

**The Need for and Challenges of Recruiting Teachers of Color in K-12 Schools and
Strategies and Challenges Related to Recruitment of Individuals of Color into
Traditional Teacher Preparation Programs in Kansas**

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Abstract

This qualitative research study explored the perceptions of deans or chairs of the Council for the Accreditation of Preparation (CAEP) approved teacher preparation programs in Kansas regarding the importance of and challenges related to the recruitment of teachers of color into the K-12 teaching profession. This research study also investigated the strategies used by higher education institutions to recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program. The challenges of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession were also explored. Eight teacher preparation program deans and department chairs participated in the study. Four research questions guided this research. Five major themes emerged from the analysis of the data: the importance of recruiting individuals of color into the teaching profession, the use of social media and digital platforms for candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation programs, strategies used to recruit candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, and the role of teacher preparation faculty in candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation. All participants concurred that having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms is important. The positive impact on the learning of all students, but especially students of color was cited by all participants. In addition, participants described the impact teachers of color have on district policy decisions. All study participants described how social media and digital platforms are used in candidate of color recruitment into traditional education preparation programs. Additional recruitment strategies included establishing partnership agreements and MOUs with local school districts with diverse student populations, campus visits, and making sure that

graphics and images used in recruitment materials include students from diverse backgrounds. The importance of having English and Spanish marketing materials and advertising on diverse radio stations especially those that broadcast in Spanish was also mentioned. Challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation included negative perceptions about the teaching profession, concerns about the low starting salaries of teachers, educator burnout, and first-generation students feeling lonely and overwhelmed while in college. Respondents indicated that higher education teacher preparation faculty are usually not directly involved in the recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs due to high teaching loads. The findings from this study may be useful to personnel and faculty within teacher preparation programs in Kansas. Future studies should focus on student perceptions about the importance of recruiting students of color into the teaching profession and on student perceptions of why students are not choosing teacher careers.

Dedication

I dedicate the completion of my dissertation and doctorate to my tribe. My two daughters, Anayah Louise and Riley Wynn, are my why! You girls motivate me to be better and push me to accomplish my goals. I hope I have made you proud as a mom. To my husband, Jordan, thank you for always believing in and supporting me in reaching every goal I set for myself. To my parents, Louis, and Dorothy, thank you for always cheering so loud for me that I never heard anything else but your positive affirmations for me. And to my grandpa, Sweet Papa. At 96 years old, you still put up a good fight, which is inspiring. My roots have pushed me to achieve!

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TB

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The nation is continuing to diversify at a rapid pace, according to 2020 census data (Frey, 2020). In 1980, the nation's population included residents who were 80% White, 11.5% Black, 6.5% Latino or Hispanic, and less than 2% Asian American (Frey, 2020). By the year 2000, the percentage of White residents had dropped to less than 70% (Frey, 2020). According to Neilsberg Research (2023), as of August 2023, the racial distribution of the United States population was 68% White, 12.5% Black, less than 1% American Indian, less than 6% Asian, 0.19% Native Hawaiian, and approximately 12% other or multiracial. Neilsberg did not include specific data related to Hispanic populations. Despite growing racial trends, there continues to be a gap between the percentage of students of color in the classroom and the percentage of teachers of color in the nation's schools. McKenna (2018) stated that the country is faced with a national teacher shortage, and schools across the country are struggling to hire and retain qualified educators who reflect the racial diversity of their communities. According to McKenna, teachers of color face unique barriers to entering and staying in the profession.

Welding (2024) indicated that in the fall of 2023, over 15 million undergraduate students were enrolled in U.S colleges and universities, and White students made up almost half (40.5%) of the total undergraduate population, while approximately 18% were Hispanic and less than 11% were Black. Private and nonprofit four-year universities were the least diverse, with approximately 46% White students (Nam, 2024). These numbers highlight the disparities in racial and ethnic representation across U.S. colleges and universities.

In recent years, the U.S. Department of Education (2023) has been committed to a policy agenda to prepare and recruit culturally and racially diverse teachers and administrators in the K-12 environment. During the 2021-2022 school year, approximately 24% of public-school teachers were individuals of color. Approximately 11% of public-school teachers identified as Hispanic, approximately 9% identified as Black, and approximately 2% identified as Asian (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). According to Jedele, Cotelo, and Gordon (2018), K-12 public-school districts around the country are developing programs to support hiring teachers of color and are creating alternative pathway programs (Jedele et al., 2018). Grow Your Own Programs (one of the alternative options) develop pathways for students to enter the teaching profession through completion of college level teacher preparation courses beginning during the high school years and providing support through placement as a teacher in the district where the student graduated from high school (Jedele et al., 2018).

The U.S. Department of Education (2023) provided data demonstrating a trajectory of increasing future educator diversity. According to the U.S. Department of Education, in 2023, 32% of pre-service teachers self-identified as persons of color. Despite the reported percentage of pre-service teachers of color, percentages vary for pre-service and current teachers from state to state (U.S. Department of Education, 2023).

After completing high school, all graduates are faced with the decision to either continue their education and enter college or enter directly into the workforce. For students of color, this can be a very difficult decision, as there are barriers these students encounter. Researchers have shown that a significant barrier for students of color is the transitional pressures these students face early in college that could potentially affect their

entire college experience (Fotuhi, 2014). Imposter syndrome can be very common among students of color (Fotuhi, 2014). Students of color suffer from feeling as though they don't belong, may have anxiety, and start to think they are not cut out for college (Fotuhi, 2014). Imposter syndrome is more pronounced for students of color than white students (Graham, 2023). Another barrier for students of color is tuition affordability despite financial aid being available (Dulabaum, 2016). Other barriers for students of color include college readiness, work-school life balance, and lack of focus and self-determination (Dulabaum, 2016).

Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005) suggested there is a positive impact on the college or institution community when diversity is apparent throughout. According to Milem et al., colleges and universities should consider institutionalizing support for diverse students, including individuals of color, women, those who are LGBTQ, and international students, over a continuous cycle. These researchers stated that diversity goes beyond the surface and is much more than representation. A diverse workforce has the potential to encourage innovation and promote a large range of perspectives. Milem et al. emphasized that by institutionalizing diversity on a continuous cycle, an institution can reap the benefits of enhancing collaboration and ultimately create a dynamic and multicultural environment.

Smith and Schonfeld (2000) stated that campuses must be intentional in their efforts to manage and address issues of diversity if they are to achieve the educational benefits of diversity in all its manifestations. Clayton (2021) stated that colleges and universities should prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion and promote these things as core values of the institution. According to Clayton (2021), diversity should be

everyone's responsibility within the institution and should spread across campus communities. Diversity, equity, and inclusion work should be the essential function for all offices, schools' colleges, and units and embrace equity-minded approaches throughout the leadership (Clayton, 2021)

While recruitment of diverse students to colleges and universities has been an issue for several decades, recruitment of students of color to pursue teacher preparation is an even more critical challenge (Will, 2022). Teacher dissatisfaction continues to be on the rise, so fewer individuals are choosing the path to become teachers (Will, 2022). According to Will (2022), enrollment in teacher education programs has been on a steady decline over the past decade. Fewer college students are earning degrees in education. According to the National Center of Education Statistics (2020), in the 1970's, more than 170 000 bachelor's degrees in education were conferred. In the 1990's and early 2000's more than 100,000 students completed education degrees each year (Schaeffer, 2022). In 2018-2019, 83,000 students earned a bachelor's degree in education (National Center of Education Statistics (2020).

McKenna (2018) stated there has been much concern over shortages of teachers of color in the teaching profession for several years. According to McKenna, the teaching force continues to look less and less like the demographics that make up the U.S. population, especially the students in our schools. The proportion of students of color is far greater than the proportion of teachers of color (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2018). Nationally, 80% of teachers are White, but more than half of public-school students are non-White (Will, 2022).

Despite efforts to include intentional strategic planning focused on recruitment of individuals of color into teacher preparation programs, there is a lack of diversity in post-secondary educational institutions. While it is important to place an emphasis on effective recruitment strategies that attract teachers of color, it is equally important to acknowledge the teacher pipeline (preparation, recruitment, hiring, induction, and retention (Borders & Perlmutter, 2020). These researchers described several strategies for recruiting K-12 teachers of color that included building an inclusive brand and focusing on a culture that is welcoming and that supports individuals from diverse backgrounds; enlisting allies to promote the search which could include casting a wider net for recruitment; mapping out a path for long term success; and redefining the notion of fit.

Diversity in the teacher workforce is a national topic that continues to be relevant after years of discussion (Partelow, Spong, Brown, & Johnson, 2017). Some strides have been made toward increasing teachers of color in the K-12 workforce. Partelow et al. (2017) indicated that a 5% increase occurred between 1987 and 2012. In 2023, Partelow et al. reported that teachers of color made up 21% of the K-12 workforce. However, nearly 40% of U.S. K-12 public schools have no teachers of color despite over 50% of K-12 public school student populations being Hispanic, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, or multi-racial (Partelow et al., 2023).

Nitri (2001) suggested that higher education institutions do not properly include specific recruiting strategies to provide students of color with equal opportunities to access higher education. No research was found that documented strategies used by college and university Schools of Education to recruit diverse candidates into the

teaching profession. The focus of this research study was to examine recruitment strategies used by college or university-based CAEP accredited Kansas teacher preparation programs to increase the number of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs.

Background

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2023), in 2021-2022, 31 providers existed for teacher preparation programs in Kansas. There are different pathways to obtaining teacher certification in Kansas. A traditional teacher preparation program is provided at four-year colleges or universities and is designed to provide a comprehensive education and practical experience to prepare future teachers for the classroom (King & Yin, 2022). The traditional teacher preparation programs include practical, hands-on experiences, class observations, and student teaching experiences (King & Yin, 2022).

Colleges and universities also offer alternative teacher certification programs that provide prospective students who already have a bachelor's degree with an alternative pathway to obtain the required teacher certification. Alternative teacher certification programs do not require completion of an additional bachelor's degree (King & Yin, 2022). There are also alternative certification programs that are not based in a higher education institution (King & Yin, 2022). A non-higher education alternative certification program also has program requirements such as coursework, and clinical experiences (King & Yin, 2022). In Kansas, in 2021-2022, 24 teacher preparation programs were traditional programs (based at a college or university), and seven were alternative programs (not college or university-based) (U.S. Department of Education,

2023). During the 2021-2022 academic year, 2,442 students completed their teacher preparation program in Kansas (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). A program completer is defined as a person who has met all the requirements of a state-approved teacher preparation program (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). According to Merod (2022), university-based alternative teacher preparation programs were producing more graduates than non-higher education alternative teacher preparation programs. During the 2019-2020 academic year, 34% of university alternative teacher preparation program enrollees successfully completed their programs, whereas only 14% of those enrolled in the programs not affiliated with colleges did so (Merod, 2022).

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the total enrollment in traditional teacher preparation programs in Kansas exceeded 6,000 students (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). The enrollment breakdown by race/ethnicity in the Kansas for the 2021-2022 academic year included: 5,828 White students, 626 Hispanic/Latino, 377 identified as having two or more races, 244 Black, 91 Asian, 74 American Indian, and 16 Native Hawaiian (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). Some individuals may have declined to report their race/ethnicity.

Statement of the Problem

Rosen (2018) stated that having same-race role models can last into adulthood and potentially shrink educational attainment gaps. According to Rosen, having one Black teacher in elementary school not only makes Black children more likely to successfully complete high school, but can significantly increase the likelihood that they enroll in college. Black students who had just one Black teacher by third grade were 13% more

likely to enroll in college. Black students who had two Black teachers were 39% more likely to attend college (Rosen, 2018).

Goings, Brandehoff, and Bianco (2018) stated that increasing the number of teachers of color in the K-12 teaching workforce is a proactive measure to address educational inequities. According to Ford (2010) and Grissom and Redding (2016), teachers of color have been found to hold students of color to higher expectations and are more likely to recommend students of color for special programs in school such as gifted or talented and less likely to refer them for special education programs. Teachers of color can also benefit White students as well (Goings et al., 2018). According to Goings et al., having a teacher of color can provide White students with positive representations of diverse racial groups, which can contribute to addressing overall society and educational inequity gaps. A diverse teaching force can also directly lead to diversifying the K-12 administration pipeline (Goings et al., 2018).

A sharp decline in the number of teachers of color in the United States can be traced to the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954 when schools began to integrate (Ma, 2022). The National Center of Education Statistics (2020) presented data that indicated that the majority of the public-school teacher workforce, 82%, identified as White. During the 2017-2018 school year fewer than 8% of teachers were Black. Recruiting and retaining individuals of color in the K-12 teacher workforce is key to improving outcomes for all students, particularly for students from low-income families and other under-served populations (Rosen, 2018). Diversity within both teaching and learning experiences offers positive outcomes inside of the classroom and provides significant benefits to students (Rosen, 2018). There are benefits of having teachers of

color in the education workforce, such as increasing the retention of teachers of color, and students having positive perceptions of all students, despite their color (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). However, like the barriers students of color face with entering college, teachers of color face unique barriers to entering and staying in the teaching profession (McKenna, 2018). According to McKenna, there is a need to examine recruiting strategies to discover what works best to close the gap between students and teachers of color (McKenna, 2018).

There is limited research about the strategies employed by institutions of higher education related to the recruitment of teacher education candidates of color. Several institutions are making efforts toward recruiting teacher education candidates of color, but no research related to strategies used to recruit these candidates into teacher education is provided in the literature. Gaining an understanding of effective recruiting strategies is essential to support the effective recruitment of teacher education candidates of color. The majority of existing research has investigated the retention and recruitment of teachers of color at the K-12 level post completion of teacher preparation programs (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). However, there is limited research on the recruitment strategies higher education institutions use to recruit candidates of color into teacher preparation programs. No literature was found that described Kansas teacher preparation program strategies for recruiting candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs.

Purpose of the Study

Four purposes guided the current research. The first purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas

about the importance of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession. The second purpose was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the challenges K-12 school administrators encounter when recruiting teachers of color. The third purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs about strategies used by their institution to recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program. The fourth purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about challenges they experience when recruiting candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program.

Significance of the Study

The results of the current study contributed to the literature focusing on recruitment strategies employed to recruit individuals of color into teacher preparation programs. The results of this study may be of interest to administrators and faculty in teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions who are engaged in efforts to improve recruitment strategies for individuals of color. Personnel at the Kansas State Department of Education and local Kansas K-12 school district administrators may also be interested in the results of this study as they strive to increase the number of teachers of color in Kansas school districts.

Delimitations

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) described delimitations as boundaries identified by the researcher that define the purpose of the study. The researcher narrowed the focus of the study with the following delimitations:

1. Deans or chairs of Kansas higher education teacher preparation programs were included in interviews.
2. Study participants were employed at a higher education institution in Kansas accredited by the CAEP.
3. Study participants had been in their administrative roles for at least one year.
4. Study participants were employed at a Kansas higher education institution that had candidates of color studying teacher education.
5. Study participants were asked to provide information related to traditional teacher preparation programs at their respective institutions.

Assumptions

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) described assumptions as “postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research” (p. 135). This study was conducted under the following assumptions:

1. Participants understood the interview questions and were honest in providing responses.
2. The interpretation of the data accurately portrays the perceptions of study respondents

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program department deans or chairs about the importance of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession?

RQ2. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program department deans or chairs about the challenges K-12 schools experience when recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession?

RQ3. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program department deans or chairs about strategies their institution has used to successfully recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program?

RQ4. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program department deans or chairs about challenges related to the recruitment of candidates of color into the traditional teaching preparation program?

Definition of Terms

Definitions of key terms used throughout the study are provided in this section.

Charter School. According to Prothero (2018), a charter school is a tuition-free school option that is publicly funded but has exemptions from certain state laws and regulations.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). According to CAEP (n.d.), this national organization reviews and accredits teacher preparation programs throughout the U.S. CAEP advances equity and excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen K-12 student learning (CAEP, n.d.).

Effective strategies. According to Collins Dictionary (2019), effective can be defined as something that works well and produces the intended results. Collins Dictionary (2019) defined strategy as a general set of plans to accomplish something, specifically over an identified period of time.

Individuals of color. For the purposes of this study, the term individuals of color was defined as any non-White individual.

Teacher-preparation program. This term refers to programs listed by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy, and Programs Studies Service (2016) as Title II approved by state departments of education to recommend individuals for teacher licensure.

Organization of the Study

This qualitative study includes five chapters. Chapter 1 included the introduction, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitations, assumptions, research questions, and a definition of terms used in the study. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature that describes the importance of having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms, the declining enrollment in higher education, challenges students of color experience in attending and completing college, students of color choosing teacher preparation as their college major, challenges associated with standardized tests and teacher licensure examinations, and CAEP accreditation. The third chapter explains the methodology for the study and includes the research design, setting, sampling procedures, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, and synthesis, reliability, and trustworthiness, researcher's role, and limitations of the study. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are explained. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study findings, interpretations, findings related to the literature, and conclusions that include implications for action and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the perceptions of deans or chairs of eight CAEP-accredited Kansas teacher preparation programs about the importance of having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms, the challenges K-12 schools encounter when trying to recruit teachers of color, strategies used to attract candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs, and challenges related to recruiting candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs. This chapter provides a review of the literature on topics related to the study. The first section summarizes research related to the importance of having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms. The next four sections focus on higher education enrollment and include summaries of research focusing on declining enrollment in higher education, challenges individuals of color experience attending and completing college, students of color choosing teacher preparation as their college major, and research on challenges associated with standardized tests and teacher preparation program entry and licensure exams. The last section provides an overview of the CAEP accreditation and the rationale for including only CAEP accredited teacher preparation programs in this study.

. The Importance of Having Teachers of Color in K-12 Classrooms

The history of racial segregation has had a lasting impact on the teaching profession and workforce in the United States (Scott, 2020). Following the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which mandated the desegregation of public schools, many African American teachers faced significant job losses (Rosenthal, 1957). Approximately 38,000 African American educators were

deemed unfit to teach White students and were dismissed resulting in a drastic reduction in the number of Black teachers in the education system in the United States (Rosenthal, 1957). This historical context sheds light on the ongoing disparities in representation within the teaching workforce. Before the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, teachers of color made up approximately 35% to 50% of public-school teachers in the 17 states that had Black-only schools (Smith, 2023). There has been systematic exclusion of African American educators and their diverse perspective for decades (Smith, 2023). Systematic exclusion in education refers to the deep rooted and pervasive racial inequities present in the educational system (Smith, 2023). These disparities are not just about individual biases but are embedded in policies, practices, and institutional structures that create unequal educational opportunities and outcomes for students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Smith, 2023).

As the population of students in the United States becomes more diverse, the need to have more teachers of color in classrooms has become greater (Ordway, 2017). Scott (2020) found that not only do students of color benefit from having a teacher of color during their elementary and high school years, but all students benefit. Ordway (2017) indicated that Black students performed better in subjects such as reading and math when they were taught by teachers of color. Ramseur (2022) described a Johns Hopkins University study that indicated that having at least one teacher of color can reduce a student's likelihood of dropping out of college by an average of 29% with an even more significant impact of 39% for low-income students of color (Ramseur, 2021). Having teachers who share similar backgrounds can enhance students' engagement (Ordway,

2017). According to Ordway, this correlation highlights the importance of representation in education as teachers of color can provide culturally relevant teaching.

Differences in disciplinary actions often stem from a lack of cultural awareness among educators because teachers may not be familiar with the student's culture and behaviors are often misinterpreted (Scott, 2020). Sabol et al. (2022) stated that research consistently shows that Black, Hispanic and low-income students face disproportionate rates of disciplinary actions compared to their White peers or students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. These students often experience more frequent and severe punishments for similar behaviors, contributing to a cycle of disadvantage in education (Sabol et al., 2022). The disparity can be attributed to various factors and the consequences of these disciplinary practices can be profound (Sabol et al, 2022). Research by Skiba, Michael, Nardo, and Peterson (2002) found that students of color are more likely to face suspension compared to their peers, even when they have the same behaviors. According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy, Development, Policy and Program Studies Service (2016) for the 2017-18 school year, students of color made up 15% of student enrollment. However, they represented over 50% of all in-school suspensions in comparison to White students, who made up approximately 47% of total public-school enrollments and represented only 39% of all suspensions.

The majority of teachers in the U.S. are White (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service 2016). Nationwide, students of color make up more than half of the public-school student population (Will, 2022). However, people of color are underrepresented

among public school teachers and less than 20% of school teachers are people of color (Will, 2022).

Recruiting and retaining teachers of color can yield significant positive returns by improving overall student outcomes (Ramseur, 2022). As K-12 students in classrooms with teachers of color with diverse perspectives graduate high school and pursue higher education at higher rates, they contribute to a more skilled and innovative workforce (Ramseur, 2022). This diversity fosters creativity and collaboration, driving economic growth and benefiting businesses, and ultimately enhances representation in education. Diversity not only supports individual students but also strengthens the economy as a whole (Ramseur, 2022).

Declining Enrollment in Higher Education

Douglas-Gabriel (2024) cited data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center and reported that many higher education institutions are beginning to see growth in student enrollment after drastic drops in enrollment post the pandemic. Undergraduate enrollment increased in the fall of 2023 by 1.2% (approximately 176 000) students compared to the previous school year. However, despite the growth in undergraduate enrollments, there are still over a million empty seats on campuses compared to 2018-2019 (Douglas-Gabriel, 2024).

Several different factors have contributed to the decline in enrollments in U.S. colleges. One factor is declining birth rates (Chowske, 2024). According to Chowske, there has been a 15% decrease in live births from 2009 to 2019, which will result in fewer high school graduates in the corresponding years. A second factor impacting higher education enrollment is the diminishing trust Americans have in higher education.

Chowske reported that perceptions of the value of college have declined. While the majority of Americans find a college education to be valuable, some Americans are less likely to trust colleges (Chowske, 2024). A 2023 Gallup poll found that 36% of Americans expressed a distrust in higher education institutions (Brenan, 2023).

A third factor impacting higher education enrollment is changing student perceptions about college attendance. Chowske (2024) reported that student perceptions of the value of college in areas such as business, marketing and science, technology, and engineering and science is depreciating. In a recent survey of more than 1,000 survey participants, nearly 66% of surveyed students said higher education is not worth the cost (Schwartz, 2021). Students are concerned with employment opportunities post college, and their ability to pay for expenses such as tuition and non-education related expenses (Schwartz, 2021).

An additional factor that has contributed to the decline in enrollment in college is that fewer employers are requiring a 4-year degree (Chowske, 2024). Many companies have revised the hiring requirements and eliminated a required college degree by as much as 46% in recent years (Chowske, 2024). According to Fuller, Langer, and Sigelman (2022), alternative options such as coding camps have become more popular, and they are less expensive than a four-year degree. Employers are placing a greater emphasis and value on demonstrated skills rather than a college degree (Wingard, 2024). In addition, advances in technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) have led to the elimination of several jobs, and modifications to how many jobs are now performed (Wingard, 2024). Employers have lost trust in higher education and are not confident that students will graduate with the necessary skills to be successful in the workplace (Wingard, 2024).

The rising cost of attending college is also a contributing factor related to declining enrollment in higher education (Chowske, 2024). According to Wood (2003) tuition has more than doubled in the last 20 years. With the tuition increases during the past few decades, admissions teams are faced with the challenge of convincing families and prospective students that the financial investment in a degree is worth the value (Carrasco, 2023).

Recently, over 360 colleges across the country made a voluntary commitment to follow an established set of principles and standards that will provide clarity to the financial aid offers they communicate to undergraduate students (Carrasco, 2023). According to Carrasco, financial aid offers will need to estimate the total cost of attendance (COA) and

include a breakdown of the cost to be paid to the institution and costs paid to others; an estimated net price for the student, derived by subtracting grants and scholarships from the total COA; and for all loans unambiguously labeled as such, using the word 'loan'. (p.1)

Admissions staff have had to be prepared to address the concerns related to the tuition cost because students and families have to make difficult financial decisions (Jenkins, 2023).

Admissions staff have to be capable of delivering complex financial information in a manner that is digestible to prospective students and their families because it can make the difference in the decision to attend college or not (Jenkins, 2023). Chowske (2024) reported that Gen Zer's (those born between 1997 and 2012) are watching

Millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996) struggle to pay back student loans, leading these students to ultimately question the value of a college education.

Selective admissions at many public colleges based on high school GPA, performance on tests like the ACT, and a record of active participation in high school extracurricular activities and community involvement have also been cited as barriers contributing to declining college enrollment (Jenkins, 2023). College and university admissions and recruiting staff are responsible on an annual basis to recruit students that meet the institutions' standards and those who will add value to the institution.

According to Jenkins (2023), the typical recruitment methods are not as effective, and recruitment has become a very complex ordeal. In consideration of the challenges in higher education recruitment, admissions teams have become innovative and no longer focus on the typical admissions standards, such as targeting the right students. According to Jenkins (2023), admissions and recruiting staff members in 2023 are considering factors such as demographic trends, student interest, geographic location, and academic achievement.

As the world continues to change, one of the biggest challenges that college admissions teams are faced with is keeping up with the trends of student interest (Jenkins, 2023). Admissions teams have to be prepared to change their recruitment techniques to stay responsive to trends and attract students who have a broad range of interest reasons for attending college (Jenkins, 2023). Another challenge facing college admissions staff is the need to effectively market their school to prospective students (Jenkins, 2023). Students are relying on social media to research and evaluate prospective higher education institutions before they apply for admissions (Jenkins, 2023). According to

Turner (2017), first-generation students of color are more likely to use social media to search for a college than other recruitment options.

Challenges Students of Color Experience Attending and Completing College

There are several barriers to educational opportunities for students of color at institutions of higher learning. Gallegos (2023) reported that students of color face psychological and financial barriers in the higher education setting. According to Gallegos, in comparison to any other racial group, Black students, in particular, are less likely to complete a credential or certificate.

Black and Hispanic students are also more likely to earn a degree from a for-profit school than a public four-year college or university (Libassi, 2018). According to a report from the Student Borrower Protection Center (2021), students are more likely to earn a degree from a for-profit university due to a combination of factors, including for-profit institutions targeting communities of color through recruitment and location strategies. Within the higher education sector, for-profit institutions only enroll 9% of students (Wood, 2021). However, they account for one-third of student loan defaults and 17% of student debt, with over 80% of their borrowers being students of color (Wood, 2021).

Students of color are often faced with psychological barriers while attending colleges. These psychological barriers include: (1) microaggressions and racism that can negatively affect their mental well-being, (2) specific forms of discrimination or cyberbullying which adds to their stress and emotional strain, (3) culture-related expectations that create pressures and cause a student of color to feel isolated and, (4) general lack of support systems that leave students of color feeling stressed (Primm,

2018). Despite students of color experiencing psychological barriers, they tend to not seek support or help due to negative stigmas and distrust for health services (Schrader, 2022).

Many students also face financial barriers in college (Chowske, 2024). According to Georgetown University (2023), students of color are most likely to have the highest unmet need while in college and the highest rate of student debt after graduation. While the cost of college can create a barrier for students considering post-secondary education, students of color also experience disadvantages regarding advising related to tuition pricing (Libassi, 2018). According to Libassi, unconscious and implicit bias has been present within college and university advising offices, and advisors are disproportionately pushing students of color into specific majors. Some institutions have price differentials depending on the department, such as engineering, discouraging students of color to enter those fields (Libassi, 2018).

Knox (2023) reported that students of color have lower college completion rates in comparison to any other demographic of students. According to Knox, a 2023 report from the Lumina Foundation indicated that 34% of Black Americans have a degree of some type in comparison to 46% of the general population. Enrollment of students of color has declined over the past decade and continued to decline post-pandemic (Knox, 2023). According to Knox, students of color are likely to have other factors, such as full-time jobs and family responsibilities that they have to juggle and prioritize while being a student in college.

Knox (2023) suggested that general discrimination and a lack of cultural inclusion contribute to dropout rates and achievement gaps that students of color face. Describing

the results of the Lumina Foundation report, Knox indicated that 21% of Black students had reported frequent or occasional discrimination during their studies in college.

Students of color enrolled at colleges and universities with low diverse student population enrollment were twice as likely to be discriminated against as those at diverse student-populated institutions (Knox, 2023).

Gallegos (2023) indicated there is a need for leadership within the university and college environments that will combat discriminatory and negative psychological environments. According to Gallegos, addressing these barriers requires comprehensive policy changes and targeted support systems to ensure equitable access to education for all students. Policy change considerations and targeted support systems include:

(1) advocating for increased funding for Pell Grants, which are a vital resource for low-income students, (2) investments in research and initiatives to improve campus climate that can help create more inclusive and supportive environments for students of color, (3) exploring federal-state partnerships to make college tuition-free could create affordability and this approach could address disparities in state-level funding, and (4) increasing support for Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) to support educational equity (Pilar, 2024).

Students of Color Choosing Teacher Preparation as Their College Major

Students of color who have completed baccalaureate degrees have faced significant disparities in comparison to White students in majors such as education and engineering (Libassi, 2018). White students are approximately two times more likely to earn a degree in education in comparison to students of color (Libassi, 2018).

Additionally, White students are also disproportionately more likely to graduate with degrees in STEM-related fields (Libassi, 2018).

Approximately half of the students of color who enter college are first-generation college students (Lynch, 2013). These students of color tend to have lower degree completion rates in comparison to their student peers (DeAngelo et al., 2011). Bouchrika (2024) reported the 2021 five-year graduation rates by race. White students accounted for 62.2%, Black students accounted for 11%, Hispanic students accounted for 13%, and American Indian, multiracial, and Asian students accounted for approximately 16% of the graduates. Students of color are significantly underrepresented among graduates with teacher education majors, with at least 82% of education graduates being White (Partelow et al., 2017).

According to Partelow et al., the disparity in graduation rates from teacher education programs among students of color in comparison to White students stems from several factors, including negative experiences with the public education system, which discourage them from pursuing teaching careers; the additional cost and time commitment required to obtain a teaching credential; and pressure from families to pursue higher-earning and higher-status professions. Partelow et al., indicated that all of these factors can create significant barriers and divert students from the education field. However, in areas of the U.S. where access to higher education is greater, there tends to be a higher enrollment in teacher preparation programs among students of color (Partelow et al., 2017).

According to Partelow et al. (2017), students of color who choose teacher preparation programs select programs that are nontraditional or alternative programs

rather than traditional teacher preparation programs. Feistritzer (2011) reported that 25% of students of color obtained alternative teaching certification in comparison to only 9% who obtained teaching certificates from traditional higher education-based teacher education routes. Overall, alternative teacher preparation programs prepare more persons of color in comparison to White students (Partelow et al., 2017).

In 2020, Rafa, Erwin, Kelley, and Wixom reported that teachers of color often opt to teach in charter school settings. Approximately 30% of charter school teachers are persons of color, in comparison to approximately 18% of teachers in public schools (Rafa et al., 2020). Charter schools often have more flexibility in their hiring practices compared to traditional public schools, which may contribute to a higher representation of teachers of color in these K-12 settings (Rafa et al., 2020). The laws and regulations for charter schools vary by state, and not all charter schools require teachers to obtain certification or licensure before teaching (Rafa et al., 2020).

Challenges Associated with Standardized Tests and Teacher Preparation Program Entry and Licensure Exams

The existence of achievement gaps in standardized tests used for entry into the teaching profession underscores broader challenges related to diversity and equity in education (Partelow et al., 2017). According to Partelow et al.,

Due to educational inequities, achievement gaps between Black and Latino students and their White peers begin early in students' careers and persist on assessments taken in college and beyond. For example, an Educational Testing Service analysis of performance and passing rate differences of African American and White prospective teachers on the Praxis I—an assessment commonly used to

determine entry into teacher preparation and alternative certification programs—indicatd that 41%, 44%, and 37% of African Americans pass the reading, writing, and math sections, respectively, the first time they take the Praxis I for licensure, while 82%, 80%, and 78% of White test takers do so. (p. 13)

There are similar trends that exist in regard to teacher licensure tests that are required by states that teacher preparation candidates are required to take toward the end of their teacher education studies before they enter into the teaching profession (Partelow et al., 2017). According to Partelow et al. (2017),

Across many licensure exams, large gaps exist in the passage rates of White and African American potential teachers. On the Praxis II—a series of commonly used licensure tests that are subject-specific—African American test takers are much less likely than White test takers to pass the tests the first time. This finding holds true across various subject and grade level Praxis tests (p. 14).

CAEP Accreditation

In this study, participants were employed in teacher preparation programs offered at higher education institutions that were CAEP accredited. A description of the CAEP accreditation is provided in this review of literature to add context to the study findings. Many teacher preparation programs across the United States have established a minimum GPA standard for entry into education preparation programs (Erickson, 2016). This requirement is often linked to accreditation by the CAEP (Erickson, 2016). The CAEP accreditation is a rigorous process that evaluates educator preparation programs based on a set of standards that focus on program impact on student learning, candidate qualifications and outcomes, and continuous improvement (CAEP, n.d.). States may

choose to require CAEP accreditation as a way to ensure that teacher preparation programs meet high-quality standards, including academic qualifications such as GPA requirements (CAEP, n.d.). According to the CAEP, Standard 3 includes the following requirements to be demonstrated by teacher preparation programs:

R3.1 Recruitment: The provider presents goals and progress evidence for recruitment of high-quality candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and diverse populations that align with their mission. The provider demonstrates efforts to know and address state, national, regional, or local needs for hard-to-staff schools and shortage fields. The goals and evidence should address progress toward a candidate pool which reflects the diversity of America's P-12 students.

R3.2 Monitoring and Supporting Candidate Progression: The provider creates and monitors transition points from admission through completion that indicate candidates' developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical skills, critical dispositions, professional responsibilities, and the ability to integrate technology effectively in their practice. The provider identifies a transition point at any point in the program when a cohort grade point average of 3.0 is achieved and monitors these data. The provider ensures knowledge of and progression through transition points are transparent to candidates. The provider plans and documents the need for candidate support, as identified in disaggregated data by race and ethnicity and such other categories as may be relevant to the EPP's [educator preparation program] mission, so candidates meet milestones. The provider has a system for effectively maintaining records of candidate complaints, including complaints made to CAEP, and documents the resolution.

R3.3 Competency at Completion: The provider ensures candidates possess academic competency to teach effectively with positive impacts on diverse P-12 student learning and development through application of content knowledge, foundational pedagogical skills, and technology integration in the field(s) where certification is sought. Multiple measures are provided, and data are disaggregated and analyzed based on race, ethnicity, and such other categories as may be relevant for the EPP's mission. (p. 1)

Accreditation plays a crucial role in the continuous improvement of education preparation programs by enforcing standards that promote rigorous assessment and evidence-based practices. CAEP accredited teacher preparation programs have met standards that require demonstration of a continuous intentional focus on recruitment (CAEP, n.d.). In addition, educator preparation program are required to demonstrate efforts to recruit teacher candidates that reflect the diversity of America's students (CAEP, n.d.).

Summary

This literature review provided an overview of the unique challenges that higher education institutions are facing as it pertains to the general recruitment of students. Higher education institutions compete for prospective students, particularly those who meet specific criteria. Impacting higher education enrollment are the continuing rise of college tuition and affordability concerns. In addition, the perception of the value of a college degree has contributed significantly to the challenges colleges and universities face when recruiting students. This chapter also provided an overview of the challenges students of color encounter and the barriers they face before entering college, and the

obstacles they face while trying to complete a degree. Researchers have reported that general discrimination and a lack of cultural inclusion contribute to dropout rates and achievement gaps for students of color (Knox, 2023).

Researchers have found that all students, regardless of race or background, benefit from having a teacher of color during the K-12 school years (Ford, 2010; Goings et al., 2018; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Rosen, 2018). Positive outcomes correlate to same-race models and can have a lasting impact on adulthood (Rosen, 2018). As the population of students in the United States becomes more diverse, the need to have more teachers of color in classrooms has become greater (Ordway, 2017).

Teacher preparation candidates of color face a range of experiences and challenges. Challenges include financial constraints, lack of resources, and insufficient support. Fewer students of color are interested in teaching due to various reasons, including underrepresentation in the education system.

The methodology used in the current study is explained in Chapter 3. This chapter includes a description of the research design, setting, sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis and synthesis. The researcher's role and the limitations of the study are also described in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the importance deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs place on recruiting teachers of color into the teaching profession and the challenges K-12 schools encounter when trying to recruit teachers of color. In addition, the perceptions of teacher preparation program deans and chairs about successful strategies and challenges related to recruitment of candidates of color at eight Kansas university based traditional teacher preparation programs were investigated. Chapter 3 provides a summary of the methods used in the current study including the research design, setting, sampling procedures, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis and synthesis, reliability and trustworthiness, researchers' role, and limitations of the research study.

Research Design

A qualitative phenomenological research design was used to conduct this study. According to Creswell (2012), “A qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem” (p. 15). Specifically, a phenomenological approach was used to understand the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs about the importance of having teachers of color in K-12 schools, challenges these schools experience in recruiting teachers of color, recruitment strategies employed by eight CAEP approved college- or university-based traditional teacher preparation programs in Kansas, and the challenges associated with recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation. Creswell (2012) described a phenomenological study as one that “describes

the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 9). The phenomenological research method used in this study provided an opportunity for the researcher to complete a semi-structured interview with a dean or chair from each of eight Kansas higher education institutions in Kansas that provide a traditional teacher preparation program of study.

Setting

The setting for this study included eight CAEP approved college- university-based traditional teacher preparation programs in Kansas that enrolled teacher preparation candidates of color during the fall 2023 semester. Teacher preparation program enrollment data obtained from the Kansas State Department of Education were used to identify the eight teacher preparation programs that had the highest percentage of candidates of color enrolled in a traditional teacher preparation program during the fall 2023 semester. In the fall of 2024, there were 24 public and private university or college-based teacher preparation programs in Kansas, and seven alternative programs that are provided by non-college or university providers (Kansas State Department of Education, 2024). All institutions included in the study had been reviewed by the CAEP and had passed rigorous accreditation standards. When an institution or program is accredited, it has demonstrated that it meets standards set by organizations representing the academic community, professionals, and other stakeholders. In order for these institutions to maintain state and national accreditations the institution or program must undergo a review every seven years.

Sampling Procedures

Purposeful sampling was used to select the sample in the current study. The contact information for the deans or chairs of eight teacher preparation programs at these higher education institutions was obtained by accessing the college or university website or the Kansas State Department of Education directory of approved teacher preparation programs. This sample selection method ensured that the researcher interviewed individuals with firsthand knowledge and experiences related to the research focus. Student demographic information from each institution was reviewed to identify the teacher preparation programs with highest percentages of candidates of color. The teacher preparation department deans or chairs invited to participate in this study had been in their administrative roles for at least one year.

Instrument

The researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research, collecting data through observation and interviewing. Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) explained that qualitative research interviewing "has the potential to elicit rich, thick descriptions" (p. 193). Interviewing was selected as the research methodology because a researcher cannot directly observe the information being sought.

A semi-structured interview protocol with potential follow-up probes for clarification and more detail were developed based on a review of existing literature and past research questions developed by other researchers conducting similar research regarding recruiting initiatives for specific academic areas or programs. The semi-structured interview protocol included four demographic questions and 10 open ended interview questions. The demographic questions included the following:

IQ1. How long have you been the dean or chair of the teacher education department?

IQ2. How many candidates are currently enrolled in the teacher preparation program at your university?

IQ3. What percentage of candidates of color are enrolled in the teacher preparation program at your institution?

IQ4. Who is responsible for student recruitment for the teacher preparation program?

The research questions and semi-structured interview questions included the following:

RQ1. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program deans or chairs about the importance of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession?

IQ5. In your opinion, how important is it to recruit individuals of color into the teaching profession?

IQ6. What are the benefits of having teachers of color in the K-12 teaching workforce?

RQ2. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program deans or chairs about the challenges K-12 schools experience when recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession?

IQ7. What challenges do K-12 schools experience in recruiting teachers of color into the teaching profession?

RQ3. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program deans or chairs about strategies their institution has used to successfully recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program?

IQ8. Describe the strategies used by your institution to recruit diverse candidates into the traditional teacher preparation program.

IQ9. Are there any other points you would like to share with me about recruitment strategies used to recruit individuals of color to enroll in the traditional teacher preparation program?

RQ4. What are the perceptions of teacher preparation program deans or chairs about challenges related to the recruitment of candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program?

IQ10. What are the challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into your traditional teacher preparation program?

To ensure the interview protocol's validity, the researcher requested two individuals who had experience with teacher education and higher education recruitment to review the interview questions for clarity and provide feedback as peer reviewers. Peer reviewer #1 was an academic dean at a private Kansas institution. Peer reviewer #2 was a vice president of admissions and marketing with over 10 years of marketing experience in higher education. The reviewers indicated that the interview questions were aligned with the research questions. These peer reviewers also participated in a mock interview to provide feedback to the researcher about wording of the interview questions, pacing, and length of the interview. Neither of the peer reviewers were employed at a higher education institution from which data were collected.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to conducting the research, the researcher completed the five U.S. Department of Health and Human Services human subjects training modules. Certificates certifying completion of each module were submitted with a request to conduct the research to the Baker University Institutional Review Board (IRB) on September 4, 2024. The request included the IRB application form, solicitation letter, interview protocol, and consent form.

Approval to conduct the research was received from the Baker University IRB committee on September 8, 2024 (see Appendix A). Once IRB approval was received, student enrollment data from each CAEP approved teacher preparation program in Kansas for the past three years was examined to identify the eight teacher preparation programs with the highest percentage of candidates of color. Deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs with the highest percentage of candidates of color were contacted by email to invite participation in the study (see Appendix B). The Invitation to Participate included an overview of the study, the amount of time the interview would require, and description of how anonymity and confidentiality would be insured. In addition, the Invitation to Participate indicated that participation in the study was voluntary and that there were no risks, discomfort, or compensation associated with participation. A description of how the participant could withdraw from the study or indicate a desire to not respond to any of the interview questions was also stated. Participants were informed that they would have the opportunity to review a transcript of the interview for accuracy prior to data analysis.

Before participating in an interview for the study, each participant signed and dated an informed consent form (see Appendix C). The consent form included the same information as that stated in the Invitation to Participate (see Appendix B). It indicated that the researcher would take notes throughout the interview and that the interview would be recorded.

All data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing for dialogue and in-depth explanations and responses from the participants. Interview questions were open-ended, and prompts were designed to elicit rigorous and detailed responses from the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Interviews were conducted via Zoom. Each interview began with pleasantries and introductions to establish brief introductions and a comfortable environment for the interview questions. All participants were asked the same interview questions in the same question order. Throughout the interview, the researcher took detailed notes regarding contextual information.

The researcher listened to all recordings several times to prepare the transcripts. The researcher removed all identifying information from the transcripts to maintain confidentiality. All transcripts were stored on a secured, password-protected Google drive that was only accessible by the researcher. The transcriptions were kept for five years before being deleted.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

To analyze the data, the researcher applied Creswell and Creswell's (2018) five steps of data analysis: organize and prepare the data for analysis, read or look at all the data, code the data, generate a description and themes, and represent the description and

themes in the context of the study's narrative. To apply Creswell and Creswell's (2018) first step of data analysis, organize and prepare the data for data analysis, the interview recordings were transcribed into text files. Once the transcripts were drafted, each participant was emailed their transcript and asked to review it for additions, omissions, and accuracy. Creswell and Creswell (2018) called the interviewee to review the transcript member checking. To apply Creswell and Creswell's (2018) second step of qualitative data analysis, read or look at all of the data, the researcher read each transcript several times to determine the overall meaning of the data. After participants returned their reviewed transcripts, notes taken by the researcher during the interview were added to the transcription.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), the third step in qualitative data analysis involves conducting a detailed analysis with a coding process. The purpose of coding is to organize the information into chunks or sections of text by giving meaning to the information. To implement this step, the researcher read the responses provided for each interview question and highlighted similar phrases and words that were present across all participant responses for the same question. Once all the data were coded, the researcher applied Creswell and Creswell's (2018) fourth step of qualitative data analysis, identifying themes. Each theme was created using a keyword or phrase focused on concepts identified during the coding process. To implement Creswell and Creswell's final step, develop a narrative to convey the findings of the data analysis; the researcher listed each theme and provided direct quotes to illustrate the theme.

Once the data analysis was completed, the researcher provided the transcripts and identified themes for peer review to the same external experts who reviewed the

interview protocol. The peer reviewers confirmed the accuracy of the data analysis and theme identification. This process was followed to ensure the validity and reliability of the qualitative data analysis. This process is crucial in qualitative data research to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

Reliability and Trustworthiness

The researcher employed the following strategies to guarantee reliability and trustworthiness in the data collection and analysis. First, a detailed interview protocol was developed and served as a guide to ensure consistency throughout the study. Two peer reviewers examined the protocol for clarity and consistency between the research questions and interview questions. Additionally, the researcher provided all participants in the study with the opportunity to review and validate the interview transcripts. This process allowed any corrections of misinterpretations to be made to ensure reliability. Peer review of interview transcripts and theme identification ensured reliability. Finally, the researcher involved peer review to ensure the accuracy of the interview protocol and data analysis results.

Researcher's Role

The researcher plays a significant role in a qualitative study. The role of the researcher involved connecting with each participant as he or she shared thoughts and perceptions during the interviews. It was important for the researcher to remain unbiased during all interviews to ensure that bias did not influence the perspective of those interviewed. Furthermore, it was critical for this study for the researcher to disclose all biases to maintain the integrity of the research. The researcher did not personally know or work with any participants in the research study. The researcher was familiar with

most of Kansas's teacher preparation programs due to a previous professional role with two four-year private institutions and one large urban Kansas P-12 school district. To minimize any potential biases, the researcher continually practiced integrity and intentionality throughout the study.

Limitations

Creswell (2012) defined limitations as potential weaknesses or problems in the study beyond the researcher's control. Limitations identified in the current study included the following:

1. Data in the current study relied upon self-reported perceptions of the participants. The accuracy of the data provided to the researcher was based on the opinions, perceptions, and experiences of only one representative from each institution.
2. Participants possessed varying amounts of experience with recruitment strategies focused on students of color. This may have limited study findings.
3. The participants in the study were from universities or colleges that varied in size. The budget and number of personnel engaged in student recruitment varied significantly and may have impacted the results of the study.
4. Data collected during this study cannot be generalized to all teacher preparation programs within or outside of the state of Kansas.

Summary

Chapter 3 focused on the qualitative research design that engaged participants in face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Four research questions guided the study. This chapter described the methodology of the study, including the research design, sampling procedures, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis and synthesis, reliability

and trustworthiness, researcher's role, and limitations of the research study. In Chapter 4, the results of the data analysis are explained.

Chapter 4

Results

The first purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the importance of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession. The second purpose was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the challenges K-12 school administrators encounter when recruiting teachers of color. The third purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs about strategies used by their institution to recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program. The fourth purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the challenges they experience when recruiting candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program. Chapter 4 includes a summary of the study participants' demographics and backgrounds and the results of the data analysis.

Descriptive Demographics and Participant Backgrounds

A total of eight individuals participated in this study. All individuals who participated in the research study were from four-year higher education institutions in Kansas. There were four females and four males. All institutions in the research study currently offer traditional teacher education preparation programs and alternative higher education institution-based programs. Five of the eight participants in the study have been in their current leadership positions for less than five years. All participants in the study identified themselves as the dean or chair of the institution's teacher preparation department. All participants in the study had completed a doctoral degree.

The following sections explain the results of the data analysis derived from study participants' responses to interview questions. Five major themes were identified from the analysis of the data: the importance of recruiting individuals of color into the teaching profession, the use of social media and digital platforms for candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation programs, strategies used to recruit candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, and the role of teacher preparation faculty in candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation programs.

The Importance of Recruiting Individuals of Color into the Teaching Profession

In this study, participants were asked how important it is to recruit individuals of color into the teaching profession. All study participants agreed that recruiting individuals of color into the teaching profession is essential. Three participants (B, C, and F) immediately responded with "extremely important." Participant B stated, "It's a core value that we have and want - working toward diversifying the teacher workforce."

Participants were asked to share the benefits of having teachers of color in the K-12 teaching workforce. Seven out of eight participants shared that, from their perspective, there are positive impacts on students of color when there are teachers of color. Participant C emphasized that teachers of color "serve as powerful models for our students and for students of color." Participant B explained, "There has been a lot of research that representation in the school setting matters." Participant F explained, "Children of color will more likely be identified for more positive services and be encouraged to participate in higher academic pathways compared to those students who don't have a teacher of color or representation at their school."

Participant G shared,

It is important for students of color to see someone who looks like them and to be with someone who can relate to them and understand them. It's important for them to see people like them in the roles of teachers and K-12 school administrators, and they, too, can believe they can go to college if they want to.

Participant F indicated, "Students need to see themselves represented in their daily lives whether with the teacher standing at the front of the room or in the materials used within the classroom. There just needs to be some form of representation."

In addition to the impact teachers of color can have on K-12 students, there are also positive outcomes for the teaching profession. Participant responses included the promotion of diverse viewpoints and perspectives, contributions to rich conversations, influencing long-term systemic changes, and impacting future educational policies and practices. Participant B explained that while there are several benefits to having teachers of color within the K-12 teaching workforce, there aren't nearly enough teachers of color entering the field of education. Participant B further explained that within the last three years, their institution's traditional teacher education preparation program graduated six African-American students, and all of those students were offered jobs and hired before graduation.

Participant D emphasized the benefit of teachers of color being able to bring culturally responsive teaching practices to the classroom, making the learning and lessons "more relatable and engaging for diverse student populations." Participant D further explained that the unique perspective of teachers of color enriches the discussions that take place in the classroom and helps students develop a "broader understanding of

different cultures and experiences.” Participant A mentioned that teachers of color can mentor colleagues and promote diversity and equity within the teaching profession.

The Use of Social Media and Digital Platforms for Candidate of Color Recruitment into Teacher Preparation Programs

All participants in the study shared that digital technology and social media are utilized to recruit candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs. The social media platforms mentioned by study participants included Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter). One participant shared that recently their department had expanded to utilizing Podcasts to reach students of color. Participant H mentioned that their institution had just recently expanded and now has some YouTube advertisements. However, because this was a new initiative, Participant H could not report whether or not their advertisements on that platform had yielded any successful recruits of color.

Participant E shared:

The location of (institution named) is not necessarily in the most diverse area, so we rely on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to reach a larger audience that may include a diverse audience. We have some faculty members who identify as people of color, so when they share, “like,” or repost our advertisements on their pages (personal social media pages), that also helps. Students also help by sharing our posts, and social media is really cost-effective.

Strategies Used to Recruit Candidates of Color into Teacher Preparation Programs

Participants were asked to describe the strategies used by their institutions to recruit students of color into their teacher preparation programs. Seven out of eight

participants indicated that their institution used targeted outreach and leveraged partnerships to support recruitment efforts. The eighth participant explained that while their outreach had not been targeted, they anticipated their program moving in that direction in the future. Participants from three out of the seven institutions that used targeted outreach and partnerships also shared that their institutions provide opportunities for high school students from diverse populations to visit their campus. Participant E shared, "We collaborate with high schools in local school districts, particularly those with a high percentage of students of color to try to build trust and pipelines for recruitment." Participant E further explained that Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are established within those school districts, and they take similar approaches to community colleges to create transfer pathways for students of color by attending all the college and transfer fairs for those community colleges.

Participant A stated:

We have set up MOUs with five districts now and we can recruit in all of those school districts. Our Kansas National Education Association holds conferences, and they invite high school students to come. I set up in the local area to meet with a lot of students that way.

Participant C shared:

We've developed a program that focuses on recruiting for careers in education. The director of that program works to recruit a specific target and provides a network of support for our candidates of color. We have a mentor in the field who works with them and then a designated faculty person who also meets with

them. They try to meet together at least two times a month. We also have a student that we stipend to help facilitate the program.

Participant F specifically spoke about how their program uses mentoring as a highlight of their program because they provide a network of support for candidates of color.

Participant A shared,

We bring students from a local public school district which is very diverse onto campus. We try to make sure that the students who come are very diverse, and we try to give them the full experience. I always do some kind of presentation with those students as well and they spend the whole day with us. They eat lunch with our students, and if we have [athletic] games going on, we work that into their experience. They get the whole college experience early.

Three participants in the study specifically mentioned including diversity within the institution's marketing materials. For example, Participant C shared that their institution has a high population of Hispanic students and they use bilingual staff and advertisements on Spanish radio stations to reach out to these students. Participant D shared that the marketing materials for their education programs are distributed in English and Spanish.

While not a significant theme, two participants in the study mentioned the efforts and strategies they use to target military populations, which includes expanding their program options and creating online opportunities for that demographic of prospective and current students. Participant G shared that while the department has prioritized recruiting students of color, they are also prioritizing focused recruitment efforts on men. She explained that it has also been challenging to recruit males into the field of education.

Challenges That Impact Recruitment of Candidates of Color into Teacher

Preparation Programs

All study participants were asked to share the challenges that impact the recruitment of candidates of color into their teacher preparation programs. Five out of eight participants mentioned there is an overall decline in student enrollment, not only for education programs but for colleges and universities in general, which means there is a smaller pool of students to recruit into the education field. Additionally, six out of eight study participants shared that one of the biggest challenges impacting the recruitment of candidates of color is the starting teacher salary. Participant E stated, "For many prospective teachers, the salary is an important consideration in whether they choose to enter the profession, and that is particularly true for students from underrepresented groups."

Participant B shared a perspective similar to Participant E and added:

For students of color, who may be more likely to come from working-class families, the appeal of the teaching career can be diminished by the pay, both starting and career earning potential, so they may be less inclined to pursue a career that does not have a significant financial reward. The low salary perpetuates the perception that teaching is not a valuable profession, so some may view the profession as a less prestigious career path.

Among the challenges mentioned, four out of eight participants mentioned there is an increasingly negative narrative regarding becoming a teacher. Participant A shared, "There are other fields that are more attractive than education." Participant A elaborated by stating, "Fields such as STEM, and business or health-related fields, have better

financial prospects, even for entry-level positions.” Participant F shared there is a perception that “teachers struggle to make ends meet” and “there are significant demands of the profession, such as long hours and high stress,” which further exacerbate recruitment challenges.

Three participants in the study mentioned that educators are no longer promoting the profession of teaching. Instead, teachers are sharing the negative aspects of teaching that create burn-out among educators. Participant A specifically stated that “Social media plays a part in these messages reaching so many.” Additionally, Participant A shared there is a high turnover rate in teaching which makes “potential teachers hesitate to enter a profession, where so many people are leaving.”

Participant F was the only study participant who spoke about the cultural disconnect creating a challenge in recruiting students of color. Participant F explained that many teacher education programs may not adequately address the needs or experiences of students of color, which could create disinterest. Another challenge mentioned by Participant F was the lack of diversity among faculty members in teacher preparation programs which can also contribute to students feeling disconnected or unwelcome. Two participants in the study indicated that they were truly unsure or unaware of what the challenges are that impact the recruitment of candidates of color.

The Role of Teacher Preparation Faculty in Candidate of Color Recruitment into Teacher Preparation Programs

All study participants responded that a variety of individuals working for the institution supported recruitment. Supporting individuals included admissions department personnel, undergraduate admission teams, recruiters, department chairs,

deans, program directors, marketing teams, and faculty from some departments. One participant shared that at their institution, the president feels that everyone has a responsibility when it comes to recruiting students. Additionally, another participant shared that a large portion of their student body consists of student-athletes, so graduate assistants and team coaches play a significant role in recruiting students of color into the institution. Five out of eight study participants indicated that the education department faculty do not play a significant role in the recruitment of students for teacher preparation programs. Participant G stated, “Our faculty are teaching full-time plus overloads, so they don’t have the time to devote to recruitment.”

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the analysis of the interviews conducted with eight teacher preparation program deans and chairs. Five themes were identified after data analysis: the importance of recruiting individuals of color into the teaching profession, the use of social media and digital platforms for candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation programs, strategies used to recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program, challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, and the role of higher education teacher preparation faculty in candidate of color recruitment for teacher education programs. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study, findings related to the literature, and conclusions for the study.

Chapter 5

Interpretation and Recommendations

The participants in this study were deans and department chairs of Kansas eight CAEP accredited traditional teacher preparation programs. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the perceptions of deans or chairs of eight CAEP-accredited Kansas teacher preparation programs about the importance of having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms, the challenges K-12 schools encounter when trying to recruit teachers of color. In addition strategies used to attract candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs, and challenges related to recruiting candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs were investigated.

Chapter 5 includes three sections. The first section includes a summary of the study, which includes an overview of the problem, purpose statement, research questions, a review of the methodology, and major findings. The second section provides a summary of the findings related to the current literature. Finally, the last section provides conclusions of the study, which includes implications for actions, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Study Summary

This section provides a summary of the study. Included in this section is an overview of the problem. The purpose statement and research questions are restated in this section. The section concludes with a review of the methodology and important findings.

Overview of the problem. A sharp decline in the number of teachers of color in the United States can be traced to the Brown v. Board of Education ruling in 1954 when

schools began to integrate (Ma, 2022). The National Center of Education Statistics (2020) presented data that indicated that the majority of the public-school teacher workforce, 82%, identified as White. During the 2017-2018 school year, fewer than 8% of teachers were Black. Recruiting and retaining individuals of color in the K-12 teacher workforce is key to improving outcomes for all students, but particularly for students from low-income families and other under-served populations. Diversity within both teaching and learning experiences offers positive outcomes inside the classroom and provides significant benefits to students (Rosen, 2018). There are benefits of having teachers of color in the education workforce, such as increasing the retention of teachers of color and students having positive perceptions of all students despite their color (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). However, much like the barriers students of color face with entering college, teachers of color face unique barriers to entering and staying in the teaching profession (McKenna, 2018). According to McKenna, there is a need to examine teacher preparation program recruiting strategies to discover what works best to close the gap between students and teachers of color.

Purpose statement and research questions. Four purposes guided the research study and aligned with the research questions. The first purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the importance of recruiting candidates of color into the teaching profession. The second purpose was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the challenges K-12 school administrators encounter when recruiting teachers of color. The third purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs about strategies used by

their institution to recruit candidates of color into the traditional teacher preparation program. The fourth purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of deans or chairs of teacher preparation programs in Kansas about the challenges they experience when recruiting candidates of color into traditional teacher preparation programs.

Review of the methodology. A qualitative phenomenological research design was used to conduct this study. A semi-structured interview protocol and follow-up probes for clarification and more detail were developed based on a review of existing literature and past research questions developed by other researchers conducting similar research regarding recruiting initiatives for specific academic areas or programs. The semi-structured interview protocol included four demographic questions and 10 open-ended interview questions. External peer examiners reviewed all interview questions prior to the interviews being conducted. Eight teacher preparation program department chairs and deans were interviewed in the study using the Zoom platform. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to complete. Each interview was transcribed utilizing the Zoom recording/transcription feature, member checked for accuracy, and assigned an anonymous identification code (e.g., Participant A, Participant B, etc.) to maintain confidentiality and anonymity for the study participants and their respective institutions.

Major findings. Five major themes were identified as a result of the qualitative data analysis.

1. The importance of recruiting individuals of color into the teaching profession.
2. The use of social media and digital platforms for candidate of color recruitment into teacher preparation programs.

3. Strategies used to recruit candidates of color into teacher preparation programs.
4. Challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs.
5. The role of higher education teacher preparation faculty in the recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs.

All study participants agreed that it is important to recruit individuals of color into the teaching profession and shared the benefits of having these teachers in K-12 classrooms. Participant responses highlighted efforts to address the immediate needs of students in the classroom who benefit from a teacher of color and the future of education. Respondents indicated that the representation of teachers of color benefits students of color because those students are able to see themselves in the teaching workforce.

Seven out of eight participants indicated that the use of social media and digital platforms were utilized by their institutions for the recruitment of students. Social media platforms mentioned by participants included X (formally Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Respondents also indicated that standard partnership agreements with local school districts with diverse student populations and local community colleges support recruitment efforts and create a pipeline for students of color into teacher preparation programs. Study participants provided examples of how school district partnerships are designed to successfully recruit students of color into teacher preparation programs. Study participants indicated that recruiting students of color into teacher preparation programs is essential for building a more diverse and inclusive teaching workforce.

Respondents also shared ongoing challenges that impact the recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs. Five out of the eight participants indicated that there is an overall decline in student enrollment in post-secondary education, creating a smaller pool of students to recruit from. Six out of eight study respondents shared that low starting teacher wages and rigorous requirements needed to obtain an education degree and teaching certification have also contributed to the challenges of recruiting students of color.

According to study participants, recruiting students of color into teacher preparation programs is a shared responsibility within the institution. Study participants reported that teacher preparation program department chairs and deans, admissions department personnel, recruiters, and program leads are primarily responsible for recruitment. One participant emphasized that faculty used to play a significant role in recruitment. However, due to increased teaching loads, faculty do not have opportunities to contribute as much to recruitment initiatives. Ultimately, teacher preparation recruitment is a collective institutional effort that requires collaboration from individuals throughout a campus.

Findings Related to the Literature

The findings of this study revealed that it is essential to recruit candidates of color into the teaching profession. This finding aligns with Ordway's (2017) who stated that due to the U.S. growth in diversity, the need for teachers of color in K-12 schools is critical. Ordway (2017) also reported that students of color benefitted from having teachers who shared similar backgrounds. According to Ordway, this similarity can enhance students' engagement in the educational setting.

Ramseur (2022) reported that K-12 students in classrooms with teachers of color with diverse perspectives graduate high school and pursue higher education at higher rates, contributing to a more skilled and innovative workforce. The findings of this research study supported the research of Ramseur (2022). Study participants reported that a benefit of having teachers of color in the K-12 workforce promotes diverse viewpoints and perspectives, which contributes to rich and elevated conversations that can significantly improve the learning experiences and educational outcomes for students. Teachers of color can draw from their own experiences and incorporate these into lesson plans, making the curriculum more relevant and engaging for students who share similar backgrounds.

Participants in the current study described how building mentoring programs that pair students of color with faculty members and other students with similar racial and cultural backgrounds helps create a sense of belonging and support. Fotuhi (2014) found that students of color can experience imposter syndrome and suffer with feeling as though they don't belong. Respondents in this study aligned with Fotuhi, sharing that one of the challenges that they experience when recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation is students not feeling a sense of belonging. Study respondents indicated that institutions now have to be intentional about creating mentoring programs to support students.

Douglas-Gabriel (2024) cited data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center and reported drastic drops in college enrollment post the pandemic. There are still over a million empty seats on college campuses according to Douglas-Gabriel. The results of this study aligned with the findings of Douglas-Gabriel (2024).

One of the primary challenges associated with recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation programs that was identified from the data analysis was that there is an overall decline in student enrollment for undergraduate students, which has negatively impacted student recruitment in teacher preparation programs. There are not enough students in the pipeline to recruit into teacher preparation programs. This finding was in alignment with Will (2022), who reported that enrollment in teacher preparation programs has been on a steady decline over the past decade. Fewer college students are seeking and earning degrees in education.

According to Clayton (2021), diversity should be everyone's responsibility within the institution and should spread across campus communities. Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) also indicated that all students benefit from a more diverse teaching workforce. Respondents from this study reported that institution leaders are encouraging all stakeholders in the university or college to be a part of recruiting students of color. In order to achieve meaningful results there has to be collective action and shared accountability.

Conclusions

This study examined the perceptions of deans and chairs of teacher preparation programs about the importance of recruiting students of color into the teaching profession. All of the study participants described the benefits of having teachers of color in K-12 classrooms including increased learning for students of color, and promotion of diverse viewpoints and perspectives throughout the education system. Varied strategies including social media and digital platforms, establishing partnerships with local school districts, campus visits, and mentoring of high school students were

mentioned by study participants as strategies for recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation programs. Challenges that impact teacher preparation recruitment included an overall decline in higher education student enrollment, negative stigma around becoming a teacher, and rigorous education requirements for a low starting salary. Higher education teacher preparation faculty are less engaged in direct recruitment of candidates for teacher preparation programs than admissions personnel and university recruiters. The following sections include implications for action, future recommendations for research, and concluding remarks.

Implications for action. The participants' responses to the interview questions in the study provided comprehensive information about the perceptions of deans and chairs of higher education traditional teacher preparation programs about the importance of recruiting teachers of color for K-12 classrooms, challenges K-12 schools experience when recruiting teachers of color, the use of social media, digital platforms, and other strategies for recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation programs, challenges of recruiting candidates of color into teacher preparation, and the role of higher education teacher education faculty in the recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs. The results of this study have implications for actions that can be taken to support recruiting candidates of color into the field of education. Five actions are recommended:

1. Given the findings of this study, college and university-based teacher preparation departments should consider development of targeted recruitment initiatives aimed at attracting students of color into teacher preparation

programs. These initiatives should focus on highlighting diversity and the opportunities available for students of color in the teaching profession.

2. Teacher preparation programs could develop mentoring programs where students of color are paired with experienced teachers of color. A formal mentoring program that provides opportunities for connection and mentoring may attract candidates of color to enter and complete an education degree.
3. P-12 educators could establish programs that support students of color at earlier ages prior to enrollment in high school. These programs should include observation experiences with teachers and leaders within K-12. Programs like these can help students of color view teaching as a viable career.
4. School districts could be encouraged to develop support systems for teachers of color to ensure they retain these individuals in the profession. Many teachers of color leave the profession, which creates challenges with having an adequate number of teachers of color in the profession and creates pressures for higher education institutions to recruit teacher preparation candidates of color.
5. Partnerships between K-12 schools and colleges and universities could be encouraged and established to create clear pathways for students of color to enter teacher preparation programs. This could include internships and dual-enrollment opportunities for high school students.

Recommendations for future research. There is a lack of research examining perceptions of teacher preparation department leaders regarding strategies utilized to

successfully recruit students of color into teacher education preparation programs. Based on the results of this study, there are 10 recommendations to inform future research.

1. This qualitative research study examined strategies deployed by CAEP-accredited Kansas higher education teacher preparation programs to recruit candidates of color. A study could be conducted that examines teacher preparation program recruitment of candidates of color in different states.

2. This qualitative research study examined the perceptions of eight education department deans and chairs who lead traditional teacher education preparation programs. A similar study could be conducted to examine the perceptions of the candidates of color who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs about their recruitment experiences.

3. A qualitative study could be conducted to examine the perceptions of K-12 teachers of color about strategies for recruiting more teachers of color into K-12 classrooms.

4. The interview questions included in the semi-structured interviews were broad. A future research study could be conducted to include more specific research questions to evoke specific details related to the challenges that impact the recruitment of candidates of color into teacher preparation programs and the teaching profession.

5. This research study examined strategies and challenges associated with recruiting candidates of color into college and university-based teacher preparation programs. Future studies could examine the strategies and challenges by individual race categories (e.g. African-American/Black students, Latino students, Asian Students, etc.).

6. This study was conducted at predominately White institutions. Future research study could be conducted at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) or Hispanic serving institutions with a focus on teacher preparation program recruitment.

7. Eight teacher preparation department deans and chairs whose departments had the highest proportions of students of color enrolled in teacher preparation programs of study participated in this study. A similar study could be conducted with deans and chairs of all teacher preparation programs in Kansas.

8. Participants were specifically interviewed regarding their traditional teacher preparation programs. Future studies could examine alternative teacher preparation programs that lead to teacher certification and licensure. Additionally, research could be conducted to include study participants from nonprofit organizations such as Teach for America.

9. This study focused on the recruitment of candidates of color into college and university-based teacher preparation programs. Future research could be conducted to examine the retention of students of color once they enter the K-12 teaching profession. Recruiting teachers of color or teachers with diverse backgrounds only gets them into the building, but attention has to be placed on their needs in order to retain them in the profession in order to make long-lasting changes within the workforce. If not, the turnover will continue to be a concern. Data presented from a recent focus group by Teacher Plus, an organization that aims to empower diverse experienced teachers to become leaders in education policy and practice, found the following five challenges that were described by teachers of color in the workforce: (1) they experience an antagonistic work culture, therefore they feel unwelcome, (2) they feel undervalued, and they are not

recognized or compensated for their work, (3) they feel they are deprived of agency and autonomy, (4) they feel they are navigating unfavorable work conditions, and (5) by being a teacher with a diverse background they bare a high financial and psychological cost on them. Studying these concerns must be addressed in order to make the necessary strides needed to increase and retain teachers of color in the K-12 workforce.

10. The researcher examined the perceptions of deans and chairs about the importance of recruitment of candidates of color into college and university-based teacher preparation programs. Future research could be conducted to examine strategies for increasing the interest of high school students of color in the teaching profession. Studies could focus on both high school teachers and high school students perceptions about how to increase interest in the teaching profession.

Concluding remarks. Recruiting students of color into teacher preparation programs is of critical importance for several interconnected reasons. The U.S. K-12 public school student population has become increasingly diverse, with growing populations of students of color. As the population of students in the United States becomes more diverse, the need to have more teachers of color in K-12 classrooms has become greater (Ordway, 2017). Several U.S. higher education institutions have experienced a decline in overall student enrollment, and the U.S. continues to face a significant teacher shortage. The need to recruit candidates of color for teacher preparation is particularly challenging. Educator preparation programs need to be encouraged to be intentional about developing innovative strategies to recruit and retain candidates of color into the teaching profession in order to alter the current pipeline of individuals pursuing K-12 teaching as a career.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Baker University IRB Approval



September 6, 2024

Dear Taneka Brown and Tes Mehring,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your project application and approved this project under Expedited Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.
3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.
4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.
5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.
6. If this project is not completed within a year, you must renew IRB approval.

If you have any questions, please contact me at skimball@bakeru.edu or 785.594.4563.

Sincerely,

Scott Kimball, PhD Chair

Baker University IRB Committee

Tim Buzzell, PhD
Steve Massey, EdD
Jiji Osiobe, PhD
Susan Rogers, PhD

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate

Dear XXXXX,

I would like to invite you to participate in a qualitative study I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. I am a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education at Baker University. My dissertation focuses on deans and chairs of teacher preparation programs and their perceptions about the need for K-12 teachers of color, the challenges K-12 encounters when trying to recruit teachers of color, strategies for recruiting candidates of color to teacher preparation, and challenges in recruiting candidates of color to teacher preparation. If you agree to participate in the study, your participation will involve an interview that will take place at a scheduled time via Zoom or an agreed-upon location. The interview should not last longer than 60 minutes.

Your interview will be recorded, and the transcript of your responses will be coded to preserve your anonymity. Your identity will never be revealed. The interview will include 14 questions. The questions are provided at the end of this invitation to participate. Participation in the research study is voluntary. There are no risks associated with your participation in this study. There is no compensation or other benefits associated with participation.

If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time or decide not to answer any question you are not comfortable answering. Once the interview is completed, I will email you a transcript of your responses to review for additions, omissions, and accuracy. If you would be willing to participate in an interview, please contact me at the e-mail address provided below. I will then contact you to set up a

time for an in-person interview or an interview via Zoom. If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me or my dissertation advisor using the contact information provided below.

Thank you for your consideration in helping me to complete my doctoral dissertation.

Sincerely,

Taneka Brown
Baker Doctoral Candidate
785-218-8054
TanekaLBrown@stu.bakeru.edu

Dr. Tes Mehring
Major advisor
tmehring@bakeru.edu

Interview questions are provided on the next page.

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been the dean or chair of the teacher education department?
2. How many candidates are currently enrolled in the teacher preparation program at your university?
3. What percentage of candidates of color are enrolled in the teacher preparation program at your institution?
4. Who is responsible for student recruitment for the teacher preparation program?
5. In your opinion, how important is it to recruit individuals of color into the teaching profession?
6. What are the benefits of having teachers of color in the K-12 teaching workforce?

7. What challenges do K-12 schools experience in recruiting teachers of color into the teaching profession?
8. Describe the strategies used by your institution to recruit diverse candidates into the teacher preparation program.
9. Are there any other points you would like to share with me about recruitment strategies used to recruit individuals of color to enroll in the teacher preparation program?
10. What are the challenges that impact recruitment of candidates of color into your teacher preparation program?

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent Form

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the transcript will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I understand that there is no compensation.
- I understand that there are no risks or discomforts associated with participation in the study.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded via Zoom.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially. An anonymous code (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.) will be used in data analysis, reporting of results, and any presentations that will be made related to the study.
- I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the transcript of my interview prior to the analysis of data.
- I understand that an anonymized transcript of my interview will be retained for two years from the date of the dissertation defense and will then be destroyed.
- I understand that the researcher will be taking notes during the interview.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____