faced by BMTs in international schools in East and Southeast Asia, providing a foundation for future research and interventions to promote equity and inclusion in these settings. The literature review will focus on BMTs in the United States and BMTs in International Schools. Most research on international schools has focused on teacher identities, experiences, and global citizenship; international school leadership; and international school turnover and retention. This literature review aims to identify and synthesize the central issues to provide context for the participants' experiences.

Literature Review: Experiences of Black Male Teachers in the U.S. Educational System

This first literature review category is neither an exhaustive review nor an “exhaustive review with selective citations” (Cooper, 1985, p. 20). Instead, this initial literature review contains current, seminal, and relevant research related to international schools and BMTs in the United States Table 1 provides a synopsis of the themes and subthemes found in the literature review regarding BMTs.

Table 1*Synopsis of Themes Found in the Literature Review Regarding Black Male Teachers*

Main themes	Subthemes	Citations
Black male teachers' experiences once hired	Black male teachers as tokens	Bristol, 2018
	Black male teachers stereotyped/marginalized	Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Brockenbrough, 2015; Brown, 2012; Brown, 2012; Brown et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2020; Pabon, 2016; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015
	Social Dynamics/ interactions with white colleagues	Bristol & Goings, 2019; Bristol & Shirrell, 2019
Black males' experiences toward becoming a teacher	Employment discrimination	D'amico et al., 2017
	Obstacles for Black males to become teachers	Petchauer et al., 2018; Quiocho & Rios, n.d.; Rogers-Ard et al., 2013;
	Black male preservice teachers' experiences	Walker et al., 2019
	Effect of low Black teacher numbers on Black students	Goings & Bianco, 2016
The absence of Black male teachers	Black males' motivation to become teachers	Strachan, 2020; Wallace & Gagen, 2020
	The role teacher race has on Black students and its resulting proliferation of a lack of Black male teachers	Bryan, 2017; Cross, 2003
	The importance of increasing the number of Black male teachers	Goldhaber et al., 2019; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Jones et al., 2019; Milton-Williams & Bryan, 2021; Williams et al., 2020
	Why Black male teachers have low representation	King, 2020; Madkins, 2011
	Increasing the number of Black teachers	Gist, 2018; Jones et al., 2019; Lau et al., 2021; Pabon et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2004
	History of Black males as educators	Fairclough, 2004; Fultz, 2004; Tillman, 2004
	Black male teacher retention	Ingersoll et al., 2019

Literature Review: Black Male Teachers in the U.S.

Several words and concepts have provided an understanding of the lack of BMTs in K–12 educational settings, including racial discrimination, teacher candidate selection, and teacher demographics. These research areas relate directly to Black males' involvement in the U.S. educational system, as students, through teacher training, and as teachers and educational administrators. This section presents these key concepts and their impact on Black male teacher numbers in the U.S.

Racial Discrimination

The core beginnings of racial discrimination towards Black people are not new. Rather, Black American's issues with justice and fair treatment has been a struggle from the first day African Americans stepped foot on U.S. soil. Over hundreds of years, antebellum slavery and laws enabled the domination and authority of Whites to preside over Blacks in all aspects of life. Much has changed, such as the end of The Jim Crow era, which began to slowly unravel in 1950 with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Sweat v. Painter* favoring more equitable rights for graduate students, regardless of race. In the past and present, and throughout much of the history of the United States, many Black Americans have and still are having to deal with the unequal treatment they receive from White Americans. And this unequal treatment, although at times subtle and implicit, can also be found as Black people work in the American public school system.

Deficit perspectives from the White majority present Black students as underperforming and deficient in knowledge, behavior, and language (Holcomb-McCoy, 2017; Paris & Alim, 2017). Over the last 30 years, studies have shown Blacks as having lower achievement than their White counterparts (Rogers-Ard et al., 2013). It cannot help that schools made up of a majority

of Black students receive less financial support than schools with White majority students. According to Lafortune, Rothstein, and Schanzenbach (2018), disparities in funding between wealthy and poor districts contribute significantly to achievement gaps between Black and White students (p. 3). And as a result of poor academic achievement, many Blacks fail to rise in the social order of American society.

Some Black individuals succeed in entering the hegemonic society in White America. Culturally sustaining and relevant pedagogical theories indicate that Black students' culture contributes to their resiliency to difficulties and barriers to success in the educational system. Additionally, having Black teachers increases test scores among minority students (Bristol & Mentor, 2018) and awareness of racist practices (Rogers-Ard et al., 2013).

Recruitment of Prospective Black Male Teachers

Higher education institution and other organization leaders could encourage minority students to become teachers before entering 4-year universities through on-campus summer programs for middle and high school students (Wallace & Gagen, 2020). Young Black male students should be encouraged to enter the teaching profession and learn about the profession's intrinsic, extrinsic, or altruistic benefits (Strachan, 2020). Black male higher education students should learn about the teaching profession, especially those in 4-year programs with undecided majors. The most effective way to recruit more Black teachers is to motivate young Black students to pursue teaching as a career (Goings & Bianco, 2016).

Some school leaders working to hire more Black teachers struggle to locate qualified recruits. Mentoring Black teaching assistants (TAs) in teacher preparation programs and helping students achieve certification could help produce qualified BMTs. School district leaders could assist their TAs' professional development through educational stipends, information sessions on

teacher certification, and close ties with local universities. School leaders could use such strategies to help TAs transition from taking part-time classes to completing their teacher preparation programs or education degrees. The goal is for school leaders to hire the TAs as teachers because they have worked at the school and developed meaningful student and staff relationships (Williams et al., 2020). This process is urgent and requires significant investment into staff; however, it would address a low minority applicant pool and a lack of qualifications.

Another recruitment strategy for Black teachers is to train Black men who want to switch careers. This segment of potential recruits consists of Black men who have worked in another profession but decided to begin teaching. Alternate teacher pathway programs could be a way to recruit Black men with bachelor's degrees who need teacher training and certification (Madkins, 2011); however, the strategy requires local, state, and federal support.

Leaders of colleges and universities with teacher education programs should proactively pursue minority students before and after they enter the university (Bryan, 2017). The earlier 4-year institutions support BMT retention in education programs, the better the outcomes (Wallace & Gagen, 2020). According to Wallace and Gagen (2020), preservice teacher programs could provide summer classes for minority teacher preparation program students needing extra preparation for courses on the licensure exam. Students who study in the same field and live together (e.g., in dormitories) can motivate each other to achieve their goals. Providing mentors to post-service (Pabon, 2016) and pre-service Black teachers is another form of social support (Bristol & Goings, 2019; Pabon et al., 2011). Rowan University's Project IMPACT (Increasing Male Practitioners and Classroom Teachers) is a good example. Social support is an effective means of retaining minority teachers (Lau et al., 2021).

Teacher Education and Teacher Credential Programs

Teachers can only enter the classroom with their experiences impacting how they perceive the content (Nieto, 2003, as cited in Milton-Williams & Bryan, 2021). Instead, they unintentionally bring their views and biases into the classroom (Enciso, 2007; Nasir & Hand, 2006, as cited in Milton-Williams & Bryan, 2021). Therefore, preservice teachers should learn the importance of acknowledging their beliefs and experiences and those of their students. In recognizing their biases, preservice teachers can learn to appreciate their views while understanding that different viewpoints are valuable. With diverse views, other staff and leaders can accept and appreciate how BMTs implement the curriculum. Preservice teachers in the White majority could benefit from having ample time in the classroom to consider their positions in life and understand White privilege (Bristol & Goings, 2019).

BMTs might experience psychological stress while working as teachers in any educational setting. For example, a Black teacher could feel highly visible and uncomfortable because there are few or no other teachers who look like them thus creating feelings of despair and mental stress. (Pabon et al., 201). One tactic is to prepare Black male preservice teachers for stressful experiences by teaching them coping mechanisms (Brown, 2012; Haddox, 2010, as cited in Bristol & Goings, 2019).

The discriminatory practices against many Black males in public schools could adversely impact the goal of increasing BMTs. Black boys are disproportionately disciplined compared to White students. Black male students can close the achievement gap and learn by being inside the classroom (Bryan, 2017). Black male students learn more when not exposed to racial discrimination (Scott & Rodriguez, 2015). Often, White teachers oversee discipline and administer it discriminately. Therefore, preservice teacher programs should provide classes on

how White teachers and all teachers could better understand Black students' needs and learn to address their behaviors by listening and working toward understanding their perspectives (Bryan, 2017). Keeping Black male students inside the classroom and helping them have more positive experiences in public education could enable them to become BMTs.

Teacher Candidate Selection

Each state is responsible for determining the requirements of teacher licensure programs policies and requirements, and they differ respectively. Still, a commonality is testing for prospective teachers to show their professional knowledge. However, in some states, the testing process appears biased against minorities. Scholars have criticized standardized testing in all forms (Petchauer et al., 2018). Dating to the 1980s, during the height of the Competencies Movement, many academics accurately predicted that licensure exams, such as the Praxis, would hinder Black students' entrance into preservice teacher programs.

For many racial minorities, certification assessments cause nervousness and mental stress due to the inability to pass certain parts of the test. Minorities might struggle with certification assessment not because they lack the prerequisite knowledge but because of issues with the tests' rationality, validity, and reasonability (Petchauer et al., 2018). Many minority students who take these teacher examinations find it difficult to use their prior knowledge and experiences as catalysts to interact with questions because many of them were formulated without them in mind. There have also been issues with test standards in certain states, such as South Carolina. Testing standards could lead to screening out higher percentages of Black test-takers than their White counterparts (Petchauer et al., 2018). Issues with testing are barriers to many Blacks seeking to become educators.

Another cause for concern preventing Black people from entering the profession is the lack of resources at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and minority-serving institutions (MSIs). HBCUs and MSIs produce a disproportionate number of trained Black educators (Petchauer et al., 2018). HBCUs and MSIs are comparatively small institutions and lack the resources to educate teachers in the same ways as larger White-majority schools. Outside of HBCUs, in more mainstream institutions, many minority student-teachers drop out of their undergraduate courses due to feeling overwhelmed by the “incredible Whiteness of their teacher educators” (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 152).

In many states, the educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA), a relatively new teacher assessment system, requires access to materials and financial resources that smaller schools, such as HBCUs, do not have. Completing and passing the edTPA requires access to doctoral student mentors and specific technical offices. Many small schools lack access to the resources that many larger schools have (Petchauer et al., 2018). Therefore, some preservice Black teachers may find the path to the profession challenging to reach.

edTPA has rigid principles for teaching students about social justice, a concern for teachers wishing to teach through a decolonized paradigm. One of the ways this is done is by empowering students from all backgrounds through instruction that honors the diversity of languages and their different dialects (Paris & Alim, 2017). Teachers with a culturally sustaining pedagogical mindset often feel conflicted when taking the edTPA. Preservice teachers have complained that edTPA often restricts their ability to insert topics to help students think about justice and equity. As a result, the perpetuation of Eurocentric history in the U.S. education system continues (Petchauer et al., 2018).

Biased test assessment protocols and a lack of educational resources hinder Black preservice teachers. However, Black preservice teachers face additional challenges after becoming certified educators in their respective states. Black teachers often return to or work in their local communities; however, school leaders might hire recruitment companies and bring in teachers from outside of their schools and Black prospective teachers' localities, resulting in few local Black teachers hired (Rogers-Ard et al., 2013). Additionally, some recruitment professionals gravitate toward hires with more White-sounding names than Black-sounding names. Academic leaders also make racial assumptions about candidates based on their names (D'amico et al., 2017). Therefore, bias negatively impacts Black teachers' opportunities to get hired at schools.

There are also issues with peer similarity preferences when hiring for jobs. Those who oversee hiring are prone to gravitate toward candidates with similar ethnic backgrounds. As a result, the teaching profession remains disproportionately staffed with White teachers and administrators; therefore, perpetually, most new teachers tend to have the same majority ethnicity (Neckerman & Kirschenman, 1991; Shih, 2002). Peer similarity is a critical issue and threat to equity and equality in education.

Most teacher educators in higher education are White and female. White female teachers, however, might struggle to teach culturally sustaining pedagogies due to a limited cultural understanding (Paris & Alim, 2017). Additionally, the overwhelming majority of White female teacher educators could contribute to racial inequality. Minority pre-service teachers have complained about the lack of student-centered teaching methods and a link between pedagogical content and the communities where they will teach (Bjork & Epstein, 2016; Chiu, 2014; Petchauer et al., 2018; Soslau, 2015). Additionally, minority teacher candidates often have

financial burdens when paying for teacher training, causing additional stress (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Petchauer et al., 2018).

Black Male Teachers Experiences

According to prior research, black male teachers have been perceived as either overqualified or incompetent, presenting a difficult challenge in working alongside white teachers (Bristol & Goings, 2019). Furthermore, many black male teachers have reported feeling like outsiders within their educational organizations and may attempt to alleviate this by making a purposeful effort to interact with white colleagues.

Subsequently, the professional climate of a school is a crucial element in how staff understands how to interact with each other, especially for those who are minorities. As a result, recent research emphasizes the importance of diversifying the educator workforce, lessening the impact of marginalization that many black male teachers and other minorities who often feel like outsiders in their educational organization's group (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019). This feeling of isolation can be mitigated by increasing the number of minority teachers, which would amplify their collective voices, improve their social capital, and better sustain the school's cultural climate. In addition, school leaders need to focus on the characteristics of the racial identity of their staff and how it influences their position in school networks to enact change (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019).

Stereotypical Roles of Black Male Teachers

School leaders might perceive BMTs as *imposing* individuals and the only ones who can control and subdue Black male students (Brown, 2012). Thus, many BMTs face the implicit and sometimes explicit role of using their gender and race to guide and discipline Black boys. BMTs who accept this disciplinarian role to appease those in school leadership positions often find

themselves in role entrapment, essentially stuck in the role regardless of a future change of heart. Kelly, 2007. BMTs considered to be ineffective disciplinarians might be perceived as ineffective teachers. However, this microscopic view of BMTs' capabilities is limiting and harmful. Labeling Black male students as needing discipline can harm their psyche, and identifying BMTs as a force to subdue these students could prevent meaningful connections between BMTs and their students.

Black males have varying understandings and experiences, and BMTs could have different ways of dealing with or disciplining students. But Common perceptions of Black teachers often categorized as disciplinarians are troubling. BMTs can connect with minority students in ways that majority teachers cannot (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). For example, Cherng and Halpin (2016) found that White students viewed minority teachers in urban school areas favorably. They stated, "Latino and Black teachers are more multiculturally aware" (p. 416), enabling a better classroom ecosystem for student learning.

Imposter Syndrome

Sharma (2020) described imposter syndrome as feeling unsuitable or estranged from a social group. In turn, they begin to question their qualifications and abilities, the same compilation of experience and education common amongst members in their respective professional field. Minorities frequently experience imposter syndrome due to a learned yet baseless understanding that they are socially inferior. In not seeing themselves represented in the workplace, individuals in the minority might feel inferior. For example, black international educators often find themselves underrepresented among other international educators, regardless of gender. Although not all BMTs experience imposter syndrome, many have detected passive-aggressive instances of their White majority staff members blocking from

specific professional opportunities and performing actions that indicate to them when they do not adhere to what is deemed appropriate. Examples in an international school context could include preventing BMTs from promotions by hiring new staff for the position instead. Other examples may include bringing in new staff to take over a curriculum already requested by a minority member but one who may have not had the training or experience. Instead of training the staff member internally, an excuse can be made that decision was based on experience.

Retention of Black Male and Other Minority Teachers

Social support, particularly mentorships, is critical for BMTs in public schools (Bristol, 2018; Grissom & Keiser, 2011; Sandles, 2020). Minority teachers leave the profession at higher rates than nonminority teachers, primarily due to dissatisfaction with job requirements (Ingersoll et al., 2019; King, 2020). BMTs often leave their positions because of a need for more organizational structure at their schools (Ingersoll et al., 2019). Therefore, school administrators should allow BMTs to network professionally among other Black teachers in the school and throughout the district (Milton-Williams & Bryan, 2021).

In addition to socially supporting minority teachers, educational leaders should also strive to create nondiscriminatory work environments (Sandles, 2020), fair and equal advancement opportunities for teachers (Lau et al., 2021), and culturally relevant curricula and professional development (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019). Consequently, leaders can focus on developing a culture without stereotypes (Sandles, 2020). Also, administrators should be ready to mediate teacher disagreements on topics such as replacing older curriculums with newer ones (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019).

BMTs in urban school districts have lamented their unofficial roles as disciplinarians (Brockenbrough, 2015; Bristol & Mentor, 2018). Often, BMTs are responsible for controlling

young Black boys because of the stereotype that Black men are the only ones who can control these students. This discriminatory role negatively impacts Black male students, whom teachers and administrators view as needing to be controlled.

State and Federal Educational Policies

As initiatives to support BMTs in public schools continue, it is essential to assess recruitment plans. School leaders should focus their recruitment efforts on bringing in more Black teachers to control unruly Black students. Instead, they should recruit with the message that all students, regardless of race and ethnicity, benefit from having more BMTs (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). Recruitment efforts should show how staff also benefit from more BMTs in schools. Feeling alone is a significant psychological stress for BMTs. School leaders could retain successful BMTs and reduce stress by hiring more Black teachers (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019).

There is a need to improve preservice teacher preparation programs with diverse curricula, so all teachers can work in urban settings. Students and teachers could benefit from diverse curricula. Many potential BMTs leave preservice teacher preparation programs unprepared to teach urban and diverse youth meaningfully (Pabon, 2016; Pabon et al., 2011). State teacher qualification programs should focus on what students from diverse or urban backgrounds need to succeed academically via community and city partnerships and local- and state-level endorsement groups (Rogers-Ard et al., 2013).

State and federal-backed student loan forgiveness for Black men working toward becoming teachers could incentivize Black men to become and remain teachers (Sandles, 2020). Such an incentive could provide support for minorities in paying for higher education. Bonuses and higher salaries are also ways to attract more Black men to teach.

School leaders contribute to BMTs' reasons for working in a school setting. School leaders can mitigate BMTs' feelings of estrangement from their peers by promoting a culturally responsive understanding (Bristol, 2018; Walker et al., 2019) and providing BMTs with a broader range of roles (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). Providing BMTs the space and opportunity to increase their leadership in schools is a way to retain more BMTs and enable them to flourish outside of predetermined roles (Brown, 2012).

School administrators could administer surveys so teachers can report their experiences with racial discrimination and other workplace concerns. In addition, surveys can provide data-supported evidence for improving hiring practices and bolstering Black teacher numbers (Bristol, 2018). Ultimately, Black teachers need assistance, from recruitment to the classroom, to attain sought-after positions and teach with maximum effectiveness (Bristol & Goings, 2019).

Left unaddressed, race-based hiring practices will continue to result in a low representation of diverse teachers meant to teach a diverse student body. Student welfare increases when students have role models who look like them (Dee, 2004; Madkins, 2011; Villegas & Irvine, 2010, as cited in D'amico et al., 2017). Furthermore, as increasing numbers of White teachers retire over the next decade, school leaders will need to hire at least 300,000 Black teachers to "close the education gap" (Wallace & Gagen, 2020, p. 417). However, between 2009 and 2018, the number of Black teachers (male and female) decreased by 2% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Therefore, concentrated efforts will be needed to increase the BMT population, not only for racial parity (Brown et al., 2018) but also for teacher preparation content that mirrors teachers' race and ethnicity (Gist, 2017, as cited in Bristol & Goings, 2019).

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) indicates that Black Americans face racism daily in every aspect of life (Delgado, 1995, as cited in Rogers-Ard et al., 2013). Tatum (1997, as cited in Rogers-Ard et al., 2013) summed up CRT by stating, “Racism is like smog in the air. Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it in” (p. 4). CRT suggests that racial discrimination impacts Black Americans’ jobs and careers. No matter the job, Black Americans confront and navigate “intentional barriers” (Brown et al., 2018, p. 468) to succeed. CRT also indicates that changes do not occur in the United States unless White society benefits (Bell, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1999, as cited in Rogers-Ard et al., 2013). Therefore, white teachers and society should learn about and acknowledge the negative racist practices inherent in American society, many of which they attain a collective advantage from (Cross, 2003).

CRT is invaluable for understanding how racist ideologies affect all Americans, regardless of race. From childhood, White Americans grew up interacting in a systematically oppressive society, whether they knew it or not (Boutte, 2015; Harro, 2010; Matias, 2013, as cited in Bryan, 2017). Well-meaning White teachers might unconsciously allow discriminatory understandings to imbue their teaching practices (Cross, 2003). Systematic racial oppression occurs in every major U.S. institution, including homes, churches, and schools. These institutions indicate the least and most respected in society based on race (Harro, 2010; Miller, 2015; Nash & Miller, 2015, as cited in Bryan, 2017).

Synthesis of Key Concepts

Racial discrimination, teacher candidate selection, critical race theory, and sociopolitical context directly relate to Black male involvement in the educational system, from K–12 students

to prospective teachers and administrators. Each facet is linked and shows a chronological history of why BMTs comprise only 2% of teachers in K–12 educational environments. Teaching was the most common profession for Blacks after the Civil War, (Sandles, 2020); however, views have changed. In the 21st century, oppressive laws contributed to the lack of BMTs. Teaching was a respectable career for Black men in Black communities before school integration (Gordon, 2000). W. E. B. Du Bois (1973) predicted Black teachers would decrease in the profession after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision to integrate schools. This became a reality for many Black teachers who held jobs in Black schools, as they were often unwelcome in majority-White schools (Sandles, 2020).

Many preservice teacher programs and school district leaders have not made meaningful efforts to increase Black preservice or certified teacher recruitment (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Bryan & Ford, 2014; Sleeter & Milner, 2011, as cited in Bryan, 2017). CRT suggests that despite evidence of the benefits of a more diverse teacher body, the majority-White population remains in place because they do not see a need to change. Due to implicit cultural bias, the dominant White society has no vested interest in increasing Black teachers or adjusting preservice teacher assessments such as the Praxis I (Bryan, 2017). Further, many questions on teacher assessments are written from a White middle-class mindset.

There are few Black teachers, particularly BMTs, in schools. The Black teacher population, male and female, in U.S. K–12 educational environments is less than 10% (Bryan, 2017), and BMTs comprise 2% of teachers. Minority students, even those who are not Black, view Black teachers favorably. Additionally, Black teachers administer less punitive discipline to Black students than their White counterparts and improve Black students' educational and social

outcomes (Jackson & Kohli, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Milner, 2010; Sleeter & Milner, 2011).

The BMT population remains small, and U.S. society could benefit from positive Black male role models. Without BMTs, White students grow up without seeing Black men in positions of power in their communities. As a result, White children may never learn to respect Black men as deserving of professional careers, or at the very least, as being an educator.

Literature Review: Understanding the Contexts of International Schools

This second literature review category focuses on BMTs in international education. There is a need to study international school leaders, the non-Western cultures with which they interact (Fisher, 2021), and minority foreign staff experiences in international schools (Dos Santos, 2020). Additionally, school data from groups such as ISC Research and International School Services indicate the need to increase staff diversity in international schools. The experiences of Black male teachers in international schools in East and Southeast Asia have remained a largely unexplored territory in academic literature.

This study recognizes the need to shed light on their experiences in a complex and niche educational industry. Some of these contexts need exploration as they directly affect the experiences of Black male teachers. This literature review examines the literature on the state of the international school industry as a business, its hiring practices, retention rates, and more. Furthermore, international schools present unique challenges, such as the transient nature of foreign teachers and teacher leaders and the often-unfulfilled promises of human diversity. Through exploring these themes, this review provides the necessary context for understanding the experiences of Black male teachers in international schools in East and Southeast Asia. Table

2 presents the main topics and subtopics of peer-reviewed journals focusing on this dissertation’s problem of practice.

Table 2

Synopsis of Literature Review Themes with Implications for BMTs in International Schools

Main themes	Subthemes	Citations
International school culture	Global citizenship	Bates, 2012; Mansilla & Wilson, 2020; Savva, 2013; Ganley et al., 2019
	International school identity	Bunnell et al., 2016
International schools as a business		D’amico et al., 2017
Hiring and retention	Employee discrimination	Ruecker & Ives, 2015
	Teacher retention and turnover	Bunnell & Poole, 2021; Chandler, 2010; Dos Santos, 2020; Mancuso, 2010; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Yang et al., 2018
Leadership		Calnin et al., 2018; Fisher, 2021; Gardner-McTaggart, 2018
	Lack of diverse staff/ leadership.	Shaklee et al., 2019; Slough-Kuss, 2014
International school curriculum		Culross & Tarver, 2011; Hughes, 2009
Stakeholder perceptions	Host country nationals	Bailey, 2015; Dunne & Edwards, 2010
	Teacher perceptions	Hayden et al., 2000; Hayden & Thompson, 1998; Ospina & Medina, 2020
	Teacher identity	Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Bunnell et al., 2020; Poole, 2020; Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021; Spencer, 2021; Rey et al., 2020
	Student perceptions	Hayden et al., 2000

History of International Schools

Over the last 30 years, Western educators worldwide have moved to foreign host countries to become international educators. An international school must have a non-native

curriculum and contain native and non-native students (Haydon & Thompson, as cited in Machin, 2017). This study used ISC Research's definition of an international school: "An 'international school' is one which self-declares as such [and is] operating wholly or partially in English" (Machin, 2017, p. 133). This study included self-identified international schools with educational operations at least partially in English and a portion of foreign teachers with teacher certification from their native countries.

International schools have been the learning places for foreign diplomats, businesspeople, and other expatriate professionals who brought their children overseas (Pollock et al., 2017), with many established to fulfill these individuals' needs. Although international schools remain inclusively branded, seemingly opening its door to any potential stakeholder, exclusivity is a marketing tool for recruiting students from wealthier and more cosmopolitan families (Gardner-McTaggart, 2018). In addition, many international schools are elite institutions for native students, known as host nationals. The population of host nationals has increased over the past few decades, with continued increase predicted.

Regardless of whether students were born in the country they go to schools in, or they come from abroad, international schools are thriving. Asia, particularly East, and Southeast Asia, has had robust growth in international schools. South Korea, China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, and Singapore eagerly pursue international schools. Singapore, as an example, known throughout Asia and worldwide for its rigorous education system, has significantly increased the number of international schools relatively quickly. International schools in South and Southeast Asia contain international students and a significant percentage of native students whose middle- to upper-class parents view an international curriculum as a means of acquiring a Western education, a status symbol, and an indicator that price is not a deterrent to education (Machin,

2017). The higher the international school tuition, the more inclined parents are to send their children.

Growth of International Schools

The growth of international schools has been nothing less than outstanding. According to ISC Research, the number of international schools worldwide has more than doubled by 52%, with 8,700 international schools in operation in January of 2013 to 13,190 in 2023 (2023). This phenomenal growth in the industry has been driven by the demands of a rising (upper) middle class, particularly in Asia. Over a five-year span, the number of international school students in Eastern Asian countries rose from 556,400 to 658,800 from January 2008 to January 2023 alone (ISC Research, 2023). All sub-regions of Asia combined makeup 57% of all international schools worldwide, along with 64% of all international school students. (ISC Research, 2023).

As in any industry, the competitiveness for entrance into international school communities rings true, particularly when there is a large amount of monetary involvement. Tuition fees for international schools, particularly in East and Southeast Asia, vary greatly. Still, many parents are keen to pay fees that reach the far end of the tuition spectrum. Still, parents have options for fee payment because of this, so essentially, this is a benefit for international schools that are newer, less expensive, and less prestigious than the more established ones. Essentially, “where there’s affordability, there is high demand,” and parents are the ones who decide this.

Although the continued growth of international schools cannot be certain, the number of stakeholders connected to the industry is no longer the parents, students, and staff. More specifically, “Many International Schools are now heavily backed by an array of support agencies, ranging from lawyers and trade/export officials to recruitment firms and

marketing/branding people, involving a sophisticated and complex set of inter-linked interests” (Bunnell, p. 47. 2022). Subsequently, because of the influential involvement whose interests would benefit from the continued growth and success of international schools in their respective regions, it is likely that the development of international schools will continue.

International School Teacher Recruitment

International schools in Asia and worldwide can have international in their names, regardless of curricula or teacher quality. However, there are significant differences in the education first-rate international schools offer. Top schools have International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) curricula and the prestige and financial means to attract highly qualified teachers from around the globe who tend to be Western-educated and White. ISC Research, a leading international school data-gathering group, “don’t collect data on racial and ethnographic information” (S. Nandlal, personal communication, September 10th, 2021). However, faculty directories suggest that the most sought-after international schools have mostly White teachers. Many people in Asian countries value white skin because they believe it represents what university students look like in Western countries. “In turn, educators who can role model access to these Anglo-American institutions are likely to be sought after” (Bunnell & Atkinson 2020, p. 263). The result is discriminatory hiring practices for international school leadership and staff.

International School Culture as Catalyst for Social Change

International schools provide a unique pedagogical opportunity that brings students and staff from different parts of the world together to learn from each other. The first international school advocates valued world peace and social equality (Haywood, 2017). By their composition, international schools can be a training ground for increasing empathy and tolerance

for differences and for analyzing assumptions and prejudices through a critical lens. (Walker, 2006). Many international schools have the tools needed to promote social change; however, it should prove challenging to achieve these ideals until they create a culture promoting its implementation. Mason (2007, as cited in Sahling and De Carvalho, 2021) stated, “Culture influences people as much as [people] shape culture” (p. 34).

Diversity and Global Citizenship

Diverse groups working together to solve a problem are likely to disagree; however, disagreements can result in new understandings and tactics. Research supports the idea that there is a need for increasing international school faculty diversity, suggesting hiring more international teachers outside of Western countries or increasing diversity in international school administrative positions (Shaklee et al., 2019; Slough-Kuss, 2014). The implication seems fitting since the majority of international schools in some way promote cosmopolitan core values on their websites. Moreover, it is essential to note the underrepresentation of BMTs is not just an issue in international schools but also in the United States, where it has been recognized as a civil rights concern (Ingersoll & May, 2011, as cited in Sandles, 2020). But this potentially missed indictment for international schools is difficult to prove as there is limited research on hiring foreign international school teachers who are minorities, with no data that was found that specifically showed international school hiring practices based on the race of their foreign staff.

Numerous educational studies have focused on the reasons for low BMT representation and the urgent need to increase Black male presence in the teaching ranks. The reasons for low BMT numbers include racial bias against Black men when they were students (Bell, 1998; Gilliam et al., 2002; Holcomb-McCoy, 2017, as cited in Wallace & Gagen, 2020; Paris & Alim, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1999, as cited in Rogers-Ard et al., 2013), biased teacher certification

testing practices (Bell, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1999, as cited in Rogers-Ard et al., 2013; Petchauer et al., 2018), financial burdens (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Luna, 2016, as cited in Petchauer et al., 2018), and biased hiring practices (D'amico et al., 2017; Rogers-Ard et al., 2013).

Additionally, many BMTs must perform their duties as pedagogists with a lack of quality educational resources and culturally relevant curricula (Bjork & Epstein, 2016; Chiu, 2014; Coloma, 2015, as cited in Petchauer et al., 2018; Ingersoll et al., 2019; Pabon, 2016; Soslau, 2015) while facing racial discrimination (Bristol & Goings, 2019). Racial discrimination includes stereotypes (Kelly, 2007) stereotype threats as the “security guard” or “purveyor of pop culture,” one seen as being in the know of what’s trendy, removing the dignity of their actual title (Walker et al., 2019, p. 2), as well as microaggressions from White teachers (Scott & Rodriguez, 2015).

Ironically, many international schools aim for students and families to leave school with a global mindset since many of them, at least in East and Southeast Asia consist of a majority White foreign staff. Still, although global citizenship is technically impossible (Machin, 2017), the word *global* is a calling card that suggests acceptance indicating a progressive educational community. But even assuming positive intent, that every international school is working towards teaching and learning that aims to purposefully create learning cultures for students that prepare them to be able to move through the world while treating and working with others fairly and equitably, the word global citizenship, like the word international school, has no one definition that is followed (Clark & Savage, 2017). As a result, the terms diversity and global citizenship can be modified organically and with local regions and cultures in mind. Even so, the underlying issue is that many international schools’ staff is not representative of citizens from

around the globe, often representing select White western citizens from *specific* parts of the globe.

International School Leadership and Foreign Staff Retention

International schools are case studies of the best practices for directing and motivating staff from different backgrounds. Scholars have framed most international school leadership research with a Western perspective (Calnin et al., 2018). A survey from the Diversity Collaborative, a division of International School Services, found a preference for hiring White men as the most competent candidates for international school leadership positions (Shaklee et al., 2019). White Westerners hold the most international school leadership positions; therefore, it is critical to communicate with staff of different cultures in different ways to maximize any diverse organization (Fisher, 2021).

There is a need for more research on foreign staff retention in international schools (Dos Santos, 2019). There is research, but it is scant as new understandings emerge and recent trends become adapted, the reasons why a foreign staff member may stay at an international school or move on to a new one may be affected. Still, research from 2011 has shown that the tenure for an international school head or principal is 3.5 years (Benson, 2011), and 50% of international school teachers leave their schools in under 3 years (Hardman, 2001).

Those foreign staff teachers and administrators who decide to make a career or spend a longer amount of time working in international schools come to learn that some international schools of less repute in less popular countries can serve as a way to gain international educator experience before moving on to countries notable for having more prominent international schools, location or both. For context, one study with international school teachers as participants found that the importance of their locations was “5.34 on a seven-point scale, from 1 (*not*

important) to 7 (*very important*), suggesting that location was important to most applicants in making their job application” (Chandler, 2010, p. 220)

Additionally, research conducted by Yang et al. identified that staff relationships with their respective leadership teams can impact foreign staff retention in international schools (2018). Workplace environment, pay, and the demands of particular positions can also impact an international school teacher’s decision to stay or leave the school (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009, as cited in Burke, 2017).

Racism in International Schools

Racism and its presence in international schools is challenging for many organization leaders and members to discuss and address meaningfully. Although international schools might appear unlikely places for racism, racism’s unexpectedness facilitates its presence (Bunnell & Atkinson, 2020). International schools promote the idea that the West equals success, including the race and gender of those who have historically represented the West. Additionally, some Black teachers working in international schools feel demoralized and discriminated against by parents and staff (Dos Santos, 2020).

Synthesis of key concepts

The literature review of both categories covered many issues BMTs continue to face because of their race and minority positions while working in either educational setting. White educators often interpret Black students’ behaviors as lazy and rebellious, viewing them through a deficit lens (Kennedy & Soutullo, 2018). Despite a lower overall population nationally in the U.S., K–12 educators suspend Black students at much higher rates than White students. Additionally, school leaders might expect the few BMTs to discipline Black boys. Instead, black

students grow up understanding that they are difficult and unruly, with the negative messages embedded in their psyches becoming a reality over time.

Black male students who overcome educational system inequalities and work toward becoming teachers encounter numerous barriers to success. Many Black male higher education students seeking teacher certification are in classes where they feel disrespected and misinterpreted. Financial struggles are another barrier to obtaining the best learning experience. Additionally, BMTs sitting for teacher examinations often face biased testing. BMTs who overcome these barriers struggle to find positions outside of inner-city communities, and even those jobs are scarce because of discriminatory hiring processes. School district leaders might overlook teachers with Black-sounding names and hire those who align with their backgrounds or experiences, which are often White and middle-class.

Black teachers face the significant task of increasing test scores for the Black student population; if students do not score as expected, Black teachers receive the blame. Furthermore, if student achievement does not increase, teachers might leave their positions due to insufficient resources to address the educational goals (Ingersoll et al., 2019; Pabon, 2016).

These interconnected issues suggest that the lack of BMTs in K–12 education is firmly set and will be a challenging problem to resolve. Indeed, BMTs in U.S. K–12 schools face racial discrimination and “boundary-heightening experiences,” purposeful exploits undertaken by non-minority colleagues that cause them to be alienated from those in the racial (Bristol & Goings, 2019). BMTs experience significant stress from teaching in an environment where they are the only ones of their race (Bristol & Mentor, 2018); therefore, addressing the discriminatory ideologies and practices undergirding the problem is critical. The small BMT population in U.S.

K–12 education could have significant consequences for current and future generations (Sandles, 2020).

The socio-historical and cultural contexts, respectively, in which BMTs grew up, are essential to understand why their experiences in international schools need to be examined. Not only have they transplanted themselves, but also, the majority racial ratio of educators in the U.S. has as well. And in this case, we have a unique situation in which the phenomenon of egregiously low and disparate Black male numbers in the U.S. are similar in international schools in East and southeast Asia, and their colleagues are as well.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This study focused on the experiences of BMTs with U.S. nationality in international schools in East and Southeast Asia. The goal was to record narratives of the BMTs' experiences to inform future hiring practices as well as workplace environments based on employees' journey to reach teaching positions in regional international schools. The narrative method was employed through a practitioner-based approach to categorize and then interpret themes gleaned from the participants. The research goal was not to prioritize qualitative reliability. Instead, it aimed to collect data in a unique and complex real-life environment, which would be challenging to reproduce (Heikkinen et al., 2016). Moreover, this researcher's goal was never meant to offer a new theory but rather to examine how to improve the conditions of a specific group of people in a specific context.

Although a theoretical framework was used as a lens to understand research findings, it was not primarily used as an analytical tool. Instead, its primary function was to construct an investigation and plan of action that was worthy of research (Lederman & Lederman, 2015).

The cohesive and integrated representation of the participants' experiences was derived from the themes that surfaced from the narrative interviews, based on the compiled data. As observed by Rodríguez-Dorans and Jacobs, narratives "can feed from and into each other" and are useful in addressing various research questions (2020, p. 612).

Locating Participants

After gaining the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the study (see Appendix A), the researcher performed a Google search for international schools in East and Southeast Asia. The participants whose schools had directories and email addresses were contacted through their school email. Participants whose schools had directories but no contact information were contacted via LinkedIn. Either way, first contact with all participants was a pre-written inquiry email (see Appendix B). Additionally, snowball sampling was also employed to recruit additional participants. Finally, email communication was used with the participants to transfer consent forms, schedule interviews, and to answer their questions.

Protecting Participants' Identities

All participant data was stored on a removable hard drive to which only the researcher had access. When not in use, the hard drive remained stored in a keyed safe in the researcher's home. The study did not include the participants' names or places of employment, and all participants received pseudonyms.

Inclusion Criteria

The study required Black male participants born in the United States with teaching licenses from one of the 50 U.S. states who worked or had worked in international schools. The international schools were self-identified as international, with educational operations at least

partially in English (Machin, 2017). The study did not include BMTs who were not born in the United States or did not have current teaching licenses from a U.S. state.

Participants

The six participants who engaged in interviews worked in international schools in three countries: Singapore, South Korea, China, and also the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

Data Collection Instrument

Zoom was the platform for data collection and online interviews, with all interviews recorded on Zoom and transcribed via Rev.com. The transcribed data underwent analysis with NVivo, a data analysis software program. Data categorization and inductive coding occurred to identify emerging themes. Ten preplanned, open-ended interview questions enabled the participants to tell their stories, and they could expand on or add specific topics to convey what they found important (see Appendix C). Follow-up questions were asked to steer the conversations back toward the interview question topics as needed.

CHAPTER IV

Participants' Narratives

This study focused on BMTs, a minority population in international schools. The presentation of findings includes the participants' voices and experiences. Narratives provide specific details of experiences and "thoughts, motivations, and emotions, among others, that evaluate and explain how and why events unfolded as they did" (Nelson & Fivush, 2004, as cited in Haden & Hoffman, 2013, p. 362). Like Johnston et al.'s (2021) study, the participants' stories showed the potential for change in the international school industry via their interesting and transparent descriptions of their experiences in international schools. Quotes from the

participants' natural storytelling were analyzed to arrive at the themes. Table 3 shows the participants' narrative information in five categories. Table 4 shows the similarities in the participants' credentials, teaching experience, and international experience before moving internationally.

Table 3

Five Fields of Participants' Narratives

Field 1	Field 2	Field 3	Field 4	Field 5
U.S teaching experience	Impetus for teaching internationally	How it all began	International teaching experiences	Challenges faced

Table 4*Participant Commonalities*

Participant	Years teaching internationally	Graduate degree or higher	Years taught in the U.S.	Notable international experience before teaching abroad
Austin	10	Master of Arts in Educational Leadership	<1	Taught as a substitute teacher overseas in Copenhagen, Denmark during graduate school
Cayden	4	Doctorate in Educational Leadership	11	Traveled to Burkina Faso to run a basketball clinic at the behest of an old college basketball teammate working for a non-profit. It was there that he was urged to “consider the overseas lifestyle.”
Luke	7	Master of Arts in Educational Leadership Master of Education in Educational Leadership	4	Moved back and forth between Nigeria and the U.S. as a child
Nico	8	Doctorate in Educational Leadership	6	–
Noah	4	Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruct	3	–
Waylon	16	Master of Arts in Elementary Education	6	Studied abroad in Australia during his final year of university

Austin

“Well, to be bluntly honest, I didn’t appreciate my life in the United States in terms of the opportunities available to me, particularly as [an] African American male.”

U.S Teaching Experience

Austin was a BMT who had taught in Asia since 2014. Like many teachers, he was a substitute in undergraduate and graduate school. Austin also did some substitute teaching overseas in Copenhagen, Denmark. Austin’s experiences provided invaluable tools for teaching in a professional capacity outside of a national context. Living abroad impacts various areas of a person’s personality development (Netz, 2021), such as intercultural prowess (Anderson et al., 2006; Clarke et al., 2009; Williams, 2005; Wolff & Borzikowsky, 2018) and self-efficacy (Milstein, 2005; Netz, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2018; Petersdotter et al., 2017).

Impetus For Teaching Internationally

After less than a year of teaching professionally, Austin left the United States and entered the international teaching market. In addition to professional aspirations, Austin had a personal reason for leaving the United States to teach abroad:

First of all, I saw more opportunities as an African American male to go abroad. You see the police brutality; you see how we were treated in the United States. I saw [an] opportunity out of that, and it was a smart decision financially to go overseas. And you could save a lot of money. When I was first in Kazakhstan, it was so remote that I was able to get a couple of credentials, taking my money and buying education with it. In short, being an African American male is not easy all the time in the United States. The second I saw a better financial path overseas, I took my degrees and left. Those were the two main reasons.

Austin's reasons for moving abroad aligned with mine, as moving abroad provided additional opportunities. I came to a similar conclusion in different conditions and contexts. The implication that Black men benefit from leaving the most powerful country on Earth to live in countries with less economic power for financial and career opportunities is telling.

How It All Began

Like many Western foreigners with little experience looking to teach abroad, Austin found Teach Away, an international school human resources company founded in 2003 based out of Toronto, Canada (*Helping Teachers Make the World Their Classroom*, 2022). Austin began his international teaching career in Kazakhstan, a country less known for teaching opportunities for expatriates. After two years in Kazakhstan, he moved to China to teach. China is a place to gain experience or make a career, with numerous career opportunities because of the transience of human resources [HR] professionals in international schools and the steady birth of new international schools with host nationals' desire for more international schooling options as a catalyst.

International Teaching Experiences

Austin's first school in China was a public school, not an international one. After 2 years, Austin found a job in an international school. He said,

My first experience was [that] I came into a Chinese school. The [school] had [an] international department where they had AP courses, and I taught economics. Then, I went to Beijing and, [in] the international department, I was A-level economics. Now, I'm in a full international school teaching AP economics.

Working for two years in a public school in China and his experience in Kazakhstan, Austin gained sufficient experience to apply to an international school. When asked about the hiring process, he stated,

I always put my face on [my resume] because I hear there's a rumor that if they see your face and it's not White, they don't hire you for the job. There's a rumor of that going around in Asia. So, I always put my face on my resume. If you don't want to deal with [it], [and] if that's a decision, then we have it right there. Let's get it out [of] the way.

Austin's response suggests that some schools, academic learning organizations, and hiring agencies look for potential candidates based on race. International schools are inherently regarded as institutions that uphold high ethical standards and demonstrate a commitment to fairness and transparency in their human resources systems. However, as evidenced by Austin's experience, there are instances in which these schools fall short of their purported ideals. His concerns about transparency, which seem to be rooted not in his qualifications but in his racial identity, raise questions about the extent to which international schools are able to overcome the implicit biases that can shape their hiring and employment practices.

At the time of his interview, Austin had been employed at his current international school for four years. When asked if race had a role in his experiences as an international school teacher, he said it did not; instead, the color of his passport did. Specifically, Austin believed parents wanted their students to succeed and do well in all classes, especially elite AP courses, such as those he taught. Austin said,

As long as you are bringing money into the school, you are all right. Now, if you [have a] purple [passport] and [are] bringing money to the school, no problem. But if you're a distraction to the money, you got problems. As far as what I see [regarding]

discrimination, [it] is more [focused on] the color of your passport. The parents want to see a blue passport at an international school because they want their children to be prepared to go off to the United States. If your passport is far away from blue, then you are not welcome because you're not bringing in the money. That's my experience at international schools.

In his international teaching career in East Asia, Austin found that race was not an issue, but in the U.S., it was. From his experiences teaching internationally, he has come to the conclusion that students' parents had explicitly or implicitly come to believe that teachers with blue passports (i.e., American) contributed the most to their children's success, saying,

[The students] are about business. They want to know the answer to Number 3, and if you're not talking about the answers [or] those definitions, then you're not valuable.

That's the way to go. That's my experience. I can't speak for everybody, but that's just my experience here in China.

Challenges Faced

Even though some of Austin's comments showed that he took certain precautions during the hiring practice to ensure his dignity as a Black man remained intact, he did not feel that his race was a challenge that he faced. He mentioned a few stares from national citizens outside of work, with no connection to the school that would stare at times. But he could tell that it was born more so out of an innocent curiosity. Austin did mention that it is a challenge to teach new students in his current international school that have recently transferred from public schools. He explained that he found it difficult to teach these host-country national students who were used to a less dynamic teaching style, one in which "the [host-country national] teacher stands in the front and reads the PowerPoint." Austin's quote implies that native born teachers teaching in

public schools in his host country often provide the lesson without interruption while the students take down notes. Finally, Austin also stated that another challenge was using public transportation instead of a car and missing certain foods that he could only find back home, in the U.S.

Cayden

“It was just proving myself coming in. I mean, I know I’m the first Black male here. I’m an African American.”

U.S Teaching Experience

Cayden no longer taught internationally but participated in this study because of his position and history teaching in the United States and abroad. Cayden had 11 years of teaching experience in the United States, including serving as a vice principal in a Texas high school, before moving abroad with his wife and two children. Therefore, his more than a decade of teaching and educational leadership experience provided an additional perspective to this study, as no other participant had educational leadership experience like Cayden.

Impetus For Teaching Internationally

Cayden became interested in teaching overseas due to a friend from college who lived and worked internationally. Cayden was a high-level basketball player in college and had made lasting friendships with many teammates. One teammate worked internationally for Africare, a nonprofit in Washington, DC, that provided financial support to nations worldwide. Also, an adept basketball player, Cayden’s friend was approached to teach community leaders to play basketball so they could, in turn, teach the young people. His friend declined but mentioned that he knew someone who could help.

Cayden received an invitation to Burkina Faso for two weeks to lead a basketball coaching seminar. He accepted, and this experience was the spark that led him to pursue teaching

overseas. While leading the camp, Cayden constantly heard the suggestion that he and his “wife should consider the overseas lifestyle.” After they returned home and talked with their family, his wife said, “Honey, let’s do it,” and Cayden agreed.

How It All Began

Like many international educators with teaching and educational administrative licenses, Cayden gravitated to Search Associates (SA), the leading HR company for international schools. Based in Pennsylvania, SA provides recruitment services for over 35,000 international school staff worldwide. Cayden went through the SA vetting process and began looking for positions. SA presented Cayden with several teaching positions, although he had significant leadership experience.

Although Cayden was a vice-principal for a large and well-known school in Texas, SA suggested he apply for teaching positions because he “hadn’t taught overseas” yet. This move was like a certified teacher taking a TA role overseas before moving on to a teaching position. Although Cayden took SA’s stance as an insult, he followed the organization’s advice. A week later, Cayden realized that looking for teaching positions when he had a valuable vice principal skillset needed worldwide was senseless. He contacted SA, explaining that he was an educational administrator and wanted to change his job search status to a principal or vice principal.

Upon initially interviewing with a member from Search Associates, Cayden had a video interview with the assistant principal who, at the start of the next school year, would become the school’s principal at an international school in Kuwait. The soon-to-be principal just happened to have ties to Texas, like Cayden. He felt that based on that alone, he and the principal were able to develop a connection. Cayden noted that “we were able to find a lot of commonalities with our background in Texas,” so much so that they have remained friends to this day. Cayden was

offered and accepted the position of assistant principal at an international school in Kuwait his first international school position.

International Teaching Experiences

Cayden has fond memories of the experience and noted that his son still stayed in touch with some of his friends from the school. Cayden mentioned that the international school in Kuwait had quite a few Black administrators. He explained,

I will say, from a minority standpoint, at that school we had, I was one of three assistant principals. I was the high school assistant principal, me a Black male. The middle school assistant principal [was also a] Black male. The elementary assistant principal [was a] Black female.

Still, Cayden indicated that there was no Black principal (aside from assistant titles) at the school, and that the Black faculty had reached a professional “ceiling.”

Challenges Faced

After Kuwait, Cayden became a principal at an international school in South Korea, where he experienced intense job requirements and a new culture. In Kuwait, Cayden had time to process and step back from his fast-paced life in the United States. However, he felt he had no respite as the international school’s principal in South Korea. In addition, Cayden felt the burden of his race. He said,

Me just proving myself—that was probably a challenge. It was a lot of stress because I felt like, “Well, if I mess up, they might not hire another African American again. I’m messing it up for all the Black people.”

Cayden’s response might not have been hyperbole. Many Black professionals in careers requiring years of education feel anxious about being a token member of their work cultures.

This anxiety can cause Black people to feel disenfranchised (Kanter, 1977) and left out of professional development opportunities (Bristol & Shirrell, 2019).

Indeed, Cayden felt he would present barriers to other future Black educators applying for positions at the school if he did not do a good job. Cayden felt like he was “carrying the whole culture” on his back.

Another challenge Cayden faced was how the work affected his physical health. As a college athlete, he was used to the routine and discipline needed to stay in good shape. However, Cayden dealt with “multiple 90-hour weeks, multiple 80-hour weeks, [and] 70-hour weeks” as the international school’s principal. The workload adversely affected his health, leading him to resign, leave his international school career, and relocate himself and his family back to the United States.

Luke

“I always, I guess, looked at the world [through] a nontraditional American/ nontraditional Black American lens.”

U.S Teaching Experience

Luke taught at high schools in the Northeastern United States before moving abroad. He taught in the United States for 4 years and was certified to referee high school varsity soccer, baseball, softball, and basketball.

Impetus For Teaching Internationally

Luke was born in New Jersey, where his father, a reporter for an intergovernmental organization, was stationed. After his father completed the contract, Luke moved to Nigeria, his parents’ home country. Luke returned to the United States in seventh grade, entering the U.S. educational system for the first time. He stayed in the country, completed college, obtained a

teaching license, and became a New Jersey high school teacher. However, teaching was different from his expectations. Luke explained,

Some of the reasons for that was just some of the bureaucracy with public schools in the United States and some of [it was] the inherent limitations that, despite your best intentions and the impact that you try to make, sometimes the intentions of the impact that school tries to make [are] just limitations.

Luke continued teaching but felt the urge for a change. Although he believed he was making an impact at times, he also found the U.S. educational system had major flaws:

You have good days here and there, but all in all, it was just a system that was very flawed and needed revamping. Unfortunately, politicians make the rules, not teachers and school admin. That [had] me thinking, “Okay, I need to find a way to go abroad and see what else is out there,” It took me 2 years trying to get everything together [and] situated, but I finally made the move to go abroad and, from a career perspective, I think that has been, hands down, the best decision that I’ve made.

Luke felt compelled to move and was an ideal candidate for any international school due to his cultural experiences and identity. In the United States, in addition to the bureaucracy and flaws of the school system, Luke “never felt fully American.” Therefore, he found the move easier and considered it a positive life decision.

How It All Began

Luke sought information about teaching internationally by conducting Google searches. Luke found Dave’s ESL Cafe, a well-known online job forum for young Western and recent college graduates to post resumes and apply for jobs in schools, language centers, or governmental programs, such as English Program in Korea (EPIK) and Japan Exchange and

Teaching Program (JET). Eventually, a recruiter contacted Luke for an interview and discussed his interests:

[The recruiter asked], “Why do you want an ESL [English as a second language] job?” I [didn’t] know; it [was] what I figured I could get. [The recruiter was] like, “No, you could get work at an international school. You’re a licensed teacher.” I was like, “Okay, what do you mean? What’s an international school?” [The recruiter was] the one who got me in.

Like the other participants, even those who had lived abroad, Luke did not know how to navigate the politics of hiring processes and finding top positions in high-tier international schools. Many individuals without teaching licenses go to Dave’s ESL Cafe to find teaching jobs, hoping to travel and have exotic experiences. With a little assistance, Luke bypassed working in private English language centers and English learning programs in public schools, which would have provided little money and few professional development opportunities.

Luke learned about more reputable international school recruiting companies, such as International School Services, SA, and Schrole. However, he realized that posting vacancies on these sites cost significantly more for international schools than posting on job boards. After realizing that the recruiter he contacted represented a company positioned somewhere between both ends of the international school recruiting firm spectrum, he worked with the recruiter to find a position. Luke obtained a position in China, his first country for international teaching.

International Teaching Experiences

Luke spent two years at one school, then spent two years and signed on for two more years at another school. Both schools were in Beijing. While working at his first international school, Luke took intensive courses for a master’s in educational leadership over three summers.

During one of his summer classes, Luke connected with another international educator who recommended him to the school principal. Although Luke had previously applied to work in this school, he had not applied for the current recruitment season and received an invitation to interview. Luke believed his classmate was the reason for the invitation. He said,

We talk [and] just exchange information and things of that nature. [My classmate] moves on from [the international school] and gets a job in Dubai. I never got this full story, but I think what happened is [that] when the principal at [the school] went recruiting at the job fair, I think it was Search or GRC [Global Recruitment Collaborative] or something like that, that guy I met in my class was an assistant principal at a school in Dubai. They met, and I know they met because he told me, “Oh, I met the principal.” And he says, “Do you want me to put in a word for you?” I was like, “Of course. It can’t hurt.” Then, when the fair was over, a day or two later, I got an email from the high school principal at [the school] to come in for an interview.

International educators are inherently highly mobile and require strong professional networks, given the transient nature of their careers in niche educational contexts. Their expertise in specific regions and schools is often taken with them from one school to the next. Therefore, establishing professional and social connections among international educators is highly advantageous, as colleagues may advocate for each other when seeking new international school posts. A diverse and well-connected staff makeup in international schools is critical, especially as it is common for educators to encounter former colleagues in new school contexts.

Challenges Faced

During his time in international teaching, Luke heard offhand comments from his foreign colleagues, members of the racial majority, about the people in China. His colleagues often commented stereotypically, such as “Chinese people only care about money.” Luke said,

They’ll say, “Oh, this happened? Yeah, you’re having a China moment.” And it’s like, okay, so what’s an American moment? Police officers harassing me for no reason? You don’t make those comments about the realities of living in America, so why do you make these snide remarks about the realities of living in China?

Luke stated his colleagues also talked about him. When Luke earned an internal promotion at his school, a White teacher indirectly asked if he attained the position because of his race. He explained,

Essentially, what she was trying to get at is, “Do you think people are now looking at you in a different way now that you are head of the department?” And what she essentially was alluding to was, “Do you think that people think you got the position just because you were Black?” That’s what she was trying to say, but she didn’t know how to say it.

Luke also shared that a colleague who applied internally to the same position resigned the next day, after hearing that Luke received the appointment.

Another frustration Luke described was that some White teachers he’s worked with have passively suggested they come from a superior culture, are highly educated, and are worldly, the latter of which was born from their career choice. Luke said,

[The White staff say], “Well, I can’t be racist. I’ve lived in three or four different countries.” It’s like, yeah, but you have that “I’m better than you” mindset everywhere you go, so what is really changing? What are you really getting at?

Luke felt that the best way to protect minorities, such as BMTs in international schools, was to create and enact policies preventing Western teachers from discriminating or using passive-aggressive rhetoric and implicit bias. Luke reported that many Western White administrators and teachers described themselves as fair and unbiased and appeared to pride themselves on being highly informed about social and political issues and races. According to Luke, a barrier to setting staff diversity policies and procedures at international schools is that many of the problems related to racial discrimination occur in the United States; therefore, U.S. diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies could lack success in international school settings. Luke said, “They’re so convinced because all the literature and all the consultants always come out of the United States. It’s so U.S.-based they can easily say, “Well, all these things don’t apply to us because we’re not American.”

Anand (2022) advised against applying diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice strategies from one region to organizations in other parts of the world. Developing policies should commence by understanding the organization’s regional context and tailoring a suitable plan. However, Anand did not account for a homogenous majority group with few minorities in other parts of the world, such as in international schools. White Americans might enact their White privilege abroad, as they did in the United States.

Nico

“And I understand that some BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and people of color] teachers wish to teach internationally so that they can escape Blackness.”

U.S Teaching Experience

Nico taught in a Southern U.S. state for five years and a U.S. Northeastern state for one year, gaining six years of teaching experience before moving abroad. All of his professional teaching experience came from working in middle schools.

Impetus For Teaching Internationally

After working in a middle school in the Southern United States, Nico became aware of discrepancies when comparing his salary with teachers hired after him. Nico said,

At my school in [the South], I loved the school. It was great. It was wonderful, but they were hiring people who were getting paid more than me. A lot of the people I was mentoring were getting double my salary. I didn't feel right sticking around that school, watching different teachers get paid more than me to do the same job.

Therefore, Nico decided to teach abroad.

How It All Began

Nico signed up for an SA account, and his recruiter recommended a position in England. However, when asked to rate the school from 1–5, Nico rated it a 2 because he did not feel excited about the post. Nevertheless, he accepted the position after fervent recruitment from the school.

International Teaching Experiences

After four years in England, Nico decided to leave the international school. He said, “It was a good experience, but after four years, I wanted to leave [England]. I ended up resigning in

September.” Although Nico did not have another teaching position “lined up,” he decided to submit his resignation to school administrators. During his last days there, Nico recalled,

I went for a walk with my colleague, and at the end of the walk, I was like, “Look, I’m leaving. I sent my letter of resignation, and I’m not coming back.” He was like, “All right, okay. I hear you. You should look at [Singapore].” That was on a Friday. I told him, “No, I’m not interested.” He said, “You really need to look at this.”

Nico took his colleague’s advice and applied to an international school in Singapore without using SA’s recruitment services. At the time of his interview, Nico has taught at the school for four years.

Challenges Faced

Race was a topic in Nico’s interview for the position in Singapore. One of two White leaders wanted to examine the school’s culture, which he described as “incredibly White.” The leader mentioned the school’s culture after reviewing Nico’s resume. Nico said,

[My resume] has something in there that refers to interrogating the internalization of White superiority. There are signposts within my resume about who I am, which is why I think a lot of schools in Southeast Asia didn’t reach out because I was explicit about who I was. That was comforting, hearing [the White leader] name the Whiteness of the school because I was looking for a school that wasn’t going to avoid that conversation.

The leader’s honesty provided transparency, enabling Nico to feel comfortable knowing he would not have to avoid discussing the social and political challenges regarding the positionality of race.

At times though, an especially difficult and demanding challenge for Nico was his experiences with some colleagues, who remained complicit with the White majority narrative.

According to Nico, many host-country nationals and foreign minority colleagues often disassociate themselves from their identity and succumb to the expectations set by those in power, without scrutinizing the underlying implications of their actions.

These colleagues sometimes attempted to undermine Nico to earn favor with those in power. Nico said,

A lot of times, we talk about those majoritarian narratives coming from White teachers and White leaders. But I also think, especially in these predominantly historically White schools, when you have people of color who are often viewed as the exception, there are certain microaggressions and anti-Black sentiments that they uphold as people of color. I've seen this minority sentiment come from not just non-Black people of color but also Black teachers. They've engaged with me in these settings [to] reproduce and reinforce Whiteness in those majoritarian narratives.

Nico explained that his Asian colleagues also held anti-Black or anti-color sentiments. According to Nico, Asia society has a social stigma regarding dark skin. These ideologies affected Nico's ability to do his work, as his Asian coworkers did not support him as much as the White teachers and school leaders. He said,

The [minority colleagues] want to associate themselves with other White folks. And then, I'm a surprise. I'm like, "Surprise! I'm here. You weren't expecting me to come here, were you? Now you're uncomfortable. Okay. Now you are undermining me. Now you're being microaggressive. Why is that? Because I'm doing the same job except better than your White counterparts? Somehow, I get more scrutiny. Let's interrogate that together."

Another challenge Nico faced while teaching internationally was his guilt about not teaching in the United States, where he knew he could make an impact. Additionally, he

understood his privilege in his position at the school and felt he had changed since leaving the United States to teach abroad. Nico internalized these conflicts and felt bothered by them.

Noah

“When you think about identity, there’s no such thing as colorblind.”

U.S Teaching Experience

Noah worked for three years in two different schools in the United States. He also worked as an academic counselor in higher education before moving abroad.

Impetus For Teaching Internationally/How It All Began

Noah worked in a historically Black high school that closed due to malfeasance. While between jobs, Noah’s wife, who was also an educator, suggested they try teaching abroad. She put up a Search Associates profile and began getting offers, the first of which was a position in Saudi Arabia. Noah thought, “Oh, you really want to go abroad? I got on board, and we started applying together as a couple.”

International Teaching Experiences

Within two months, Noah and his wife accepted positions at a prestigious international school in Nigeria. Noah described his time at the school as nearly perfect; he was no longer a racial minority in Nigeria. However, Noah said,

Unfortunately, I had gotten used to not thinking about White supremacy. I [was] not thinking about it, and it snuck up and almost tried to [bite] my head off. It definitely altered my trajectory. We were so happy in Nigeria we would probably still be there.

The new school head did not renew “the Black people’s contracts, with no reason given.” The school received funds from the U.S. Department of Defense; therefore, lawyers, the U.S. embassy, and the U.S. ambassador to Nigeria became involved with nonrenewal. Ultimately, the

Black teachers were allowed to stay, but Noah saw where the school was headed. Noah completed the last year of his contract, and he and his wife left for China.

Noah and his wife had negative experiences with the leadership of the international school in China. They accepted positions in an international school in China that was not as highly regarded as in Nigeria. Noah said, “We were at a Tier 2 or Tier 3 school [in China]. Whatever. We [came] from a Tier 1 DOD school [in Nigeria].” Noah made the best of the situation, and he and his wife completed their two-year contracts. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school’s leadership team began cutting all non-IB and non-AP teachers who had left the country for vacation and could not return. Noah’s wife, who had become the dean of middle school, brought up the unfairness of the leader’s actions, but her message was not well-received. Again, on ethical principles, Noah and his wife left the school.

Noah and his wife accepted positions at another international school in China, which also experienced conflicts with unethical school leadership. In a meeting regarding the United Nations Sustainable Goals, 17 global issues tagged as important to work towards for a better world, Noah’s wife brought up the inequality of pay for the school’s host-country staff. The head of the school did not appreciate her suggestion. After several meetings with Noah’s wife, the school head suggested she take a pay cut to ensure international staff equality. The pay cut occurred during their first year, around Christmas break, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Soon after, Noah’s wife received a negative “appraisal” during her teacher observation. However, Noah said, “The data given on the rubric, the data presented by the evaluator, which is another person, did not match their criteria of the rubric.”

Right before the Christmas break, the head of school wrote Noah’s wife a letter, essentially stating:

“Hey, you can quit by the time you come back after Christmas break,” because they gave it to us right before Christmas break. “You can either quit and don’t come back after Christmas break, quit at the end of the year, or finish out your 2-year contract and then quit.”

Noah and his wife decide to finish their two-year contract and leave the school.

Noah accepted a position at a Tier 1 school in Hong Kong, while his wife received a position at a Tier one international school in Thailand. To continue teaching internationally, they had to work in separate countries. However, Noah reported that he and his wife had positive experiences at their new schools.

Challenges Faced

According to Noah, race was a factor in his negative experiences at the international school in Nigeria. Noah continued to have negative experiences but attributed them to bad leadership, not race. He believed leaders decided whether to foster inclusion, fairness, and diversity in international schools. He stated,

Just because you move abroad doesn’t mean those racial stereotypes or structures do not move with those people. That moves with them. It don’t matter. If you were a racist, or you thought that Black people were this and that, and you’re the head of school, you’re going to still think that and still operate on that.

Noah wore a tie and jacket most days, but one day he wore a hoodie to school in Hong Kong. One of his students said, “You look like a drug dealer today, Mr. [Noah].” Noah found that his students in Hong Kong had adopted White supremacist and anti-Black ideologies from their Chinese counterparts on the mainland. Noah theorized that his Chinese student had also

received filtered content from the West, with the citizens of Hong Kong receiving less-filtered content. Noah also noted correcting some of his students in Hong Kong:

Like, yo, you don't say you should get the math problems right because you're Asian.

No, you don't say that; you don't do that in my class. Or, [you shouldn't say things] like,

"I'm Indian; I should be a doctor." No, bro, we don't do that. You've internalized all

these things that, as Black people, we [are] trying to get over. We really trying to get rid

of that, but you're taking these model minority myths because it makes you White

adjacent. And the thing is, they don't realize that can be snatched away so quickly.

Waylon

"Whatever you do, [Waylon], don't work for a profit school if you can avoid it."

U.S Teaching Experience

Upon graduating, Waylon joined AmeriCorps on the U.S. West Coast. After completing his 2-year contract, he stayed for two more years at an "under-resourced school" before moving abroad.

Impetus For Teaching Internationally

During college, Waylon was a tour guide for prospective students. In side conversations, some students' parents frequently mentioned that they wished they had gone abroad and traveled more. Going abroad was such a consistent statement that Waylon decided to look into studying abroad. He accepted a scholarship to study in Australia for a semester during his senior year.

Waylon quickly took to living internationally, realizing he wanted to continue.

While studying in Australia, Waylon took a trip to Japan to visit a friend teaching through the government's JET program. Waylon said,

At that point, [I saw] how a Black person was treated in a small rural Japanese town; [it was] the complete opposite of my experience growing up in the U.S. in inner cities [and

the] suburbs, everything. It was just so different. I'm like, "Man, I wanted to come get a taste of this."

After returning to the United States in November, Waylon immediately applied for the JET program. However, applications for the next school year were due in three days, and he could not gather the necessary documents in time. Subsequently, Waylon joined Teach for America after graduation, knowing that he would use teaching as his vehicle to return to Japan to live and teach.

How It All Began

After four years of teaching in the United States, Waylon applied to JET and was accepted. He found it easy to get a position after four years of teaching experience.

International Teaching Experiences

At the start of his international teaching career, Waylon was unaware of the types of teaching positions available to foreigners international. For example, there are also opportunities to work in public schools, mediated by governmental organizations such as the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET), which aims to place foreign teachers as co-teachers with Japanese teachers in K-12 public schools. Upon learning this information after two years in JET, Waylon decided he no longer wanted to co-teach and sought work in an international school in Japan. He started applying to international schools, but "international schools in Japan didn't even get back to me because I was a nobody." Still, upon learning about this information, Waylon opted to break his contract. He began working on building his resume to eventually gain the experience needed to gain interest from international schools. Waylon said,

I didn't hear back from any schools. I needed to get an international school on my resume so that I [could] try to come back to Japan one day. I took the first job out of just, I don't know, Black male paranoia or just paranoia of wanting a job.

Search Associates found him an international school in Venezuela, but the recruiter suggested he not take it due to "red flags," such as a one-year contract. Waylon accepted the position but soon realized the recruiter was correct. He had international teaching experience in Venezuela and Japan but needed to move on. For his next position, his recruiter told him to accept an offer from an international school in Doha, Qatar, for an authentic international school experience. Waylon accepted the teaching position and stayed in Doha for three years. He said,

When I got [to Doha], I met true international school teachers. The people there were like, "Oh, no, this is how you play this game." So, I stayed. Even though I didn't like living in Doha, I stayed there and got schooled by people who [had] been in the game for a long time. That's how I figured everything out.

Waylon's colleagues in Qatar advised him to look into teaching in Singapore. However, Waylon discovered that a senior leader at the school was moving to a large international school in Japan. Via email, the senior leader told him, "I'm going to take over the school in Tokyo." Waylon's connection with the leader enabled him to access his *dream country* and "dream school." However, due to various political factors within international schools, such as hiring preferences involving nepotism, if Waylon had waited for a response, he could have risked losing the opportunity to have a job anywhere. As a result, Waylon did not return to Japan; instead, he accepted a guaranteed, secure, and well-paying position at a school in Singapore: he's been working there for more than six years.

Challenges Faced

One challenge Waylon faced in international schools was the lack of Black teachers, which allowed racist and discriminatory ideologies and comments to continue. Waylon experienced racism throughout his international teaching career, ascribing it to a shortage of Black people to address it. However, Waylon noticed a positive change in his school with only the slightest increase of Black teachers and has since made a point to advocate for the small number of Black teachers at his school.

Waylon, a veteran teacher with 17 years of international teaching experience and familial responsibilities, expressed his reluctance to assume a critical stance towards school culture regarding the dearth of staff diversity or insensitivity towards issues related to Black people emanating from White staff members. Still, he articulated its challenges: “I’ve been on that since, I don’t know, birth. It’s hard. I’m trying to get to his level of just like, ‘I know I’m good at this, so you need me, and I don’t need you.’”

CHAPTER V

Commonalities

In addition to the findings, notable patterns amongst the participants surfaced from the data, as displayed in Table 4. Firstly, all participants were highly qualified, boasting master's degrees, with 33% also holding doctorates in education. Secondly, each of the six participants taught in the US before transitioning to an international teaching career. Thirdly, most participants reported a significant experience or connection with the world beyond the US prior to working in an international school context. These shared characteristics suggest a meaningful trend rather than a coincidence.

While it is increasingly common for international school staff to hold graduate degrees, particularly master's degrees, it is far less common for them to hold doctorate degrees. In 2020, an ISC report revealed that globally, only 4% of international school staff held doctorate degrees, while 43% held master's degrees (Jones, 2020). Given the scarcity of Black male teachers in East and Southeast Asia, which is a major focus of this research, it is particularly noteworthy that two out of six participants held doctorates or 33%. This represents a substantial increase underscoring the significance of this commonality.

A notable research investigation by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004), revealed that job applicants who are White and possess higher qualifications are more likely to receive greater interest in job positions, while their Black counterparts with the same level of qualifications were less likely to receive similar attention. Although the research was conducted solely in an American context, it may still provide insight into the challenges faced by minorities, particularly when dealing with the same ethnic-racial makeup, in finding work in international schools even with stellar qualifications.

Findings

One key finding that emerged from the data analysis of participants' interviews was that all participants in this study attested to the impact of their skin color or race on their experiences teaching abroad in some way. Still, it is important to note that Waylon felt the potential influence of a teacher's country of origin and financial incentives for international schools was more of a focus for stakeholders, with his race not being a negative factor. Waylon explicitly stated as much. However, despite this, he also mentioned that in the past, he made sure to place his picture on his resume to ensure that potential future international school employers would know that he was Black sooner than later, which consequently directly acknowledged the presence of race

being a potentially hindering factor in international school settings. The other participants provided direct examples of how their race affected their experiences abroad, ranging from racial discrimination during the hiring process to mistreatment by white colleagues in international schools or both.

Examples of how race impacted the ways in which participants' colleagues interacted with them include tactless remarks explicitly pertaining to topics regarding Black people as well as microaggressions, one notably coming from a colleague who insinuated that Luke's rise to a leadership position might have been influenced because of the color of his skin.

Another participant, Noah, provided a striking example of blatant racial discrimination against Black international teachers at a prior school he worked for. The newly appointed Canadian head of the school made a conscious effort to not renew the contracts of the Black teachers without providing any explanation for this decision. And his effort would have come to fruition had it not been for the intervention of government officials. Another participant, Waylon, explained that a colleague on his team and a part of a doctoral program cohort with other colleagues in the international school where he worked made racially charged statements regarding police brutality. The discussion occurred when individuals worldwide questioned and discussed the Black Lives Matter movement and the killing of George Floyd by U.S. police officers. The Black Lives Matter movement coincided with the doctoral program's focus on DEI and CRT. Waylon's colleague, a White man from Canada, used the "N" word several times during a particular discussion and sought to incite conflict, antagonizing Waylon with questions such as, "Is it really that big of a deal?" and "All lives matter."

Waylon said, "[My coworker] was just literally attacking me about it, continuing to poke when I'm telling him about my personal experiences instead of just letting it go." Waylon

reported the conversation to the school's HR department. He explained, "Mostly, I was used to offhanded comments or just ignorance, but this dude was a problem, and it worried me that he was in front of students to the point that I had to let HR know the stuff that came out of his mouth."

Waylon also explained, "The other stories [regarding the same colleague] would be too minuscule, but when we added them together, it was just like, 'You know what? If we were just...'" What is notable is Waylon's use of the word minuscule and what it indicates. In the context of a setting where Black individuals are a racial minority or tokens, even the slightest discriminatory behavior towards a Black man can be tolerated by some and intolerable to others. One professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, explained that Black men in academia must determine whether they will "play the game" by accepting what is deemed tolerable for that particular individual in work settings (R. Goings, personal communication, November 1st, 2022). Many Black teachers, understand they lack organizational power and leverage to prevent microaggressions from colleagues who belong to the racial majority, as exemplified in Waylon's experience.

Another finding is that all the participants were happy with their decision to teach internationally despite any negative experiences begotten for being Black. Being racially discriminated against in one way or another was not a strong enough factor for them to claim that they did not like their careers as teachers in international schools. High pay may have been a consoling factor, or travel, adventure, etc., but this is unclear. However, one participant expressed that his choice to move overseas was directly related to the lack of career opportunities, which he believed were influenced because of the racial prejudice, discrimination, and biases directed towards Black men in the U.S.

The importance of establishing professional connections and grasping the political intricacies of the international school industry, which the former may support, emerged as another salient theme from the participants' interview data. For instance, Luke recounted how he maintained communication with a former colleague who had connections to an international school he was interested in joining, which ultimately facilitated his employment there. Notably, he was still employed at the same school during the interview for this study, highlighting the significance of such connections. Similarly, while teaching in London, Nico was encouraged by one of his colleagues to explore international schools in Singapore. Following this lead, he secured a position and was currently living and working at an international school there during his interview. These narratives exemplify how cultivating professional relationships and comprehending the politics of the international school industry can enhance one's prospects for employment. Another participant, Austin, shared a similar experience during his early years teaching at a Doha school. Austin stated

And that's why I stayed three years [in Doha] because when I got there, I met true international school teachers. The people there were like, 'Oh, no, this is how you play this game.' And so I stayed, even though I didn't like living in Doha. I stayed there and got schooled by people who've been in the game for a long time. And that's how I figured everything out.

Austin continued with

And again, I was just learning the game from all of them. So when they were talking about big schools, all I was just focused on was getting back to Japan. But when I heard about all these other places and they're like, 'Here's the big six in Asia and here's this and here's that.'

Discussion

This research focused on BMTs' experiences in international schools in East and Southeast Asia; however, the study could have just as easily been about BMTs' experiences working with a mostly foreign White staff colleagues in international schools. Many of the stories provided by the participants suggest that White foreign staff, the majority in most international schools, covertly and overtly use their power to create, promote, and sustain organizational cultures beneficial to them. That being said, international staff included amongst this racial majority might not consider the ethical and moral implications of doing little to promote the international school's goals of an inclusive environment and a diverse racial and ethnic population of teachers, leaders, and students.

The participant's experiences indicate that White Western teachers benefit from the overwhelming presence of their homogenous makeup in international schools. This finding applies to more than foreign White educators from the United States, including foreign White staff from any country working in international schools. Furthermore, it would not be difficult to imagine that White teachers and administrators feel comfortable working together. Foreign White staff from the United States, Ireland, and Australia have shared experiences, even if one common experience is never feeling uncomfortable or slighted in the ways the BMTs for this research in international schools have felt. This finding is troublesome because the harm and discomfort BMTs experience in international schools because of White staff are not often vicious, blatant attacks; they are usually subtle instances of discrimination. This could logically harm the reputation of Black male teachers and other foreign minorities working in international schools as a career.

Anecdotally, stories have emerged of international educational leaders who have been known to hire candidates not because they were the most qualified but based on their perceived ability to work alongside and create a comfortable working environment for them. In most career organizations in Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic countries (WEIRD), however, there are checks and balances forced upon organizations less legal action can be initiated by the offended. Nonetheless, in many international schools, this process is often given to foreign educational leaders of the respective schools, who do not have to follow the dictates of the rigid systems in WEIRD countries.

This study investigated the experiences of Black male teachers (BMTs) in international schools in East and Southeast and discovered that the participants contend that their skin color (i.e., race) has influenced their experiences working in the international education sector. Furthermore, Kanter's token theory indicates that the significantly low BMT and other minority staff representation in international schools leaves them devoid of the power to influence change, where their unremarkable actions may garner more attention than their achievements.

Despite facing challenges related to their racial identity when interacting with their White counterparts, the participants in this study have paradoxically benefitted from their assistance and guidance. As international schools in East and Southeast Asia, and likely worldwide, are predominantly staffed by foreign White individuals, colleagues from that ethno-racial group have likely provided valuable insights into the international education sector. For instance, they may have shared information about potential teaching locations and advocated for their hire on their behalf. However, what this means is more troubling than what can be discerned without further analysis of the underlying implications of this contradiction.

In international education, Black male teachers face unique challenges and obstacles that their white counterparts do not. Unlike their white colleagues who seemingly walk on solid ground, Black male teachers must tread carefully, never knowing when they may encounter a situation that seeks to undermine their position or dignity. As a result, Black male teachers do not always have the same level of confidence and privilege as their white colleagues. Despite these challenges, however, the participants in this study expressed gratitude for their jobs and a strong desire to continue working in international schools. Nevertheless, the fact remains that having colleagues who share similar racial backgrounds can provide a sense of support and confidence that is often lacking for Black male teachers in international schools.

Black male international teachers may not fully appreciate the mental freedom that comes with the confidence of being part of a racial majority in the international school community since they've unlikely never experienced it. Unlike their white colleagues, they must often make a concerted effort to navigate a career where their race may be a disadvantage, including the need to include their picture on resumes to avoid potential racism in the hiring process. The challenges they face suggest that the international teaching field is not yet fully inclusive for Black male teachers when contrasted with the confidence displayed by their White counterparts that reflect their sense of belonging in the international school community.

There is an unfortunate reason why Austin's initial international teaching position was in Kuwait, and that, upon arrival, he was surprised to find an unusually high number of Black vice-principals at the school. Similarly, despite not enjoying living there, Waylon began his international teaching career in Qatar, a country that, along with Kuwait, is unofficially considered a "practice school" location as they are generally viewed as less desirable than other parts of the world for international school teachers. The presence of many Black vice-principals

in Kuwait suggests that they leveraged the opportunity, one that may have been turned down by potential foreign white staff. This does not mean that these vice principals were unqualified. If anything, the findings from this research suggest that they were likely qualified, if not overqualified, for these positions. Additionally, it is not the intention of the researcher to belittle these Middle Eastern countries, both of which are rapidly developing and are likely to become premier destinations for foreign international school staff in the future. However, the implication is that White staff have the racial capital to choose "more ideal" locations. Indeed, equity and fairness in the international teaching community appear skewed toward white foreign staff. Whether this knowledge was lost on these two participants is irrelevant; what matters is that the research findings suggest an inequity in the international teaching community that favors white foreign staff.

Some of the participants in this study emphasized the importance of building strong connections and ties with co-workers and other teachers in the international school community or provided anecdotal information regarding helpful advice they received from colleagues. However, while Black male participants in this study received benefits from their networking efforts, they faced challenges such as microaggressions due to their race. In contrast, white staff members, who are not disenfranchised due to their race, reap the rewards of networking in the international school community without facing the same obstacles. The presence of their spouses, whom many white staff members in international schools work alongside in the same campus or building, provides them with an even more secure and comfortable work atmosphere, leaving them seemingly impervious to the anxieties that Black men face.

The convergence of several factors, including nepotism in international school hiring practices and homophily theory, which suggests that individuals prefer to be around those with

similar positionalities, including racial identity (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; McPherson et al., 2001; Mollica et al., 2003; Monge & Contractor, 2003), along with the disproportionate representation of white foreign staff in international schools, all reinforced by Kanter's theory of numbers, where any subgroup with less than 15% representation is powerless to effect change (Kanter 1977), produce a culture that empowers white foreign teachers and leaders to levitate above their minority counterparts metaphorically. Black male international school teachers and other minorities may not be aware of these factors that confer a great privilege to their White counterparts. And even if, for example, nepotism, one of the more visible discriminatory practices in international school hiring, were to be mitigated, it would do little to address the prevalence of a predominantly White foreign staff workforce and the implicit biases held against minority groups when those in dominant positions or numbers hold them.

To ensure accountability and address systemic issues, examining who is responsible for perpetuating discriminatory practices in international schools is crucial. In cases of misconduct or discrimination, it is essential to implement clear and transparent human resources policies that hold individuals accountable for their actions, such as a formal warning process that could lead to termination. It is also important to examine the actions of school leaders and the regional organizations they fall under to determine if appropriate measures were taken to address the issue. After all, inaccurate or discriminatory recommendations from school leaders can also impact the career trajectory of minority teachers. As such, it is also necessary to consider the lasting effects of discriminatory practices on the professional and personal lives of minority teachers.

The question of accountability is a complex but necessary one. It is important to examine who is responsible for the perpetuation of discrimination and how they should be held

accountable. For instance, in Waylon's case, what consequences did his coworker face for their discriminatory behavior? Were they subject to a progressive disciplinary process, or were they allowed to continue their behavior without repercussion? Similarly, what action was taken against the head of the school in Nigeria, and was there any follow-up from the regional organization to which the school belonged? It is important to document these incidents and their outcomes and have those responsible accountable for their prejudiced actions. This includes false or biased recommendations from international school leaders for exiting BMTs in international schools which would negatively affect their careers.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Action Plan

To promote inclusivity and support the professional growth of all teachers in the international school sector, it is crucial to take proactive steps towards accountability. One of the clearest ways to mitigate the taxing duality of professional existence as a token amongst a majority White staff make-up is to increase minority staff presence in international schools. International schools need more foreign minority staff members, such as Black educators, because “as proportions begin to shift, so do social experiences” (Kanter, 1977, loc. 4396). Until, foreign minority staff presence increases, all international school stakeholders should strive to implement the best HR practices to restrain and protect against implicit bias. In addition, leaders need the courage to work toward changing their schools’ cultures. Their responsibility is to serve, protect, and enhance staff experiences, allowing all staff with the ability to then dedicate themselves to student teaching and learning.

Given the instances of implicit bias and racial discrimination described by the Black male teachers who participated in this research, it is imperative that international schools, in collaboration with their human resources departments, take necessary steps to address and

mitigate these issues. Comprehensive and purposeful measures are needed to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all teachers. Seven have been identified: implementing clear dress codes, regulations for career advancement, a stated effort to increase foreign staff diversity, and transparent procedures for handling complaints between teachers and teacher leaders.

Additionally, being transparent about employee demographics by race, acknowledging the possibility of bias in teacher observations for minority teachers, and implementing additional actions to combat implicit bias and racial discrimination during and after hiring minority teachers for international school positions. Through such measures, international schools can cultivate a culture that prioritizes inclusivity and supports the careers of all teachers.

Infographic Six-Step Action Plan For Equitable Recruitment and Workplace Environment

Informed by the findings, a six-step action plan for achieving equitable recruitment and workplace environment in international schools for minority teachers was created by the researcher. The action plan, designed as an infographic, is a printable checklist that, when completed, will help fulfill the presented goals of most international schools, which is an equitable, wholly inclusive community composed of a diverse stakeholder constituency (with the communal goal of providing the best education possible for its respective students. (see Figure 7).

Figure 3

International Schools' Antidiscrimination and Transparency Standardization Checklist



Created by Myson Jonathan Sheppard (2023)

A formalized approach to accountability is necessary to ensure the sustained implementation of the International Schools’ Antidiscrimination and Transparency Standardization (ISATS) Infographic Action Plan. As many international schools fall under the umbrella of regional associations, one plausible approach to disseminate the checklist would involve reaching out to international associations with direct connections to East and Southeast Asia schools. These associations can be contacted to gauge their willingness to distribute the plan. Table 5 provides a list of 11 international school associations, which collectively represent 1,150 schools (with some overlap).

Table 5

International and Regional Organizations Associated with Schools in East and Southeast Asia

Name of Organization	Abbreviation	Schools
Association for the Advancement of International Education	AAIE	179
Association of China and Mongolia International Schools	ACAMIS	78
Association of International Malaysian Schools	AIMS	43
Council of British International Schools	COBIS	309
East Asia Regional Council of Schools	EARCOS	197
International Schools Association	ISA	42
International Schools Association of Thailand	ISAT	140
Japan Council of International Schools	JCIS	29
Korea Council of Overseas Schools	KORCOS	21
Mediterranean Association of International Schools	MAIS	48
Members of International School Association	MISA	64
	TOTAL	1150

Note. List adapted from Shaklee, B. D., Daly, K., Duffy, L., & Watts, D. S. (2019). *Cultivating diverse leaders in international schools*. International School Services.

Six-Step Action Plan

Step 1: Create an updated teacher and staff directory that provides international schools’ foreign staff photographs

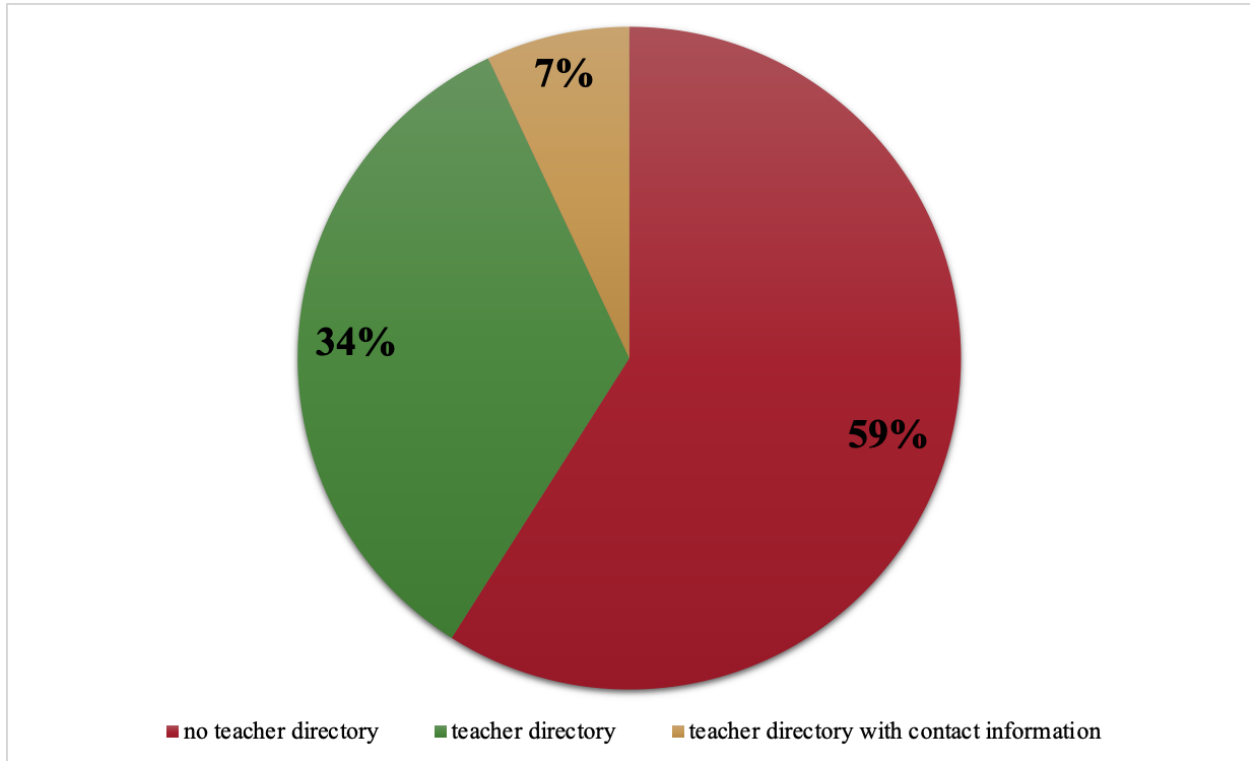
Although many international schools focus on diversity (Shaklee et al., 2019), there tends to be diversity in the student population and less among the teachers. Elite international schools lack faculty diversity, particularly those with IB or AP curricula. International schools should

present the staff's racial makeup for transparency on their websites. All school stakeholders, including parents of students, potential applicants, and minorities, should know who is teaching the students and learn what the ethno-racial composition of the school's foreign staff is. As shown in Figure 3, searches of the websites of 100 international schools in East and Southeast Asia found that 59% had no staff directories. Thirty-four percent of the schools had directories but did not enable stakeholders, such as the “students, teachers, parents, administration and board” (Slough-Kuss, 2014, p. 222), to contact the staff. The lack of staff contact information could have been due to privacy issues, the transience of international teaching, and the frequent departures of teachers from international school websites. Out of 100 schools, only seven had staff directories with contact information. (Figure 4 shows the data by country).

The lack of diversity in international school staff poses a challenge in understanding the reasons behind some schools having a more diverse staff compared to others. Unfortunately, in this study, the 50 international schools examined in East and Southeast Asia had a predominantly White foreign staff. The absence of staff directories displaying the racial makeup of staff impedes accountability and transparency. This lack of transparency results in only plausible deniability for the schools. Yet, if international schools are truly committed to creating a more diverse staff for the benefit of the students, then the simple step of creating and maintaining an updated faculty directory is a crucial first one.

Figure 4

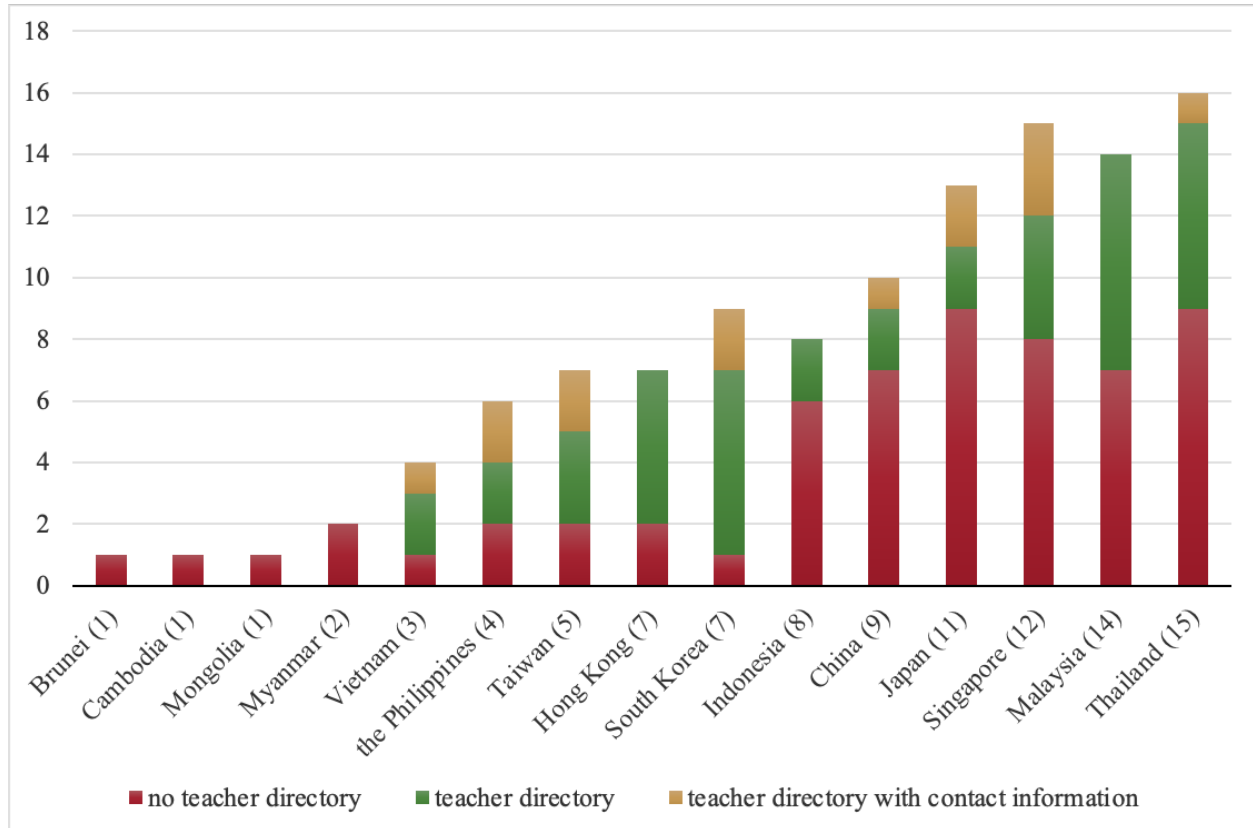
Sample of 100 International Schools in East and Southeast Asia and the Presence of Online Staff Directories with Contact Information



Note. Data collected from November 6, 2021, through September 2, 2022.

Figure 5

Sample of 100 International Schools in East and Southeast Asia and the Presence of Online Staff Directories with Contact Information by Country



Note. Data collected from November 6, 2021, through September 2, 2022.

Showing the images of teachers on schools' websites is important for other reasons. For example, parents may be provided the contact information of their child's teacher once they are in a class with a teacher, but that doesn't mean they and other extended family members wouldn't appreciate the ability to access their information in a directory. More reasonably, teachers' contact information could contribute to international schools' credibility. Even without contact information, creating and maintaining an updated staff directory would be commendable if only for the fact that many international schools lack them. Additionally, departments, board members, school leaders, and other stakeholders who provide information on what their

community looks like should be standard practice if nothing but to increase the professional presentation of what the school puts out to stakeholders, one of which is their respective websites.

Understanding that there is a lack of staff diversity at an international school could also be a way to begin conversations about the best practices for maximizing student learning in any learning community. Teachers, like many other professionals, are problem-solvers. Educating students with diverse racial and cultural identities can be challenging as teachers strive to create lessons and learning plans to differentiate instruction for each student. Diversity is a critical issue in international schools, where many students come from different cultures and countries. Additionally, prestigious international schools often have three separate curricula for one subject: the U.S.-based Common Core State Standard Initiative, the AP program, and the Switzerland-based IB program. It is important that the diversity of those who teach the respective curriculum is represented in such a diverse curriculum.

Page (2007) explained the importance of diverse teams. Diverse teams have the power to create novel solutions to problems that would be less likely with homogenous teacher bodies (e.g., consisting of a majority Western staff). Page noted, “Two people belonging to different identity groups, or with different life experiences, also tend to acquire diverse cognitive tools” (loc. 84). These cognitive tools come from those who interact with others from different cultural backgrounds or come from the same cultural backgrounds but have experienced life through a different lens (e.g., BMTs compared to their White Western counterparts).

Beyond racial positionalities, there could be differences in age, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation. Individuals who work in teams with people with different backgrounds and understanding can find more effective solutions to problems than teams of the most

knowledgeable individuals in their fields (Page, 2007). Although not all international schools in East and Southeast Asia publish teacher directories, those that do reveal a notable lack of diversity, with White Western teachers constituting an overwhelming majority. It's important to note that this lack of diversity does not necessarily reflect on the quality of the schools themselves. However, providing directories that include staff contact information can demonstrate a school's commitment to transparency in its hiring practices and offer unimpeded access for stakeholders to connect with school staff, contributing to the school's overall image and reputation.

Step 2: Create a diversity statement detailing the commitment to enhancing and sustaining the diversity of foreign staff, accompanied by an action plan and ongoing updates

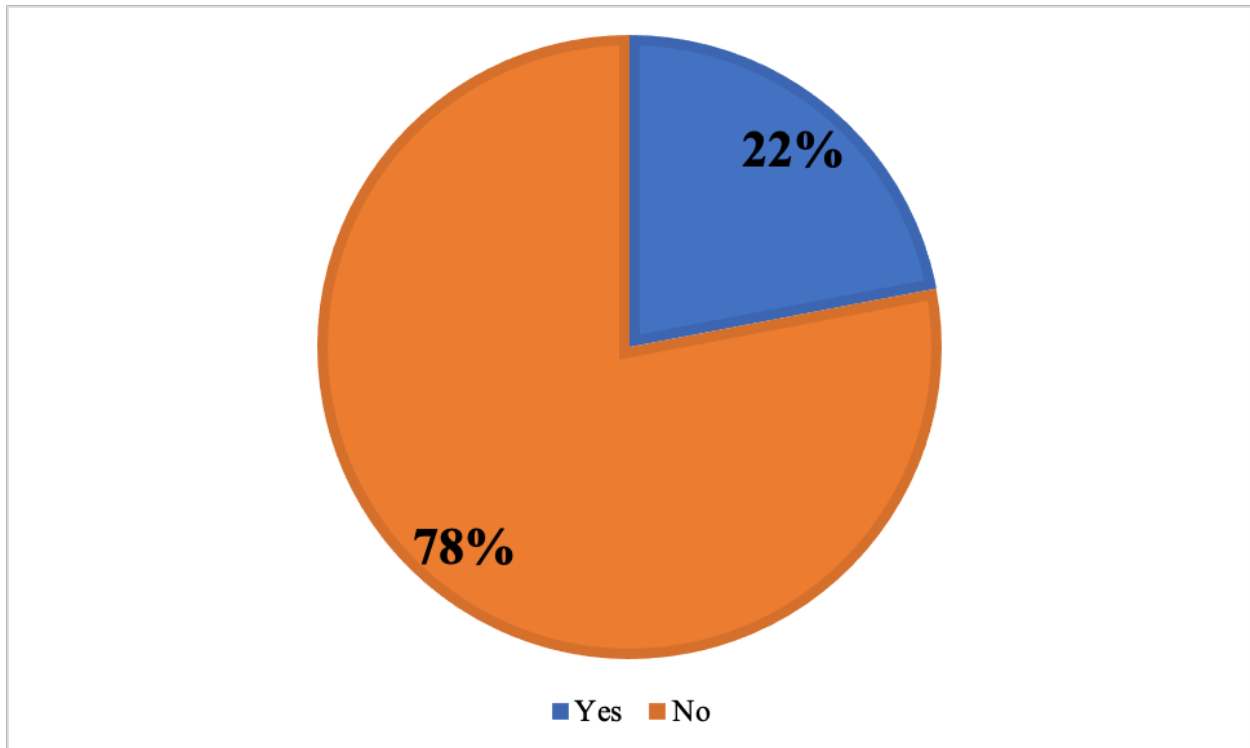
In any international school setting, it is imperative to promote and maintain diversity in order to operate ethically. In the last five years, diversity has become a buzzword in organizations worldwide, not just at international schools. Diversity czars are becoming ubiquitous, from fashion houses (Prada and Gucci) to multimedia corporations (Walt Disney and Apple) and international school organizations (e.g., International School Services). American companies alone have spent billions of dollars in recent years to work toward diversifying their staff (Newkirk, 2020), and there are no signs that this trend will slow (Page, 2007). All of this is to say many industries have gone past the point of exploring the need and have instead dedicated a tremendous number of resources to diversifying their staff.

While some international schools have web pages dedicated to promoting their diverse staff makeup, the majority lack official diversity statements. An analysis of 50 international school websites in East and Southeast Asia revealed that 78% had no such statement, while the remaining 22% displayed a variety of labels and acronyms for diversity (refer to Figures 5 and 6). This lack of congruity suggests that some international schools may create diversity programs

and statements in a superficial manner without being held accountable for their actual commitment to diversity.

Figure 6

Presence of Diversity Statement from a Sample of 50 International Schools Websites in East or Southeast Asia



Note. Data collected from November 6, 2021, through May 22, 2022.

Figure 7

Iterations of Diversity Wording Employed on a Sample of 50 International School Websites in East and Southeast Asia



Note. Data collected from November 6, 2021, through May 22, 2022.

The small but revealing sample of East and Southeast Asia international school websites showed the lack of diversity statements. The few websites with diversity statements ($n = 11$) did not include the commitment to hiring and sustaining a diverse staff. This research indicates the need for international schools in East and Southeast Asia to show their commitment to diversity in all organizational aspects. However, there has to be a concrete plan that dictates specific actions regarding how this commitment will become a reality. Additionally, it is not enough for international school leaders to half-heartedly promote a focus on the latest educational or social

issues without providing the resources and attention needed to solve the issue of foreign staff homogeneity. Again, International schools should have diversity statements on their website but, more importantly, accompanying action plans that include ongoing updates regarding their respective diversity objectives.

Step 3: Eliminate the requirement for teacher candidate photos during the hiring process.

In the United States, BMTs comprise only 2% of the teacher population, an especially low percentage, even compared to other minorities (D'amico et al., 2017). That being said, it is not reasonable that the Black male teacher population internationally, and particularly in international schools in East and Southeast Asia, can compare to these statistics. A reasonable assumption is that international schools in East and Southeast Asia would have a lower percentage of BMTs than in the United States. However, some English language schools in South Korea require applicants to submit photos with their resumes. In the international school English-language teaching community, many recruiters who hire native English speakers from Western countries require applicants to send photographs so that organization leaders can determine “if an individual is the ‘right candidate’ in lieu of a face-to-face interview” (Ruecker & Ives, 2015, p. 744).

One research participant, Waylon, provided an anecdote regarding this phenomenon. After several years working in the international school community and becoming more familiar with recruitment procedures, Waylon did not include his photo for subsequent recruitment seasons. Subsequently, at one recruitment fair, one international school representative explained, “‘Oh, you’re not the [Waylon] I expected’ [because] they hadn’t seen my picture.” Regarding the international school recruitment process, Austin explained,

For my resume, I always put my face on there because there's a rumor that if they see your face and it's not White, they don't hire you for the job. There's a rumor of that going around in Asia. I always put my face on my resume. If you don't want to deal with [me], if that's a decision, then we have it right there. Just let's get it out of the way.

International schools are not far removed from English language centers, where those who hire staff often ask for photos of candidates either directly, through recruitment agencies, marketed job posts on their company websites, or international English language teacher forums such as Dave's ESL Café. For the purposes of this study, the researcher searched on Dave's ESL Cafe's job board and clicked on the third post for an English teacher for a school in Ibaraki and Sano, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan. The post indicated that all applicants "Apply by e-mail with CV/Resume, degree, certifications, cover letter, birthday and recent photo (photo less than a month old)."

Regardless of the tier of schools in East and Southeast Asia that teach English, Western White teachers of any country are the seeming de facto preferred candidates for positions over non-White Western candidates. Subsequently, postings for international school teachers on job boards indicate that many international schools focus not on the most qualified candidates but on those who fit the ideal of what they believe qualified foreign teachers or teacher leaders should look like. A more professional and equitable recruitment atmosphere across the board for native English teachers in East and Southeast Asia academic institutions is needed.

Step 4: Address implicit bias in teacher observations recognizing that although bias cannot be eliminated, it can be acknowledged, and thus, to some extent, its effects can be mitigated

The racial makeup of international school staff indicates the need for protection against the White majority staff's tendency to look down on or disregard the practices and beliefs of individuals different from them (Bourisaw, 1988; De Houwer, 2019; Dos Santos, 2020; Foley &

Williamson, 2019; Kepinski & Nielsen, 2020). There could be adverse effects when someone from a higher position diminishes someone in a lower position—for example, an international school staff member with authority to perform teacher observations and assessments. As professionals, teachers work towards meeting an objective goal. However, there is no way to eliminate implicit bias (Kepinski & Nielsen, 2020). Research has shown that teachers receive higher test scores when observed by someone of the same race (Grissom & Bartanen, 2022). This indicates that the observation component of a teacher’s yearly evaluation could be biased, adversely affecting minority teachers’ career advancement.

Despite the contentment expressed by the study's participants regarding their work in international schools, there remains uncertainty in their job security, as negative observations or evaluations may result from a lack of diversity in observers, which can affect Black male teachers and other minority groups disproportionately. In contrast, White foreign staff benefits from being observed by individuals of their own race.

International school leaders should amend their teacher observation processes to acknowledge bias in their respective observation frameworks. Additionally, staff contracts or appendices should include the ramifications of not meeting observation standards and the steps needed to improve. And this should all be explicitly written an HR document. The goal continues to be protecting minority, skewed, and token staff members with clear procedures that not only protect themselves but professionalize their learning communities. Subsequently, simply recognizing that all individuals have implicit biases and that there is evidence that suggests that observations of teachers are of a different racial identity than the observer could lead to unintentional (or intentional) negative observation findings for minority teachers. Figure 8 is an

example of how to enhance an international school’s teacher evaluation document to address foreign racial majority teaching staff’s implicit bias regarding their foreign racial minority staff.

Figure 8

Example of Appendage to International School Evaluation Instrument to Acknowledge the Presence of Implicit Bias

Here at _____ school, we recognize that all staff hold implicit bias. With over 200 identified biases identified by scientists (Bourisaw, 1988; De Houwer, 2019; Kepinski & Nielsen, 2020), along with many others that are created from our life experiences, we understand that this can cause a problem when our educational leaders evaluate our staff. This issue becomes even more compounded when we recognize that the international education industry tends to be diverse in some ways, but in others very much homogenous.

On the one hand, we honor and search for students to express the diversity in race, ethnicity and culture. On the other hand, we acknowledge that the majority of our international school’s foreign teacher and teacher-leaders are comprised of a single racial majority. There is concern, that even with our educational leaders’ best intentions in mind, they can still evaluate our smaller population of teachers from other races, ethnicities and cultures negatively in comparison with those they observe from their respective race, ethnicity and culture. As a result, we are working towards implementing processes that prevent staff members who conduct teacher observations from negatively commenting on any teacher of any minority positionality through the lens of implicit bias.

Step 5: A clearly written dress code for male and female staff

To promote equality in educational communities, it is imperative to have clear and equally enforced professional dress codes for fairness and comfort. Black male teachers (BMTs) in international schools are already hyper-visible as they represent a minority with low representative numbers. In many international schools in East and Southeast Asia, BMTs are often tokens, representing 15% or less of the international school staff (Kanter, 1977). Therefore, a clear dress code for foreign staff in international schools could provide certainty regarding

what individuals of either gender should or should not wear. It is not improbable for a Black male teacher's style of dress or tattoos to be considered unprofessional or offensive, even though White male and female teachers may display similar attire or body art. Essentially, BMTs and other minorities do not want to be caught off guard by dress code rules changing suddenly and negatively affecting their identity and expression. Ambiguity can occur when an international school's dress code includes phrases such as "smart dress" without indicating what that entails. Some schools provide no direction regarding whether international school teachers and leaders from different countries can show body art, such as tattoos. Some international school professionals follow the dress code of a cultural region (Fisher, 2021), while others choose not to (Savva, 2013). However, international schools often lack detailed dress codes, if they have one at all.

Step 6: A clearly written process for managing conflicts between coworkers

Disagreements between teachers and other staff in educational settings will occur. BMTs and other minorities often experience microaggressions from their majority White colleagues. Examples have been presented in this research. Additionally, numerous studies have shown the toll that passive-aggressive slights and other discriminatory actions towards Black people lead to a host of mental and physical health issues (Armstrong et al., 2019; Mouzon et al., 2017; Walker, 2018; Walker et al., 2019). International schools' cultures are often created and dictated by White staff. Therefore, BMTs and other minorities must navigate situations in which their small numbers betray their inherent right to equality while their majority White foreign colleagues continue to perform actions that have the potential to shorten their professional and physical lives literally. This is not hyperbolic: Black Americans have reported poor well-being and health outcomes when faced with chronic discrimination (Utsey et al., 2000).

The pervasive misperception that White Western staff in international schools "... possess higher economic, cultural, symbolic, and social capital than others" (Bunnell & Atkinson, 2020, p. 263) perpetuates a system of inequality and injustice that disproportionately affects Black teachers and other minorities. As a result, these individuals continue to face serious challenges to their well-being, equity, and power within the international school community, while their White counterparts benefit from these biases. To address this, it is essential to establish clear and transparent processes for increasing the accountability of all international school staff members, regardless of their race or position. Without such measures, progress toward equity and justice in international schools will remain elusive. Therefore, there is a need for clear human resource documentation in international schools that explicitly indicate the processes and steps that ensure all potential and current employees be held to the same dignified standards.

In conclusion, this research on the experiences of Black male teachers in international schools in East and Southeast Asia has important implications for the education of their students. The recommendations presented in this study can benefit students significantly, as "education for international understanding" relies on staff equity, accountability, and representation of diverse races and backgrounds. Therefore, implementing more equitable hiring practices and policies that eliminate opportunities for racial discrimination against all minority staff, not just Black male teachers can create a more valuable and dynamic educational experience for international school students. As Hughes (2017) states,

Prejudice and education are inextricably linked as they both touch on the fundamental attribute of human behavior: learning to live together. A good education will teach a person to judge other people with some degree of intellectual, moral and social retinue,

whereas one could argue that an education would have failed were it to leave us with people who generalise about others easily, judge others harshly on little but assumptions and dislike individuals or entire groups of people without even knowing them. (p. 1)

As Hughes so eloquently explains, international school teachers and leaders have a moral responsibility to ensure that adequate, clear, and transparent human resources policies are in place that empower international school staff by increasing their professional accountability to provide their students with the quality education they and their families expect them to receive.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
International Review Board Informed Consent

■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: The Experiences of Black Male Teachers in International Schools in East and Southeast Asia

Principal Investigator: *Myson Jonathan Sheppard*
Phone/Email Address: ■■■■■■■■■■

Department: *Teaching & Leadership*

Research Advisor: ■■■■■■■■■■

Research Advisor
Phone/Email Address: ■■■■■■■■■■

What should I know about this research?

- Someone will explain this research to you.
- Taking part in this research is voluntary. Whether you take part is up to you.
- If you don't take part, it won't be held against you.
- You can take part now and later drop out, and it won't be held against you.
- If you don't understand, ask questions.
- Ask all the questions you want before you decide.

How long will I be in this research?

We expect that your taking part in this research will last one hour.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of minorities' hiring and work experiences in international schools where much of the foreign teacher population is from the majorative society (i.e., White/Caucasian) while identifying what role race has played (if any,) in your teaching experiences in international schools in East and/or Southeast Asia.

What happens to me if I agree to take part in this research?

If you decide to take part in this research study, you will complete a one-on-one interview via Zoom, answering 10 broad preplanned questions in which you are encouraged to express as much as you are comfortable. You are free to skip any questions that you would not prefer to answer.

Our interview will be recorded via Zoom, and then sent to the Rev transcription service. Your interview transcription will then be sent to the Thematic company, to be coded.

Approval Date: <u>5/19/2022</u>
Expiration Date: <u>4/18/2023</u>
■■■■■■■■■■

Date: _____
Subject Initials: _____

Could being in this research hurt me?

There are no foreseeable risks to participating.

Will being in this research benefit me?

The most important benefits that you may expect from taking part in this research include providing crucial data to research on international schools. Additionally, you might better understand the experiences of others who may or may not have had similar experiences as you.

Possible benefits to others include future knowledge gained from this research.

How many people will participate in this research?

Approximately 2-5 people will participate in this research, individually, via one-on-one Zoom meetings.

Will it cost me money to take part in this research?

You will not any costs for being in this research study.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

Who is funding this research?

████████████████████ and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

What happens to information collected for this research?

Your private information may be shared with individuals and organizations that conduct or watch over this research, including:

- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) that reviewed this research
- ██████████

We may publish the results of this research. However, we will keep your name and other identifying information confidential. We protect your information from disclosure to others to the extent required by law. We cannot promise complete secrecy.

Data or specimens collected in this research will not be used or distributed for future research studies, even if identifiers are removed.)

Video recordings

Your interview, conducted through Zoom will be recorded and then sent to a company called Rev, to be transcribed. Transcripts of the recording will be given to you for feedback before it is sent to Rev for transcription. The video recording will only be erased once it has been identified

Approval Date: <u>5/19/2022</u>
Expiration Date: <u>4/18/2023</u>
████████████████████

Date: _____
Subject Initials: _____

that the research team is no longer in need of the video recording for research purposes. At the very latest, the video recording will be deleted no later than June 1st, 2023.

What if I agree to be in the research and then change my mind?

If you decide to leave the study early, we ask that you email either of the researchers as soon as possible so that we may remove you from the research study.

Who can answer my questions about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think this research has hurt you or made you sick, talk to the research team at the phone number listed above on the first page.

This research is being overseen by an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”). An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies. You may talk to them at

_____ if:

- You have questions, concerns, or complaints that are not being answered by the research team.
- You are not getting answers from the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone else about the research.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You may also visit the _____ IRB website for more information about being a research subject: _____

Your signature documents your consent to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subject’s Name: _____

Signature of Subject

Date

I have discussed the above points with the subject or, where appropriate, with the subject’s legally authorized representative.

Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

Date

Approval Date: <u>5/19/2022</u>
Expiration Date: <u>4/18/2023</u>

Date: _____
Subject Initials: _____

Appendix B

Inquiry Email

Greetings,

My name is Myson Jonathan Sheppard, and I am an American citizen who currently works as a high school teacher at an international school in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. As part of the process to complete a dissertation towards a doctorate in Educational Practice & Leadership at [REDACTED] my aim is to conduct research on the experiences of Black male teachers as international educators in East and Southeast Asia.

Journal articles regarding the experiences of aspiring, current, as well as previously employed Black male teachers in the U.S.A. is substantial. Currently, the Black male teacher population in the U.S.A. stands at just below 2%. There are many documented reasons for why this is the case. However, many of the reasons for this dearth given by other researchers stems from racist, discriminatory, and inequitable practices at different levels of American societal structure.

I understand the international Black male teacher population in East and Southeast Asia, in comparison to Westerners of other races is not comparable to the demographic representation in the U.S. for obvious contextual and geographical reasons. However, my aim is to provide a sample of Black male teachers who chose to teach overseas, specifically in East and/or Southeast Asia the opportunity to provide a genuine narrative that describes their own personal experiences, whatever they may be.

I also understand that experiences vary. I am not looking for any specific answer, but only your truthful answers to ten questions that would assist me in coding participant responses for emergent themes to see what may be found.

To this end, I'm asking for your assistance in being a participant in this study.

The prerequisite requirements for this study are:

- that you self-identify as a Black male, or African American male
- that you were born in the U.S.A.
- that at the time of the interview, you are employed in an international school in East or Southeast Asia, as determined by the researcher, based on specific definitions on what an "international" school is or is not.
- that at the time of the interview you currently hold a teaching license from one of the 50 states of the United States of America.

If you fulfill the prerequisites and you would like to take part in this study, I would greatly appreciate your assistance in this research project.

Any personally identifiable information connected to you, including the name of your school would be given aliases.

As soon as you are able, would you please let me know your decision?

Of course, you can email me at any time to answer any questions that you may have regarding this study. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you.

Best,

Jonathan Sheppard
[REDACTED]

Appendix C
Practitioner-based Narrative Questionnaire

- 1. Could you describe your teaching experiences nationally, if any?**
- 2. Could you describe your international teaching experience locations? Specifically, what is the name of the international school you currently work at, and what other international schools (if any) have you previously worked at?**
- 3. Could you describe why you made the choice to teach in an international school?**
- 4. Could you describe your international resume, i.e., how many schools have you worked in and where were their locations? How long have you worked internationally?**
- 5. Could you describe the hiring process that you experienced when applying for the international school you currently work at and or other previous international schools you worked at in Southeast Asia?**
- 6. What have your overall experiences been working in international schools in Southeast Asia?**
- 7. What benefits (if any) have you experienced teaching in an international school setting?**
- 8. What challenges (if any) have you experienced teaching in an international school setting?**
- 9. What role do you believe your race has played (if any) in your experiences in international schools in Southeast Asia?**
- 10. Overall, could you describe your overall feelings and experiences as a teacher internationally?**