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Searching for Satisfaction: Black Female Teachers' Workplace Climate and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Job satisfaction may decrease teacher attrition. Furthermore, job satisfaction correlates with teacher retention, which may influence school building climate and student achievement. Potentially affecting students' progress and seeking to reduce attrition rates among Black teachers, this quantitative study uses data from the 2007-2008 Schools and Staffing Survey to examine Black female teachers' job satisfaction. Findings suggest that Black female teachers' have job satisfaction when they are in an urban, non-charter school; receive administrative support; experience positive student behavior; and are committed to teaching. Concluding recommendations are offered for teacher education programs and school leaders.

Keywords

teacher job satisfaction, Black female teachers, teacher working conditions

Introduction

Black female teachers are disproportionately underrepresented in the American teaching workforce, when compared to their White female counterparts

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(Madkins, 2011). Milner and Howard (2004) affirmed that after *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the number of Black teachers drastically declined. This decrease has coincided with an increase in diversity among the public student population. Thus, the American teaching workforce is not presently reflective of the demographics of public school students and the American society. Despite an urgent need to diversify the teaching workforce, the current teaching population remains predominately White and female (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2013). One only has to walk into a public school to observe a racial disparity between teachers and students (Landsman & Lewis, 2011).

Presently, there are more than 3 million public school teachers in the United States (NCES, 2010). Among this group, African American teachers only make up approximately 8% of the public school teaching workforce (NCES, 2013), while White female teachers comprise more than 60% (Lewis & Toldson, 2013). When compared to White women, Black women are often underrepresented among school personnel, filling a small percentage of teaching positions. This current trend is disconcerting, considering Black females' historic roles in the American public education system. Shipp (2000) noted the historical function of Black women educators in the South prior to the Civil War. Likewise, Dixson and Dingus (2008) confirmed the long legacy of Black female teachers in American schools and the significance of highlighting the often omitted Black female experience within teacher research and scholarship. With a predominately White teaching force (Lewis & Toldson, 2013) and a shortage of Black teachers within American public schools (Madkins, 2011; Tillman, 2004), who could potentially affect the academic achievement of all students, the purpose of this research study is to examine factors influencing Black female teachers' job satisfaction—an important contributor to how and why teachers remain in the classroom.

Literature Review

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Teacher job satisfaction has been noted as one avenue that may decrease teacher attrition (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008). Teacher job satisfaction also correlates with teacher retention (Stockard & Lehman, 2004), which may positively influence students' educational outcomes (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006). Conversely, teacher turnover negatively affects student progress, both because of the lack of continuity in instruction for students (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013) and the substantial costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training replacement teachers

(Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007), which could potentially be redirected to teaching and instructing students.

In addressing teacher attrition and job satisfaction, Ingersoll and May (2011) contended that increasing recruitment efforts would not eliminate the shortage of teachers of color because "pouring more water into the bucket will not do any good if we do not patch the holes first" (p. 33). With an association between job satisfaction and retention (Bobbitt, Faupel, & Burns, 1991; Cockburn, 2000; Meek, 1998; Perrachione et al., 2008; Shen, Leslie, Spybrook, & Ma, 2012), to patch these metaphorical holes, it is important to understand factors precipitating the shortage of these teachers, including job satisfaction. In more general studies of teacher attrition and retention, research suggests an important link between job satisfaction and turnover. Stockard and Lehman (2004) found that teachers who experience job satisfaction were more likely to remain in the profession, whereas Ingersoll (2001) posited that teachers with job dissatisfaction were more likely to leave. Furthermore, job satisfaction was found as a key mediating predictor of voluntary teacher turnover (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008; Price, 2001).

Kim and Loadman (1994) reported factors such as salary, opportunity for advancement, professional challenges, professional autonomy, working conditions, interaction with colleagues, and interaction with students were statistically significant predictors of teacher job satisfaction. Billingsley and Cross (1992) also found leadership support, the elimination of role conflict, role ambiguity, and stress were predictors of commitment and job satisfaction. Unfortunately, teachers do not possess a uniform perspective on job satisfaction, meaning research on teacher job satisfaction is vast and often mixed. For example, salary is a contentious topic with research suggesting high salaries may produce more job satisfaction (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Macdonald, 1999). However, Perie and Baker (1997) found no significant relationship between salary and job satisfaction. In addition, although Stockard and Lehman (2004) found no association between teachers' level of education and job satisfaction, Culver, Wolfe, and Cross (1990) noted that teachers with lower academic achievement had greater job satisfaction, while teachers with higher qualifications (e.g., certifications and advanced degrees) possessed less job satisfaction. Teachers' years of experience were another area that produced mixed findings. Although Bogler (2001) found no association, Renzulli, Parrott, and Beattie (2011) found that years of teaching experience were negatively associated with job satisfaction, and Liu and Ramsey (2008) found teaching experience positively associated with job satisfaction. Last, when examining commitment to teaching and job satisfaction, Currivan's (2000) analysis showed no significant relationship.

With regard to school location, Perie and Baker (1997) reported that teachers at suburban schools had high job satisfaction; teachers at urban schools had low job satisfaction; and teachers in rural schools had a satisfaction level in between suburban and urban teachers. Perie and Baker (1997) and Shann (1998) also found that teachers who taught in schools with high-minority student enrollment had less job satisfaction. When examining students' socioeconomic statuses, teachers in schools with less than 5% of the student population on free or reduced price lunch had high job satisfaction, while teachers at schools with 20% or more students on free or reduced price lunch had lower job satisfaction (Perie & Baker, 1997). Aligning with Perie and Baker's study, Stockard and Lehman (2004) also examined teachers working in schools with students from high socioeconomic backgrounds and found that these teachers were more satisfied than teachers working in schools where students came from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Findings in Mueller, Finley, Iverson, and Price's (1999) study offered additional insight into the effect of teacher and student racial alignment on teachers' job satisfaction, school commitment, and career commitment. Although the study found that commitment to teaching was not influenced by a student body's racial composition, it also found that White teachers, not Black, possessed job satisfaction in schools where their race comprised the majority of the school racial composition.

School type (e.g., traditional public school, charter school, etc.) may also influence teacher job satisfaction. Charter schools are often championed and commended as innovative and flexible institutions, lacking bureaucracy, empowering teachers, and building a sense of community (Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2001). Although these characteristics are ideal, many charter schools fail to embody all of these qualities. For instance, when examining the job satisfaction of teachers in charter schools, Corwin and Flaherty (1995) summarized findings of Southwest Regional Laboratory's (SWRL's) statewide survey of California charter schools. In this report, charter-school teachers reported greater autonomy but heavier workloads when compared with teachers in traditional public schools. Miron, Nelson, and Risley's (2002) study evaluated Pennsylvania's charter schools and charter school initiative. Their evaluation showed teachers were generally satisfied with their working conditions, but retention was a problem as teachers left charter schools at high numbers.

Additional indicators of job satisfaction are collegiality between teachers and the administrative staff, as well as administrative support (Littrell, Billingsley, & Cross, 1994). Collegiality is defined as a positive working relationship between colleagues (Huang, 2000). It is associated with job satisfaction and may influence teacher retention (Huang, 2000; Woods &

Weasmer, 2002). Studies have shown a poor teacher–administration relationship, and lack of administrative leadership may contribute to teacher attrition (Anhorn, 2008; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007; Johnson, 2006; Ladd, 2011). On the issue of administrative support, teachers with high job satisfaction typically experience high administrative support (Perie & Baker, 1997). Furthermore, effective and supportive principals who reduce teachers' frustrations positively influence teacher job satisfaction (Blasé, 2001).

Student behavior may also affect teacher job satisfaction (Garrahy, Cothran, & Kulinna, 2005; Ingersoll, 2001). If student behavior is poor, it may significantly impede teaching and learning in the classroom, thus making the job of a classroom teacher more difficult to accomplish. Although negative student misbehavior may produce stress, burnout, and teacher turnover (Certo & Fox, 2002; Garrahy et al., 2005), positive teacher–student interactions and relationships may increase teacher retention (Brunetti, 2001). In fact, as presented in Shann's (1998) study, teacher–student relationship ranked highest in relation to job satisfaction. An additional factor potentially influencing teacher job satisfaction is teacher autonomy. Teacher autonomy, (i.e., control over schoolwide and classroom decisions) may influence teacher job satisfaction and retention (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012). In Bein, Anderson, and Maes' (1990) study, teachers with a greater sense of control were more satisfied with their work. When examining teacher autonomy, Pearson and Moomaw (2005) found there was little association between curriculum autonomy and job satisfaction, but teacher autonomy (control over daily instructional responsibilities) was associated with teacher empowerment and professionalism. In a related study, Ingersoll (2007) asserted that teachers have little input with regard to policies that directly and indirectly affect their work environment, including content, pedagogy, course schedules, class size, and school funding. Of all the decision-making areas, Ingersoll found that teacher autonomy or control over school and student behavior and discipline policies were most consequential, significantly affecting teacher retention and turnover.

Teachers possessing job satisfaction have, but are not limited to, administrative support (Bogler, 2001; Otto & Arnold, 2005; Petty, 2007), cooperation from their colleagues and administrators (Shen et al., 2012; Young, 2007), instructional resources (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007), parental support (Thornton, 2004), professional autonomy (Ingersoll, 2003), positive student behavior and teacher–student relationships (Brunetti, 2006; Newberry & Davis, 2008), and are not overburdened with non-teaching duties (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Perie & Baker, 1997). Although the literature presents a variety of factors that may influence teacher job satisfaction, research is scarce regarding the job satisfaction of teachers of color, particularly Black teachers.

For instance, the aforementioned studies primarily sampled White teachers as study participants, hence the need for research that simultaneously considers teacher race and job satisfaction.

Positionality

In conducting this study, the positionality of the researchers must be acknowledged and thoroughly evaluated to ensure the validity of the work (Milner, 2007). Clarifying our personal stake in the research exposes an awareness of our unconscious influences on the data. The vantage point from which we view and analyze this study is deeply embedded in our race, gender, and former positions as former K-12 classroom teachers. The primary researcher is a Black, female, former English teacher, while the secondary researcher is a White, male, former history teacher. For the Black female educator, possessing the same racial and gender identity as the participants in this study helped shaped this study. Likewise, the latter researcher's position as a White, male educator also shaped the way he interpreted the data, especially because this study concerns data from teachers who possessed racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds outside of his own. As social science researchers, we were cognizant of how our positionality may shape our selection of variables and interpretation of data. Considering our sample (Black female teachers) throughout the data analysis process, we acknowledged and rejected existing assumptions and biases and were attentive to dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen (Milner, 2007).

Method

Data Source

In this study, existing data from the 2007-2008 National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) were used to conduct a hierarchical multiple regression analysis. At the time of this study, the 2007-2008 SASS was released to the public and was the most current SASS report available. The present study used data extracted from the Teacher Questionnaire (SASS-4A) and the Public School Questionnaire (SASS-3A) in the 2007-2008 NCES' SASS. Conducted by the Department of Education, SASS surveys schoolwide characteristics in private, public, and public charter school settings (Tourkin et al., 2010). As the largest and most comprehensive data set on the staffing and organization of elementary and secondary schools in the nation, survey questions are administered to a sample of nationally representative teachers and principals.

The 2007-2008 SASS sampling frame is developed from the 2005-2006 Common Core of Data (CCD), which is collected by the NCES from each state education agency and possesses information for more than 100,000 schools nationally. The schools sample was a stratified probability proportionate to size (PPS) sample. SASS' complex sampling procedure causes unequal probability of selection, which requires the use of weights for estimation (final weights) and calculation of standard errors (replicate weights). For the purposes of this study, an inverse-probability equation was used to weigh teachers. Weighing prevents biased, overrepresented cases, presenting Black female teachers' correct proportion within the population. Weight adjustments were used to proportionally represent participants and were based on participants' proportions within the population. Using this data set to garner information about Black female teachers' job satisfaction, our study was guided by three research questions:

Research Question 1: To what extent are teacher demographics and credentials associated with job satisfaction among Black female teachers?
Research Question 2: To what extent is school context associated with job satisfaction among Black female teachers?
Research Question 3: To what extent are teachers' reported working conditions associated with job satisfaction among Black female teachers?

Data Analysis

The first half of the study used a cross-sectional survey research design, utilizing hierarchical multiple regression (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). Descriptive statistics were also examined in this portion of the study. In this multiple regression analysis, the researchers assessed the relationship between one dependent variable and several independent variables. When conducting the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, the researchers also determined the order that the independent variables were entered into the equation, identifying the variability that is unique to each predictor variable entered into the model. The order of variables in this study was based on theory and influenced the study's outcome. The focus was on the change in predictability, which was based on the contribution that the later predictor variable made over and above the variables entered earlier in the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

In this model, estimate weights were used to provide accurate coefficients and replicate weights were used to provide accurate standard error (for statistical significance). Using AM, a statistical software package for large-scale assessments, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine

factors influencing Black female teachers' job satisfaction. Predictor variables were ordered into a three-block model based on theory. The order of variables allowed the researchers to examine how much variance the predictor variables had after the previous variables were entered into the equation.

Variable Selection

Descriptive statistics of race, gender, age, teaching experience, academic degree, licensure, alternative certification, national board certification, charter school identification, urbanity, and grade ban are presented in Table 1 to identify the national characteristics of Black female teachers. Years of teaching experience and licensure were recoded. All categorical variables such as licensure, urbanity, alternative certification, national board certification, academic degree, charter school, and grade ban were recoded as dummy variables. The variable licensure was recoded and dummy coded with "not certified" serving as the reference variable. Urbanity, which included city, suburban, and rural, was recoded with "suburban" being the reference variable. The years of teaching experience variable was recoded and dummy coded, using "21-25" as the reference group. The academic degree variable of degrees obtained (masters) was dummy coded with "no masters" as the reference variable. For the alternative certification variable, "no alternative certification" served as the referential, and for the national board certification variable, "no NBC" served as the referential variable. Likewise, for the charter variable, "no charter" served as the referential variable. As mentioned, dummy codes were also created for grade ban with "primary" serving as the reference variable.

A single-level analysis was conducted and deemed appropriate because the sample size at the school level (i.e., nesting within schools) was small. Because the between-school variance was not substantial ($n < 5$), a random selection of one Black female teacher per school was performed. Data were screened for accuracy of data entry, presence of univariate and multivariate outliers, missing values, and normality of distribution before the major analysis ($n_{\text{un-weighted}} = 9{,}70l$; $n_{\text{weighted}} = 128{,}532$). All other assumptions related to regression analysis were also addressed. Once the data were conditioned, selected data from SASS were placed into AM. The dependent variable associated with the hierarchical multiple regression was a construct of job satisfaction. It was created using composite variables of teacher job satisfaction, based on items selected from the Teacher Questionnaire.

Many of the independent variables in this study were replicated from Shen et al.'s (2012) study. In Shen et al.'s study, researchers used SASS 2003-2004 data to examine whether principal background and school processes were

Table 1. Weighted Frequency and Percentage of Black Female Teachers by Demographic Characteristics.

Demographics	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's degree	128,111	99.7
Master's degree	64,810	50.4
Licensure		
Certified	107,838	83.9
Lateral	15,295	11.9
Not certified	5,398	4.2
ALTCERT	29,651	23.1
National board	13,458	10.5
Charter school	4,496	3.5
URBANS8		
City	56,634	44.1
Suburban	55,823	43.4
Rural	16,075	12.5
SCHLEVE2		
Primary	59,399	46.2
Middle	37,152	28.9
High	27,334	21.3
Combined	4,646	3.6
	M	*SD*
Birth year	1,964 (49[a])	11.187
Years of teaching	12.53	10.131

Note. (*N* = 128,532)[b] weighted; (*N* = 970) un-weighted.
[a]Age.
[b]All un-weighted sample sizes were rounded to the nearest 10 because of NCES disclosure procedure.

related to teacher job satisfaction. In their analysis, a national sample was used for public school teachers and principals. Although researchers in this study did not sample teachers of color, this study was particularly relevant to our study because it utilized SASS data and analyzed independent variables associated with job satisfaction. Variables of interest include (a) administrative support, (b) student behavior, (c) teacher control, and (d) collegiality between principal and faculty. The independent variables entered into the model were academic degree, licensure, alternative certification, national board certification, years of teaching experience, the percentage of minority students, urbanity, the percentage of students approved for free or reduced lunch, charter school, teacher control (autonomy), administrative support,

positive student behavior, collegiality between principal and faculty, and commitment to teaching. Some of the independent "variables were based on single items; some were composites created by NCES (ready-made in the SASS database); and some were composite created in the present study based on the operationalization of the relevant constructs" (Shen et al., 2012, pp. 213-214). Cronbach's alpha internal consistency measures were used to estimate the reliability of all composite variables.

Guided by existing research on teacher job satisfaction, the independent variables were entered into the regression equation in a specific order to examine the research questions. After statistically controlling for the influences of demographic variables (age and grade ban), selected independent variables were entered as distinct blocks in a three-step process. Addressing this study's first research question, in Step I of the regression equation, academic degree, licensure, alternative certification, national board certification, and years of teaching experience were entered as a block. The second research question was examined in Step II of this analysis. The following variables were entered as a second block: percentage of minority students, urbanity, the percentage of students approved for free or reduced lunch, and charter school. Finally, in Step III, the final block of variables (i.e., control [autonomy], administrative support, positive student behavior, collegiality between the principal and faculty and commitment to teaching) were entered into the model, seeking answers for the third research question.

Descriptive Statistics

After applying estimation and replicate weights, the data indicated a national representation of Black female teachers. Unweighted, the sample consisted of 970 Black female teachers; weighted, the sample was 128,532 Black female teachers. Frequencies and percentages of the demographic variables in this study are reported in Table 1. Demographic data show that an overwhelming number of teachers hold a bachelor's degree and most have a master's degree. When examining the Black female teachers, 83.9% (weighted) are certified teachers; 11.9% (weighted) have a lateral entry teaching certification, and 4.2% (weighted) are not certified teachers. Less than a quarter of Black female teachers possess an alternative certification, and approximately 10% have a national board certification. Examining the type of school setting, a small percentage of Black female teachers work in charter schools. With regard to locale (i.e., where Black female teachers work), it is split fairly evenly between cities and suburbs, with only a small percentage working in rural schools. The average age of Black female teachers is 49. When examining years of teaching experiences as classroom teachers, the average is 12 years.

Reliability of Variables

Cronbach's alpha internal consistency measures were used to estimate the reliability of all composite variables. The means and standard deviations are provided for continuous variables, while percentages are provided for categorical variables. The Cronbach's reliability estimates for teacher job satisfaction, teacher control (autonomy), administrative support, student behavior, and collegiality between principals and faculty are presented in Table 2, along with other selected variables and their descriptive statistics. Teacher perception of job satisfaction, administrative support, and collegiality between the principal and faculty were scaled using a 4-point Likert-type scale: 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *disagree*, 4 = *strongly disagree*. Some of the items under teacher job satisfaction, administrative support, and collegiality between the principal and faculty were recoded so that a higher number indicated a more positive response. Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability indicated adequate to moderate reliability across the variable constructs (see Table 2).

Findings

In Model I, Block 0 (birth year as well as grade ban, which included middle, high, and combined) was combined with Block 1 (academic degree, licensure, alternative certification, national board certification, and years of teaching experience). Controlling for birth year and grade ban, Block 0 and Block 1 were first entered into the model. The variance accounted for 8% of Black female teachers' job satisfaction. None of the variables in Step I was statistically significant.

In Model II, the second block of variables was entered and consisted of charter school, urbanity, the percentage of minority students, and the percentage of students on free or reduced lunch. The results showed an increase with regard to variability. The model accounted for approximately 12% of the variance in job satisfaction. The change in variance ($\Delta R^2 = .04$) was a statistically significant increase when compared with Model I. Similar to the previous model, no variables in Model II were statistically significant with regard to Black female teachers' job satisfaction.

In Model III, the third block of variables was entered (student behavior, teacher autonomy, administrative support, collegiality between the principal and faculty, and commitment to teaching). With the inclusion of working condition variables, Model III accounted for approximately 55% of the variance associated with job satisfaction among Black female teachers, accounting for a 43% statistically significant change in variance from Model II. Model III

Table 2. Selected Variables and Measures and Their Descriptive Statistics.

Variables	Representation	Coding	Statistics
Composite variables (Schools and Staffing Survey–Teacher Questionnaire, 2007-2008)			
TJS[1]	Teacher job satisfaction	Mean of the following items: 55q, 57a, 57b, 7c, 57d, 57e, 57f, and 57g Cronbach's alpha = .83	*M* = 3.05, *SD* = 0.64
TPCC[2]	Teacher perception of classroom control	School mean value of Items 54a, 54b, 54c, 54d 54e, and 54f, 54e, and 54f Cronbach's alpha = .70	*M* = 3.23, *SD* = 0.54
AS[3]	Teacher perception of administrative support	School mean value of Items 55a, 55g, 55l, and 55o Cronbach's alpha = .79	*M* = 3.16, *SD* = 0.67
SB[4]	Teachers perception of positive student behavior	School mean value of Items 56a, 56b, 56c, 56e, 56f, and 56i Cronbach's alpha = .83	*M* = 2.60, *SD* = 0.74
CPS[5]	Teachers perception of collegiality between principal and faculty	School mean value of Items 55h, 55i, 55j, and 55k Cronbach's alpha = .84	*M* = 3.19, *SD* = 0.62
Controlled variables			
BY[6]	Birth year (TQ 71)	Continuous	*M* = 1,964, *SD* = 11.9
SCHLEVE2	Teaching level (by NCES)	1 = Primary 2 = Middle 3 = High 4 = Combined	46.2% 28.9% 21.3% 3.6%
Predictor variables			
TE[7]	Teaching Experience (TQ 10a)	0-5 years = 1 6-10 = 2 11-15 = 3 12-20 = 4 21-25 = 5 26 or more = 6	*M* = 12.91, *SD* = 10.9
MAST[8]	Master's degree (TQ 25a)	Yes = 1 No = 0	51% 48%
LICE[9]	Licensure (TQ 33a)	Certified = 1 Lateral = 2 Not certified = 3	83.9% 11.9% 4.2%

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Variables	Representation	Coding	Statistics
ALTCERT[10]	Alternative certification (TQ 31)	Yes = 1 No = 0	24.6% 75.4%
NBC[11]	National board certification (TQ 32a)	Yes = 1 No = 0	18.5% 81.5%
URBANS8	Urbanity (by NCES)	City = 1 Suburban = 2 Rural = 3	44.1% 37.6% 18.2%
CT[12]	Charter (SQ 47a)	Yes = 1 No = 0	6% 89.6%
NSLAPP_S	Percent of students approved for free or reduced lunch (by NCES)	Continuous	*M* = 57.5, *SD* = 28.3
MINENR	Percent of students in school who are of a racial/ethnic minority (by NCES)	Continuous	*M* = 71.99, *SD* = 28.7
CTT[13]	Commitment to teaching (TQ 58b)	1 = intention to stay 0 = intention to leave	*M* = 0.91, *SD* = 0.29

Note. Variable development modeled after Shen, Leslie, Spybrook, and Ma (2012).
NCES = National Center for Education Statistics; TQ = teacher questionnaire; SQ = school questionnaire. [1-13]See Notes section below for details.

showed that charter, urbanicity (city), student behavior, administrative support, and commitment to teaching were significantly associated with job satisfaction. For example, among working condition variables, each unit increase in teachers' reported administrative support and positive student behavior was associated with .85 and .16 unit increases (respectively) in job satisfaction. Black female teachers working in the city were associated with 1.02-unit increases in job satisfaction compared with teachers in suburban schools holding all other variables constant. Black female teachers who indicated a commitment to remain in teaching were associated with a 0.65-unit increase in job satisfaction. With the inclusion of working condition variables in Model III, school context indicators (i.e., city and charter) entered in Model II became statistically significant. These findings might suggest a potential interaction between working conditions and the school type. Conversely, working in a charter was inversely related to job satisfaction among Black female teachers.

Discussion

Although many of the findings in this study further existing literature on teacher job satisfaction and retention, literature is often presented from the perspective of those who comprise the majority of the American teaching workforce—White female teachers. Rather than examining the broader labor pool of teachers, we offer a new viewpoint by presenting data from a specific group of teachers. Our study shows Black female teachers possess shared commonalities, as well as exhibit differences from the greater teaching population. Job satisfaction findings in this study are notable because the largest predictors of Black female teachers' job satisfaction were within-school variables, rather than between-school contextual variables, suggesting Black female teachers' job satisfaction is unique to a particular school and may be altered depending on school leadership, management, and policy.

In addressing the first research question, although literature presents a correlation between White teachers' credentials and job satisfaction (Culver et al., 1990), these variables were not associated with Black female teachers' job satisfaction. Specifically, analysis showed that academic degree, licensure, alternative certification, national board certification, and years of teaching experience were not statistically significant. However, an examination of school context, the second research question, uncovered important findings related to teacher staffing (see Table 3). As shown in Model III, Black female educators report greater satisfaction working in urban areas—a finding contradictory to the broader context of school staffing research (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Jacob, 2007; Jones & Sandidge, 1997).

Contrasting Perie and Baker (1997), who found that urban teachers reported lower job satisfaction, in this study, Black female teachers possessed job satisfaction in urban schools. Urban areas may bring greater occupational fulfillment to Black female teachers because schools in urban areas are located in neighborhoods that resemble and exhibit characteristics similar to many Black female teachers' childhood communities (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005). Often possessing different racial–ethnic and cultural backgrounds and experiences from their White colleagues (Collins, 2000), many Black female teachers may not perceive urban schools' geographic locations and urban school characteristics (Milner, 2012) as foreign or threatening. Rather, Black female teachers, because of their unique cultural and racial backgrounds, may gravitate to and find comfort in a familiar educational and community setting. Considering urbanicity is associated with Black female teachers' job satisfaction, more than suburban or rural schools, urban schools may serve as a site for recruiting teachers of color.

Table 3. Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Black Female Teachers' Job Satisfaction.

	Model I		Model II		Model III	
Variables	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
(Constant)	34.02	80.48	13.61	84.00	−24.62	53.43
BY	−0.01	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.03
SCHLEVE2 Middle	0.57	0.90	0.28	0.85	1.08	0.56
SCHLEVE2 High	1.23	0.67	0.73	0.73	1.95	0.62
SCHLEVE2 Combined	0.15	0.95	0.05	1.14	0.36	0.78
TE-Years0_5	−1.32	1.48	−1.29	1.74	−1.01	1.08
TE-Years6_1	−0.35	1.42	−0.30	1.67	0.15	0.97
TE-Years11	−1.39	1.69	−1.47	1.85	−0.51	0.98
TE-Years16	−1.39	1.52	−0.51	1.62	−0.21	1.05
TE-Years26	−1.12	1.51	−1.31	1.61	−1.00	0.91
MAST	−0.57	0.68	−0.90	0.67	−0.07	0.49
LICE-Certified	1.75	1.11	0.71	1.21	−0.48	0.73
LICE-Lateral	0.65	1.38	0.14	1.37	−0.15	1.05
ALTCERT	−0.80	0.73	−0.79	0.80	−0.47	0.54
NBC	−0.52	0.4	−0.31	0.79	−0.12	0.66
CT			−1.53	1.05	−1.54*	0.79
URBANS8-City			1.46	0.78	1.02**	0.49
URBANS8-Rural			0.02	0.88	−0.08	0.57
NSLAPP_S			−0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01
MINENR			−0.03	0.02	−0.01	0.01
SB					0.16**	0.07
TPCC					0.10	0.10
AS					0.85***	0.13
CPS					0.20	0.13
CTT					0.65***	0.09
Model R^2	.08		.12		.55	
F for Δ R^2			7.49***		236.60***	

Note. (*N* = 128,532) weighted; (*N* = 970) un-weighted. NCES = National Center for Education Statistics.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

As noted by Achinstein, Ogawa, and Sexton (2010), teachers of color are more likely than White teachers to work and remain in hard-to-staff, urban schools. However, Ingersoll and May (2011) contended that Black teachers

also have high turnover rates at these schools because these schools "tend to be less desirable as workplaces" (p. 64). The literature, in conjunction with this study's findings, suggests while low-income, urban schools employ more Black teachers (Achinstein et al., 2010), workplace conditions, specifically lack of administrative support and negative student behavior, may exacerbate Black female teachers' attrition rates. Although data show that Black female teachers experience job satisfaction in urban areas, policy measures are needed to alter working conditions in urban schools. Policy measures that directly affect school leaderships' support for their faculty, as well as student behavior, are needed to improve working conditions in high-need schools in urban areas (Haberman & Rickards, 1990; Milner, 2015). With a focus on teachers and students, perhaps effective policy mandates can ensure the retention of more Black female teachers.

Charter school employment was statistically significant. In this study, charter schools were negatively associated with Black female teachers' job satisfaction. The literature suggests a number of reasons why teacher job satisfaction is low in charter schools and in turn produces teacher turnover. Offering insights regarding charter schools, Ni's (2012) study found that although charter-school teachers perceived that they had a greater level of school autonomy, they also possessed a heavier workload as opposed to traditional public school teachers. When considering the charter school model, charter schools that deviate from the traditional public school education model often require greater effort from faculty members in establishing an educational infrastructure. That is, charter schools and traditional public schools may differ with regard to teacher workload and organizational structure. Johnson and Landman (2000) noted the intense and at times chaotic environment within many charter schools and the high demands many place on teachers. Furthermore, many charter schools, although rooted in innovative, educational ideals, often are unable to fully adhere to their core tenets. Dissimilar to the traditional educational structure many teachers experienced during their own K-12 education, teacher dissatisfaction may develop in charter schools due to the lack of a preexisting infrastructure. Essentially, teachers who possess knowledge about traditional educational models may compare the structural weakness of charter schools with traditional schools. Tasked with adopting numerous roles and responsibilities under a charter school model, teacher satisfaction may wane. Gaining additional insight regarding the charter school variable, it is recommended that future research examine the job satisfaction of Black female teachers or female teachers of color in charter school classrooms.

Administrative support (e.g., administrator's behavior toward the staff is supportive and encouraging; principal enforces school rules for student

conduct; staff members are recognized; and teachers are given the support they need to teach students with special needs) and positive student behavior (e.g., no student tardiness; students do no class cutting; students do not drop out; no student apathy; and students come to school unprepared to learn) were significant predictors of teacher job satisfaction in this study. Although research highlights numerous variables associated with teacher job satisfaction (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Ingersoll, 2003; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Newberry & Davis, 2008; Otto & Arnold, 2005; Perie & Baker, 1997; Shen et al., 2012; Thornton, 2004), adequate administrative support is stressed in the literature as a means of increasing or maintaining teacher satisfaction (Woods & Weasmer, 2002). The literature supports that a highly effective and supportive administration can affect a teacher's level of satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Otto & Arnold, 2005). Aligning with existing data (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003), this study affirms that Black female teachers need administrative support. Similar to their colleagues, Black female teachers value a supportive administrative staff and find satisfaction under such working conditions.

As found in this study, positive student behavior proved influential to teacher job satisfaction. Confirmed by the literature (Certo & Fox, 2002; Garrahy et al., 2005), student behavior affects teachers and teachers' level of vocational enjoyment. Whether positive or negative, student behavior affects classroom instruction and management. Being that the goal of classroom teachers is to improve students' academic and social development, teachers contending with negative student behavior may experience dissatisfaction as teaching and learning are obstructed in their classrooms (Garrahy et al., 2005; Ingersoll, 2001). Moreover, teachers' self-efficacy, their ability to successfully influence student learning, may lessen because of negative student behavior, indirectly affecting their job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Regardless of teachers' racial–ethnic or social backgrounds, student behavior affects all teachers' classroom instruction and in turn may affect their job satisfaction. Although this study suggests that Black female teachers are not an exception to this phenomenon, we acknowledge that findings alone do not capture a holistic and accurate portrait of this subgroup of teachers. With this awareness, we emphasize the need for additional research. In seeking additional data to clarify Black female teachers' perceptions of student behavior as it relates to their job satisfaction, we recommend the implementation of qualitative research examining how Black female teachers define positive and negative student behavior. We posit that cultural congruence may affect Black female teachers' perceptions of what is defined as "bad" student behavior.

Commitment to teaching is an additional finding that emerged from the data. In examining commitment, the teaching profession is often referred to

as a "calling" (Irvine, 2002), requiring a certain type of individual, one who is committed to students and to students' academic progress. In contrast to Currivan's (2000) analysis, which suggested a dubious relationship between commitment and job satisfaction, commitment to teaching in this study produced job satisfaction. Furthermore, Fresko, Kfir, and Nasser's (1997) study showed that job satisfaction directly predicted commitment to teaching. The satisfaction Black female teachers gain through a commitment to teaching is described in Dixson and Dingus' (2008) study, in which Black female teachers perceived teaching as community work, allowing them to "give back" and remain connected to Black communities and students. Moreover, the literature indicates that Black teachers' commitments to teaching are often described differently from their White colleagues. Being a member of a historically marginalized racial group, many Black educators perceive teaching as instrumental to racial uplift (Dilworth & Brown, 2007; Morris, 2004) and express a desire to improve the personal lives and academic achievement of students of color (Kauchak & Burback, 2003). Holding these viewpoints, teaching is more than an occupation. The commitment and personal beliefs held by many Black teachers regarding their role and contribution to the education of students of color may produce job satisfaction.

Limitations

The 2007-2008 SASS is the largest, most extensive survey of K-12 teachers in the United States (Tourkin et al., 2010). It provides a multitude of opportunities for analysis and data on elementary and secondary educational issues. Although this data set surveys countless educators, when examining Black female teachers, the data did not permit a multilevel analysis. This study was restricted to a single-level analysis because of SASS sampling procedure, and Black female teachers were not significantly clustered in schools. Given that findings from our study suggest a potential interaction between building-level context and teachers' working conditions, it is unfortunate that the study was not able to accurately examine between-school variance. Future studies should attempt to use multilevel modeling to examine the potential association among building-level effects of school context and of Black female teachers' job satisfaction. In addition, this study utilizes teacher-reported data to estimate working conditions and teacher job satisfaction. Recognizing the potential for response bias, SASS data are the largest, most comprehensive surveys of public school teachers in the United States. We are confident that the NCES sampling procedures and the anonymity of respondents sufficiently minimized social desirability bias.

Recommendations

The findings in this study are particularly insightful for teacher education programs, urban education, and local school administrators. Based on this study's findings, teacher education programs should consider and implement practices that acknowledge the effects of school geography and conditions on certain groups of teachers' job satisfaction. In addition, school leaders, specifically administrators, could potentially improve the job satisfaction of Black female teachers. As found in this study, administrative support and positive student behavior are areas that may influence Black female teachers. These variables are not fixed; if keeping Black female teachers satisfied and in the classroom is a staffing priority, the actions of school leaders may positively influence this particular group of teachers, reaffirming teachers' commitments to teaching.

Within this study, the urban factor was significant. Urban environments were associated with higher teacher job satisfaction as opposed to suburban or rural environments. Programmatically, teacher education programs should work more extensively to recruit and prepare more Black female teachers for urban schools because, as indicated in this study, they are more likely to be satisfied in these settings. Although the recruitment and increased pipeline of Black female teachers into urban schools are encouraged, we do not advocate the confinement of Black female teachers solely to these particular schools; rather, aligning with the literature, this recommendation simply acknowledges that Black teachers' retention rates are often higher than White teachers' in such schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Scafidi, Sjoquist, & Stinebrickner, 2007).

Moreover, the urban factor in this study contributes to scholarly literature on urban education and schools. Presently, "*urban* itself has become in many quarters a signifier for poverty, nonwhite violence, narcotics, bad neighborhoods, an absence of family values, crumbling housing, and failing schools" (Kincheloe, 2010). Harper (2015), reframing the image of urban schools through an asset lens, initially captures the propagated depiction of urban schools in much of published scholarship:

> They are large, overcrowded, dark, and dangerous settings in which little learning occurs. Most educators find them undesirable places to work; hence, few apply for jobs at them, which results in perpetual shortages and a reliance on emergency certification initiatives. Teachers who end up there tend to stay only a year or two because the students are so apathetic and underprepared; there are too few resources, and incompetent leaders repeatedly fail to ensure safety and stability. (p. 140)

Both confronting and challenging this master urban school narrative, the urban factor finding in this study defaces the legitimacy of urban schools and environments as problematic, racialized places (Milner, Delale-O'Connor, Murray, & Farinde, 2016). Rather, the urban finding in this study reconceptualizes urban schools as desirable workplaces for Black female teachers. Such a finding opposes the negative connotation that is often associated with *urban* and affirms, "There is a rich array of excellence, intellect, and talent among the people in urban environments—human capital that make meaningful contributions to the very fabric of the human . . ." (Milner, 2012, p. 558).

Although the recruitment of Black female teachers in urban schools is pertinent, retention efforts must be implemented to sustain the Black female teacher pool. To retain Black female teachers, this study posits that school working conditions matter and must be nurtured. Rendering support and improving the working conditions of schools, administrators should develop a professional partnership between themselves and teachers. It is recommended that administrators advocate an "open-door policy" in which teachers can thoroughly convey their classroom needs. Through policy and action, administrators must consider the varied needs of teachers in all school-related issues. By developing this educational environment, administrators become instrumental in the success of both teachers and students. The presence of administrative support systems for teachers could potentially offer teachers the opportunity to focus less on the exterior factors influencing the classroom and more on teaching and learning inside the classroom.

Administrators must also render support in the area of student behavior. To promote positive student behavior in teachers' classrooms, administrators must empower teachers as authority figures within the school. In empowering teachers and establishing their authority, it is suggested that administrators (a) hold bi-weekly or monthly meetings with faculty in need of student behavior support, (b) offer a variety of aid to those teachers having difficulty with classroom management, (c) continually follow up with classroom disturbances, and (d) maintain an active presence, both vocally and physically, within school classrooms and hallways. These purposeful actions, although seemingly commonplace, may potentially promote positive student behavior when performed collectively.

Considering the underrepresentation of Black teachers in K-12 American classrooms and that teacher attrition and turnover negatively affect student progress by obstructing classroom instruction, these recommendations are timely and necessary. Although this study focuses on the job satisfaction of one subgroup of Black teachers, the job satisfaction of teachers of color must become a priority in educational discourses due to the potential impact on teacher retention and, subsequently, student outcome. Echoing the thoughts

of Ingersoll and Smith (2003), if we continue to recruit Black teachers without addressing the reasons why they are leaving the classroom, we are merely maintaining the status quo. Furthermore, neglecting factors influencing Black teachers' job satisfaction may produce and sustain certain educational consequences, such as (a) high attrition rates among Black teachers, (b) the persistence of a homogeneous teaching workforce, and (c) the restricted educational possibilities of diverse student groups. These consequences cannot be minimalized. In fact, they must be at the forefront of decisions pertaining to Black female teachers' job satisfaction and retention.

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Notes

1. TJS—teacher job satisfaction: **55q** (I am generally satisfied with being a teacher at this school), **57a** (the stress and disappointment in teaching at this school are not really worth it), **57b** (the teachers at this school like being here; I would describe us as a satisfied group), **57c** (I like the way things are run at this school), **57d** (if I could get a higher paying job I would leave teaching as soon as possible), **57e** (I think about transferring to another school), **57f** (I do not seem to have as much enthusiasm now as I did when I began teaching), and **57g** (I think about staying home from school because I am just too tired to go)
2. TPCC—teacher perception of classroom control: **54a** (selecting textbooks and other instructional materials), **54b** (selecting content, topics, and skills to be taught), **54c** (selecting teaching techniques), **54d** (evaluating and grading students), **54e** (disciplining students), and **54f** (determining the amount of homework to be assigned)
3. AS—teacher perception of administrative support: **55a** (the school administrator's behavior towards the staff is supportive and encouraging), **55g** (my principal enforces school rules for student conduct and backs me up when I need it), **55l** (in this school, staff members are recognized for a job well done), and **55o** (I am given the support I need to teach students with special needs)
4. SB—teachers' perception of positive student behavior: **56a** (student tardiness), **56b** (student absenteeism), **56c** (student class cutting), **56e** (students dropping out), **56f** (student apathy), and **56i** (student comes to school unprepared to learn)
5. CPS—teachers' perception of collegiality between the principal and faculty: **55h** (rules for student behavior are consistently enforced by teachers in this school,

even for student who are not in their classes), **55i** (most of my colleagues share my beliefs and values about what the central mission of the school should be), **55j** (the principal knows what kind of school he or she wants and has communicated it to the staff), and **55k** (there is a great deal of cooperative effort among the staff members)

6. BY—birth year: **71** (What is your year of birth?)
7. TE—teaching experience: **10a** (How many years have you worked as a FULL-TIME elementary or secondary teacher in PUBLIC SCHOOLS?)
8. MAST—master's degree: 25a (Do you have a master's degree?)
9. LICE—Licensure: **33a** (Which of the following describes the teaching certificate you currently hold in THIS state?) **certified** = **1** (regular or standard certificate or advanced professional certificate; certificate issues after satisfying all requirements except the completion of a probationary period), **lateral** = **2** (certificate that requires some additional coursework, student teaching, or passage of a test before regular certification can be obtained; certificate issued to persons who must complete a certification program to continue teaching), **not certified** = **3** (I do not hold any of the above certifications in THIS state)
10. ALTCERT—alternative certification: **31** (Did you enter teaching through an alternative certification program?)
11. NBC—national board certification: **32a** (Are you certified by National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in at least one content area?)
12. CT—charter: **47a** (Is this school a public CHARTER school?)
13. CTT—58b (How long do you plan to remain in teacher?) **1** = **intention to stay** (as long as I am able; until I am eligible for retirement benefits from this job; until I am eligible for retirement benefits from a previous job; until I am eligible for Social Security benefits), **0** = **intention to leave** (until a specific life event occurs [e.g., parenthood, marriage]; until a more desirable job opportunity comes along; definitely plan to leave as soon as I can).

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