

## Social Justice: A Missing Link in a Literary Review of Successful Strategies Utilized by Principals for Retaining African American Teachers

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### Abstract

Perceptions on leadership training to sustain teachers of color vary in approaches, ideologies, and values. However, what evidence is within the literature to depict what effective principals do to retain, in particular, African American teachers? In the present study, the authors have reviewed the literature from 2011-2020 through the lens of Critical Learning Theory. This examination led to an extrapolation of categories that indirectly embed social justice as a tool utilized for retaining African American teachers. Nevertheless, many well-known strategies utilized to promote the retention of present-day African American teachers do not include this motivating call-to-action within the parameters of their approach or training of principals. Social justice is an effective tool for supporting Generation X students who willfully and actively participate in digital and physical campaigns against systematic racial injustice. Therefore, educational leaders should transcend authoritative leadership and systematic racism with social justice as a pivotal strategy for teachers of color.

*Keywords:* teacher retention; social justice; principals; African Americans; teachers of color; professional development.

### Introduction

Perceptions do not go far enough to correct the problem of disappearing African American educators in today's schools. Moreover, "the history of race-based differential treatment of individuals in the United States is older than the history of the country itself" (Carothers, 2018, p. 42). Yet, finding and sharing strategies that are presently in practice to deter declines regarding diversity of the teaching population are sparse. This study addresses this challenge

by using both EBSCOhost and Google Scholar to search terms and phrases to identify strategies principals use to retain African American teachers in public school settings in the United States.

This literature review references principals and teachers, specifically about strategies principals use to retain African American teachers. While the literature provides a historical perspective to understand the plight of African American educators, social justice as a strategy directly to retain teachers of color is marginal in the literature. However, the history of displacement and inequality experienced by African American educators unequivocally relates to the shortage of African American educators (Ingersoll & May, 2011). While the history of injustice endured by African American educators is evident, the integration of this history does not transcend to the actions of school leaders to ensure social justice as an intricate part of the approach for diversity and longevity in the profession.

Goodloe and Ardley (2020) conducted a literature review that exposed a chasm in the literature regarding strategies principals use to ensure the retention of African American teachers. In particular, the literature review showed gaps of perspectives pertaining to social justice and the absence of the actions required by principals to guarantee an environment of equity for teachers of color. Thus, the clear depiction of strategies and actions needed by principals to ensure social justice is urgently missing to sustain teachers of color.

The question: “Is there a need for sharing strategies that embed social justice to support the retention of African American teachers?” In response to this preliminary question, the inception of the research was a global consciousness awakening through Black Lives Matter over the death of George Floyd. George Floyd, an African American man, whom police murdered in 2020. George Floyd’s death was the catalyst that unified many voices and cultures around the world who rallied against the injustices orchestrated towards Black lives. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that a riot is in the language of the unheard. However, the degree in which voices of color are systematically silenced, and how principals utilize social justice as a tool to support African American teachers are questionable (Capper & Young, 2014). Fortunately, as noted below, there are diverse school entities that are currently utilizing social justice toward the betterment of education:

1. In Portland, Oregon, educators participated in Black Lives Matter celebrating progress made around racial justice in education. Teachers wanted a more culturally responsive curriculum, especially for black and brown students (National Education Association Edjustice, 2019).
2. In San Jose, California, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to pass a proposal to declare racism a public health crisis in an effort to dismantle and deepen individuals’ understanding of racism in education (Reyes, 2020).
3. Black Lives Matter and the Los Angeles African American teacher’s union collaborated with California State University, the nation’s largest four-year system, to launch a drive to address “anti-blackness” within the university system (Cawood, 2020).

The three American media events described above denote the gravity of the current struggle against injustice. These educators recognize that the very fabric of the educational system are the constructs of privilege or unprivileged, authority or subjectivity, power or powerless, and superiority or inferiority. These dichotomies are the underpinnings of an unjust society in

which the preponderance of a dominant group is glorified and protected through educational systems. Bourdieu and Passeron (2020) states the constructs of society present illusions of equality, in which the continuous perpetuation of symbols and practices of false freedoms and equity are learned through schools. Society reproduces itself mechanically (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000), thus an unjust society replicates unjust social norms. School administrators must be cognizant of such constructs and reflective to establish provable resolutions.

For real change in schools, ongoing and continuous training is necessary to avoid the default modes in which school administrators revert to traditional practices that suppress people of color. Principals, who are viewed traditionally as heroes (Schweiger et al., 2020) in education, require new leadership skills. The plight of the hero today demands critical thinking to consciously review and implement policies that create environments to advance justice. Moreover, teachers remain in schools where there is exemplary leadership (Menon, 2014). African American teachers stay in schools where leadership is supportive (Bristol, 2020), and equal protection of the law is administered intentionally and in a fair manner. The examples shown above demonstrate an influence of Black Lives Matter and the new influence activists have on education. Today, a transformative leader is an advocate and activist for social justice. Social justice is fundamental to the implementation of strong programs in which African American teachers are not marginalized.

The purpose of this study is to answer the following research questions:

1. What present strategies are used by principals that embed social justice practices to retain African American teachers?
2. Is social justice one of the key strategies mentioned or recognized by principals in and of itself in scholarly publications to support the retention of African American teachers?

In the realm of education for African Americans, the progression of equality has been extremely slow. Equal rights, civil rights, and social justice have merged into a chronology of struggle over 300 years from 1619 to the present. In the struggle for equality, the only absolute course for justice that corrects decades of inequitable practices is social justice. Freedom for African Americans following 1861 did not provide fundamental changes toward financial equity, while social equity progressed incrementally. Thus, the struggle continues for adequate and fair practices in society, particularly in education. There is much work to be done to accomplish this salient goal for equity in America.

A pivotal point towards the progression of equality in American educational history was the 1954 Supreme Court case, *Brown vs the Board of Education in Topeka, Kansas* to desegregate schools. Segregated schools violated the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and had a profound impact on the direction of the nations' educational system that transcends its original intent (Ramsey, 2020). This case ended segregated schools and led to the decline of African American educators (Irvine, 1988). This case as noted ended segregation legally, but it did not cease the inequality exhibited within schools or its teachers of color.

The shortage of teachers and principals of color profoundly affects the success of students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018). These issues are further magnified when unqualified teachers are hired out of their area of expertise when there are not enough qualified educators and administrators available to employ in public school settings (Carothers et al., 2019). When diversity is absent and unqualified teachers are present, all children miss opportunities to engage in divergent thinking, and share different philosophies and values (Wilson, 2015). Teachers of color enhance school environments with multiple perspectives and ideas. Lash & Radcliffe (2014) noted that approximately two decades earlier researchers such as A.J. King, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and J.A. Gordon noted the need for teachers of color for a wide range of reasons which include the following:

1. The inability or unwillingness of middle-class teachers to teach students from low-income African American families;
2. The passion of African American teachers to educate African American students;
3. The need for all students to experience a multiethnic teaching force, and;
4. The necessity of a sincere and diverse representation of ideas and abilities in a teaching force that contributes to the development of America.

The integration of varied cultures and perspectives strengthen the need for diversity in American schools. Society is complex and there are many points of view heard and respected. Perspectives of a dominant path to thinking or a singular way to ruminate, negates insights from others. People are not monolithic, but complex and layered with multiple dimensions of character, beliefs, norms, and behaviors. The lack of diversity is an identifiable consequence of singular ideas of thought and values in reactionary, polarized, and intolerant environments. Social justice is a call of action for equality and shared perspectives.

The literature reviewed by Goodloe and Ardley (2020) notably accounts for a lack of social justice as a strategy to retain teachers. Yet, 83% of the nation's principals participated in professional development during 2016-2017 school year (NCES, 2017). Since school administrators are attending trainings, the professional development of principals need a new and broader focus on social justice. The understanding of the complex multiple layers of an unjust society is necessary to obtain a just society for all.

The theoretical framework, Critical Learning Theory, as it relates to social justice and the retention of African American teachers is a constructive alignment with equitable practices in education. Critical Learning Theory is a philosophy that involves relentlessly analyzing power structures of society to ensure educational needs are equitable and just for all students (Fitzclarence & Giroux, 1984). Social justice is fundamentally critical to the application of Critical Learning Theory in which all educators become beneficiaries of an equitable education regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, economic status, physical, mental, and/or emotional capabilities (Sarid, 2020).

According to the Declaration of Independence, social justice is inclusive of the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Kimberly J. Robinson, a professor of law at the University of Virginia, USA, said that despite decades of litigation, the state courts have not effectively been able to hold the states accountable for providing an adequate and equitable education (Walsh, 2020). The Critical Learning Theory perspective when applied dilutes elitist

theories of educational attainment and advocates for justice in education. Racism confronted on all levels of educational access and equitable education becomes a right. Thus, Critical Learning Theory is essential for the sustainability of African American teachers. Ultimately, fairness and justice rise when educators of color are respected in spaces free of racist ideologies. Paulo Freire (1971) stated that the purpose of education is to liberate. The freedom to think rather than recite conformist ideologies that suppress freedom is a process toward liberation. African American educators can only become leaders for liberation through equity in education. Critical Learning Theory forces educators to confront historical tensions through social justice and close gaps of inequality for teachers of color.

**Data and Method**

This study used content analysis design (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) that aims to explore qualitative data through the contextualization of the content. Researchers probed peer-reviewed journals for reoccurring words, categories, patterns, and themes significant to the study. The researchers selected content based on the words and phrases relevant to the context of social justice to refine emerging practices by principals to retain African American teachers. Researchers also regarded the historical context as well as the semantics in which words and phrases influenced the selection and analysis process for choosing indicators. For example, the words “Black” and “African American” utilized in the literature describe the cultural group within the study. Likewise, the coding for “social justice” included synonymous words such as “justice”, “equality”, “equity”, “freedom”, and “liberty”. This expansion of the words supported the investigation of relevant categories, themes, and patterns from the literature in which eleven categories emerged from the content analysis. See Table 1 for details.

**Table 1.** Key Terms for Social Justice under Investigation

Key Terms for Social Justice under Investigation					
1. Equality	2. Inequality	3. Civil Rights	4. Justice	5. Liberation	6. Freedom

This scholarly study used the template from Hallinger (2014) to frame the method for understanding the data. This format includes the following: a) framing the research in terms of the theoretical framework, b) choosing indicators based on the topic to find the relevant literature, and c) sharing the literature by stating their correlations or differences from the key questions. Critical Learning Theory was the theoretical framework for the study and utilized key terms for “retention” and “African Americans” and “principals” to narrow the data from the literature review done by Goodloe and Ardley (2020). The results from this study were further refined by reading the scholarly documents to see which journals embedded social justice as a way to support African American teachers by educational administrators.

**Sources of Data**

The data collected from scholarly documents dated 2011-2020 focused on principals who effectively supported the retention of African American teachers. EBSCOhost and Google

Scholar search engines were used to collect data from scholarly documents. EBSCO Information Services is frequently used by researchers worldwide to access research through libraries. The contemporary, Google Scholar, is a free service web search engine that categorizes metadata of scholarly literature across multiple publishing formats and disciplines. Of these two search engines, only peer-reviewed research documents were selected for this study. These databases were also selected due to their ability to analyze content based on selected indicators and timeframes under investigation.

The search initially began with the key terms “principal”, “teacher retention”, “black teachers”, and “beginning teachers”. Also, terms that focused on equity, justice, freedom, liberty, and inequality were used to narrow the assortment of research articles which correspond directly or indirectly to the focus of the study. To support the depth and breadth of the retrieval of scholarly documents, the search was not limited to full text or source type. However, documents were limited to the demographics of the United States due to the specific interest of African American teachers.

Key term indicators depicted by EBSCOhost and Google Scholar such as “administrator”, “teachers of color”, “longevity” and “induction programs” were also utilized and combined with previous terms noted to match “principal” with the direct subject -“black teachers”, to analyze methods of successful strategies for “retention”. This technique of finding research publications by mining key terms via suggested terms in search supported the retrieval of scholarly publications since 2011 on the given topic of interest. The usage of diverse key terms is significant since researchers use different terms to describe concepts and behaviors as the decades changed.

Discovering research publications, which focused on social justice, presented unique challenges in the review process. Words that identified or were relevant to social justice were explored in documents gathered from the literature review by Goodloe and Ardley (2020). Therefore, historical terms were applied to represent “social justice” throughout this research. Social justice, the equality of individuals, is the focus. Statements relevant to this topic were investigated in the journals that indicate strategies principals demonstrated as a significant reference to social justice. Historical and current key terms associated with the topic is in Table 2.

Once key phrases were selected for the subject of the study, the word “principals” was added to the search engine with either “and” or “or” Boolean subsets to narrow the research to the given topic. By combining, the terms mentioned previously, 205 articles were unearthed. The categories noted for these journal are in Table 3. This table indicates the frequency in which terms occurred as relevant indicators for the study. Since the historical and semantic context on words have implications on the frequency in which the term or phrase appeared in the literature, the researchers were careful to be inclusive of diverse words. For instance, the phrase “school leaders of color” was recognized as a key indicator to identify principals in public schools because it was a recurring phrase. However, phrases such as: “school leaders” and “school principals” only yield small differentials of less than nine.

**Table 2.** Historical and Current Key Terms Utilized for Principals

Historical and Current Key Phrases Utilized for Search Principals									
Key Phrases for Principals Under Investigation									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Transformational leadership	School principals keep	Principals train	Effective school leader	School Leaders	School Leaders of color	School Administrators	Public School Administration	Educational Leadership	Urban Principals

**Table 3.** Educational Terms Utilized in Google Scholar Searches That Yielded No Data for Literature Review that Embeds Social Justice

Educational Terms Utilized in Google Scholar Searches That Yielded No Data for Literature Review that Embeds Social Justice	
Google Scholar Phrases	Results from Search
School principals build relationship to support school diversity	9
School leaders and underrepresented teachers	31
Mentoring teachers of color	21
Professional organizations, affiliations and teachers of color	1
School leaders of color and new urban teachers	3
Strategies of school principals and teacher diversity	26
Principals maintain teachers of color	1
School principals keep African American teachers	4
Strategies used by school leaders with new teachers of color	3
Practices of school principals to retain African-American teachers	2
School leaders of color	104

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

In order to conduct a content analysis as proposed by Zhang and Wildermuth (2009) from the derived data, procedures used the prescribed six steps: 1) identification and collection of data, 2) determine coding categories, 3) code the content, 4) check validity and reliability 5) analyze and present results and 6) conclusion. Research publications relevant to the topic from two search engines were collected, read, and reviewed. Next, concepts were highlighted within the publications that were related to the questions of the study and similar concepts were coded into categories with the same topic and focus from similar publications. These categories led to units or groups of publications. If more than one publication referenced a strategy or concept, emerging themes were coded. Coding and naming of the group of documents were based on overarching strategies or concepts that principals used to support African American teachers. According to Kvale (1989), the researchers consistently use words and phrase across peer-reviewed documents to investigate the occurrence of terms per research question to validate and to check the reliability of the search. Once the information was validated, the documents within the categories were analyzed to note the embedding or the lack of infusion of social justice as a possible strategy for supporting African American teachers to draw conclusions and implications.

### **Results and Discussion**

The organization of this section included the key findings from the literature review after the completion of the coding of the collected documents. Subsequently, eleven categories that included the thirteen research documents denoted successful strategies utilized by principals to support African American teachers. Table 4 contains the specific research documents or the lack of research documents in these categories related to social justice.

Research on exemplary strategies utilized by school principals to retain African American teachers is limited. The literature review content analysis demonstrates a need to expand the research to comprise social justice as embedded in curriculum and instruction, but limited to the training of principals to keep African American teachers. Social justice is a continuous quest for equality. However, the implementation and the assurance of social justice among many principals is not evident as a strategy to retain African American teachers. The primary literature review conducted by Goodloe and Ardley (2020) explored strategies utilized by principals to support the retention of African American teachers from 2011-2020. As noted in table 4, this research did not show direct evidence of principals' usage of strategies for social justice to retain African American teachers.

Yet, social justice is an effective strategy for supporting Generation X students who willfully and actively participate in digital and physical campaigns against systematic racial injustice. For example, university students in Norfolk, Virginia, USA unified and held a demonstration against social injustice on July 18th, 2020. This rally began at Norfolk State University with the support of the President, Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston (13News Now, 2020). Students deliberately led actions against systematic injustice in our society. They gained the support of teachers and administrators to eradicate injustice and proceeded with a new consciousness to protect their inalienable rights. Therefore, neglecting social justice as a tool to retain African American



teachers is a mistake. Therefore, neglecting to address social justice to support the retention of African American teachers is a mistake.

**Table 4.** EBSCOhost Successful Strategies Used by Principals to Retain African American Teachers Related to Social Justice

Results from the EBSCOhost Research	
Search Terms: Principals or School Leaders or Administrators and teacher retention and (ethnicity or race or culture or minority or minorities or teachers of color or black teachers or African American teachers or underrepresented teachers or urban teachers and teacher retention or teacher attrition or teacher turnover or teacher persistence	
Results from Search:118 Relevant Research Related to Social Justice: 6	
Eleven Categories	Citation of Research
1. African American Teacher Retention Social Justice-Embedded	Farinde-Wu, A., & Fitchett, P. G. (2018). Searching for satisfaction: Black female teachers’ workplace climate and job satisfaction. <i>Urban Education</i> , 53(1), 86–112
	Olsen, A. A., & Huang, F. L. (2019). Teacher job satisfaction by principal support and teacher cooperation: Results from the schools and staffing survey. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i> , 27(11).
2. General Retention Practices and Ancillary Practices Social Justice-Embedded	Goings, R. B., Walker, L. J., & Cotignola-Pickens, H. (2018). School and district leaders’ role in diversifying the teacher workforce. <i>Educational Planning</i> , 25(3), 7–17.
3. Mentorship Social Justice-Embedded	Farinde, A. A., Allen, A., & Lewis, C. W. (2016). Retaining Black teachers: An examination of Black female teachers’ intentions to remain in K-12 classrooms. <i>Equity &amp; Excellence in Education</i> , 49(1), 115–127.
	Campoli, A. K. (2017). Supportive principals and Black teacher turnover: ESSA as an opportunity to improve retention. <i>Journal of School Leadership</i> , 27(5), 675–700.
4. Grow-Your-Own	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice
5. Self-efficacy, Self-Actualization & Mindfulness	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice

6. Professional Affiliations	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice
7. Cultural Responsiveness/Awareness Training	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice
8. Relational Demography Social Justice-Embedded	Fairchild, S., Tobias, R., Corcoran, S., Djukic, M., Kovner, C., & Noguera, P. (2012). White and Black teachers' job satisfaction: Does relational demography matter? <i>Urban Education, 47</i> (1), 170–197
9. School Climate* Social Justice-Embedded	Bristol, T. J. (2020). A tale of two types of schools: An exploration of how school working conditions influence Black Male teacher turnover. <i>Teachers College Record, 122</i> (3), 1–24.
10. Social Justice	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice
11. Policies	0 findings in EBSCOhost Related to Social Justice

The analysis of the literature also reflects documents that represent exemplary strategies for retaining African American teachers by principals. These strategies for inclusion and equality are not monolithic (Wang, 2020), but they are as diverse as the populations within the schools. Thus, social justice should not be a neglected tool to support African American teachers. It is evident that principals effectively utilize social justice concepts embedded in some of the strategies. However, none of the research noted it as the prime strategy or activity to retain teachers of color. Among the eleven categories, social justice appeared in five of the categories as indirect references. These five categories included African American Teacher Retention, General Retention and Ancillary Practices, Mentorship, Relational Demography, and School Climate. There were only four of the eleven categories with a direct relationship to social justice. These four categories included Grow-Your-Own, Self-efficacy/Self-actualization and Mindfulness, and Professional Affiliations, Culture Responsiveness/Awareness Training. These later categories indicated a relationship with other phrases associated strategies regarding social justice. Among these categories, social justice is an action.

Therefore, placing social justice at the forefront, the researchers used relevant terms to decipher which articles were significant to the study, then the information was organized into categories. These categories are as follows: African American teacher retention and social justice, mentorship, relational demography, school climate, and Areas with Zero Evidence.

### ***African American Teacher Retention and Social Justice***

Social justice embedded in the research on retention by Farinde-Wu and Fitchett (2018). These researchers and others such as Goings et al. (2018) stated that retention was dependent on positive school conditions and the training of school leaders to keep teachers of color. Principals

recognized as supportive administrators fairly enforce school rules. Olsen and Huang (2019) added to the scholarship of social justice through the examination of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was determined as administrative support and cooperation. When African American teachers have supportive principals they remain employed as educators. Administrative support is unequivocally important to the longevity of career educators.

### ***Mentorships***

Mentorship is a common and an important practice in education to retain new teachers. However, mentoring programs that are entrenched in social justice practices are rare, but it is an important component to sustain African American teachers. Farinde et al. (2016) describe mentorship as a key factor to maintain African American teachers and implied that social justice is necessary as does Campoli (2017). Campoli (2017) agreed that mentorship was important particularly to reduce the turnover rate of African American teachers. Campoli (2017) also emphasizes that mentorship works when principals establish a positive supportive school climate. A supportive school climate facilitates fairness and equity as a significant indicator for a quality mentorship program that is beyond ordinary.

### ***Relational Demography***

Relational demography as defined by Fairchild et al. (2012) conceptualized as a set of racial and gender congruency items between teachers and principals, teachers and teachers and students. The disproportional difference of European American teachers to African American teachers affects the relational demography. Fairchild et al. (2012) found that European American teachers are more congruent with teachers and principals, while African American teachers are more congruent with Black students. This association between relational demography and social status suggests that the teacher-to-teacher relationship is collegial, while the teacher to student relationship is cultural. These associations force an examination of relational demography and the rooted influences of authority and power. Relational demography is the expectation that relationships formed by shared values for social justice.

### ***School Climate***

School climate is highly emphasized in school leadership programs. School climate is generally associated with the schools' establishing structure, norms, values, and cohesive environments to promote success. School climate facilitates positive improvements toward student achievement, strong teacher relationships, and encouraging principals. It makes a difference when the school climate is associated with social justice (Blitz et al., 2020). Bristol (2020) embedded social justice in the conversation of African American teachers who remain in education and have supportive principals who are attentive to interpersonal relationships, particularly with African American male teachers. Many of the articles examined highlighted teachers as a general population rather than teachers of color in the context of school climate. The establishment of a positive school climate must be intentional, inclusive, and fair by any school principal.

### ***Areas with Zero Evidence***

Six areas identified by Goodloe and Ardley (2020) may be good practices, but social justice was not regarded as a critical component to retain African American teachers: grow-your-own, self-

efficacy, self-actualization, mindfulness, professional affiliations, culturally responsiveness, social justice, and policies were the noted categories. The findings did not render a correlation between social justice strategies used by principals and the retention of teachers of color. For example, although researchers such as Goings and Walker (2018) regarded practices such as grow-your- own as a prudent practice, grow-your-own may not be rooted in social justice consciousness.

Likewise, Blitz et al. (2020) revealed a correlation between school climate and cultural responsiveness as a manifestation of negative racial school climate. They addressed social justice, but not in the context of a strategy used by principals to retain teachers of color. Mavrogordato and White (2020) strongly suggest that principals either enable or obstruct social justice through policies implemented. Policies and procedures structured and enforced directly impact school climate, rather than instructional transformational leadership to create a positive and productive school climate (MacLeod, 2020). Principals make decisions to make culturally responsive environments a priority and determine policies and procedures to enforce or excuse it. Thus, cultural responsiveness becomes a priority to create the school climate. The implementation of policies cannot be overlooked in the literature and the justification for cultural responsiveness and cannot be overstated to ensure the retention of teachers of color.

Although little was discovered about culturally responsiveness in the context of a strategy to retain teachers of color, Blitz et al. (2020) restate the analysis of inequality in schools. This did not extend to strategies for social justice used by principals to retain teachers of color. Reed and Swaminathan (2014) emphasized that contextually responsive leadership practices rather than a singular best practice represents better solutions to the complexity in urban school leadership and social justice. A plethora of research on social justice and leadership exist, but the content of social justice and the retention of African American teachers is minimal. Six areas within the literature review conducted by Goodloe and Ardley (2020) yield little evidence demonstrating that social justice was essential to the retention of teachers of color.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

In the midst of Black Lives Matter, it is unfortunate that the literature review did not reveal any articles that directly connected social justice with principals' effective practices to ensure the retention of African American teachers. The literature is very general in regards to this discussion. Notably, homogeneous populations are reinforced when principals do not commit to diversify teacher populations. Principals must develop new relationships in diverse communities to attract teachers of color. An audit of bureaucratic procedures that perpetuate injustice and racism may be necessary to identify specific areas, then engage in a plan of action to rectify the injustices. Questions that mitigate change are neglected when there is a void in the research. This study revealed an essential need for change and improvements by strengthening the retention of teachers of color through the following:

1. Research to determine exemplary strategies must be continued to provide prudent information about eight areas in which there is little knowledge: grow-your-own, self- efficacy, self-actualization, mindfulness, professional affiliations, culturally responsiveness, policies, and social justice;

2. Professional development for principals to implement exemplary strategies identified by the research;
3. Professional development for principals to recognize the personal values, dispositions and behaviors about systematic racism;
4. Professional development for principals to identify causes of situations/incidents, not simply a focus on the effect to ensure thorough and fair investigations of events rather than reactionary responses to seemingly obvious outcomes;
5. Professional development principals to recognize enablers or obstructions of justice to ensure policies and practices are implemented fairly to eradicate inconsistencies;
6. Professional development to promote social responsibility initiatives, and;
7. Conduct a school audit to ensure social justice.

The void in the literature is a call “to do something” as is the call for justice among Black Lives Matter activists, as the Honorable John Lewis said, “when you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up”. Say something and do something to change fragmented social practices. Principal training is imperative to rectify inequalities in schools and create environments for equal justice.

In conclusion, educational leaders should transcend authoritative leadership and systematic racism with social justice in a movement. Therefore, leadership skills are required to harness identifiable effective strategies that maintain the dignity and respect of African American teachers. Strategies to ensure social justice as a primary practice are dependent on the ability of principals to advocate and implement best practices to increase the longevity among teachers of color. This responsibility to eradicate injustice and uplift social justice in American schools is a humongous task, but a necessary one. It is explicit that action is necessary to provide principals with tools and training to support teachers of color to increase both longevity and a commitment to education.

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