A Phenomenological Study: How Minority Immigrant Teachers Perceive Inner-City School Climates

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Concordia University–Portland
College of Education
Doctorate of Education Program

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A Phenomenological Study: How Minority Immigrant Teachers Perceive Inner-City School Climates

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Concordia University – Portland
College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Professional Leadership, Inquiry, and Transformation

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Abstract

Inner-city school environments include the location, size, demographics, and diversity of the school population, working conditions, and administrative support. In this study, I explored the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates. A phenomenological research design was chosen as a method to explore the detailed descriptions of the phenomena and interpretation of the data. Cultural identity, critical race, and multicultural teacher theories served as the framework for the research. Study participants were minority immigrant teachers who received formal education up to high school in their home countries and currently work in inner-city schools. The participants were asked to discuss their perceptions, experiences, strengths, challenges, and contributions to inner-city schools. Findings concluded that the rate of marginalization, prejudice, and discrimination against minority immigrant teachers in the inner-city schools was high. Participants believed they demonstrated resilience by asserting themselves as professionals who pursued their dreams and goals in the face of challenges. The consensus of the participants is that multicultural education programs are needed to help minority immigrant teachers understand the U.S. educational system. The program will provide informational opportunities for the school community to embrace diversity and acceptance of immigrant teachers and support the immigrant teachers’ assimilation of the new culture. Findings from this study may contribute to conversations about ways to support minority immigrant teachers, especially those working in urban cities in learning about the culture and climates different from their home countries.

Keywords: acculturation, minority immigrant teachers, inner-city schools, school climate, marginalization, multicultural education
Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my father, late Chief J. O. C. Ejiofor for his vision and inspiration that drove me to take on this journey. Secondly, to my son, Somto, who I hope to stimulate his learning, growth, and tenacity through my example. Finally, to my family, friends, and colleagues who were constant support in this doctoral journey.
Acknowledgments

The dissertation experience has been a strenuous journey and would not have been possible without the encouragement and support of my dissertation chair, Dr. Christopher Maddox. I am grateful for your constant communication, direction, and pushing to spur me to put in my best. I will always remember your commitment, kindness, and servant-leadership attitude.

Thank you to Dr. Nagy and Dr. Goss for serving as committee members. Your patience, guidance, and constructive feedbacks provided the support needed to get this far. I would also like to thank my family especially my husband and my mother, Comfort, who sacrificed her time to stay and assist me through the course of my studies. I want to thank my son, Somto, for forfeiting so many of his activities and tolerating me during this journey and my siblings for encouraging and cheering me all the time. My sincere gratitude goes to my cohort of classmates who have become friends and advisors during the program. I am eternally grateful to my church family, especially the Pastor, for standing with me throughout this journey. Finally, special thanks to the participating teachers who willingly spared time and shared their unique experiences to make this study possible.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The United States has become the melting pot of world cultures because globalization has allowed individuals to migrate freely around the globe (Bernstein, 2015; Goodman, 2015; Reynolds, 2015; Steinberg, 2014). As a result, the inner cities of the U.S. have become home to diverse populations from across the world; schools within them are also becoming demographically diverse (Hachfeld, Hahn, Schroeder, Anders, & Kunter, 2015). The multicultural nature of inner-city schools requires diverse teacher population to maintain a positive, multicultural learning community (Madsen & Mabokela, 2014). Despite the diversity in the U.S., racism may persist and be deeply ingrained within the cultural and psychological facets of the society (Howell & Emerson, 2018). Current authors fail to directly examine the phenomenological experiences of minority teachers, especially immigrants working within inner-city schools (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Djonko-Moore, 2016; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Magaldi, Conway, & Trub, 2018). This study represents a qualitative analysis on the effects of the school climate on minority teachers who immigrated to the U.S. The study participants, who are minority immigrant teachers, explore their experiences, feelings, and thoughts while navigating a culture that is different from their home countries.

Within this chapter, I present an introduction to the research, a background of inner-city schools, a description of the problem addressed in the study, the purpose of the study, as well as the research questions. In addition, I provide an introduction of the conceptual framework that gives a brief description of Bell, Cochran-Smith, Collier, and Thomas, and Ladson-Billings and their perspectives on racism, stereotyping, marginalization, and inclusion of minorities in the inner-school setting. Also included is a summary of the methodology that briefly addresses how I conduct this study and a definition of key terms used in the study to enable the readers to
understand the topic. I conclude with an outline of my assumptions and the scope of the study to establish clear boundaries.

**Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem**

The changing demographics of inner-city schools show an increase in the number of educators from other ethnicities and races (Howard & Milner, 2014). Despite the dramatic increase in the number of teachers from other countries working in inner-city schools, there has been little or no effort to integrate multicultural education into professional development to help with their acculturation and assimilation into the new culture of the inner-city schools (Jones, 2015). There is also a cultural mismatch of teachers and students because of the large number of White teachers in schools with a mostly minority student population (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Endo, 2015; Farinde, Allen, & Lewis, 2016; Haddix, 2017; Kohli, 2014). The results are cultural misunderstandings and cultural incompatibility which increase conflicts, difficulties, and tensions (Gonçalves et al., 2016).

The increasing diversity of inner-city schools are characterized by poor school climate, lack of resources, and other socioeconomic factors ranging from poverty, student absenteeism, truancy, a high number of students in need of special education services, and overcrowded classes (Blaisdell, 2016; Kim, Mazza, Zwanziger, & Henry, 2014). The characteristics of inner-city families, schools, and neighborhoods affect teachers’ performances especially when they belong to a different group that identifies as the minority in the setting (Lippman, Mcarthur, & Burns, 1996). Minority teachers are unduly underrepresented in U.S. schools despite the fast-growing student demographic diversity (Choi, 2018; Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Endo, 2015; Philip, Rocha, & Olivares-Pasillas, 2017). Minority teachers are likely to experience specific adversities such as social isolation, microaggression, and hostile teaching environments
with peers and students (Adair, 2014; Gist, 2017, 2018). Cochran-Smith’s (2003) multicultural teacher education theory provides a framework for researchers, policymakers, and educators to understand the meaning of multicultural education and subsequently recruit, prepare, and support teachers for a multicultural society. Cochran-Smith theorized that using a multicultural teacher education framework helps to address the problem of diversity of cultures in schools and guide teachers.

Bell’s (1995) critical race theory and the related Ladson-Billings’ (2014) culturally relevant pedagogy are committed to the struggle against racism, microaggression, and discrimination in institutions. Ladson-Billings discussed racism in education and helped to understand the inequities that occur in schools. Bell focused on the realities of the lived experience of racism of Black and other suppressed groups. Many minority teachers are often racially isolated or treated with hostility, resentment, and suspicion by other staff in the majority (Fisher-Ari, Kavanagh, & Martin, 2016; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016), which may eventually provoke mental, emotional, and physical problems (Choi, 2018; Palmer & Maramba, 2015; Thai, Lyons, Lee, & Iwasaki, 2017). Generally, racism, microinsults, and microaggressions are not isolated acts but are deep-rooted in every sphere of life; Bell (1989) believed it is difficult for people who look different from others to defend themselves against the hostility they encounter. Microaggressions may be very subtle but tend to denigrate and erode self-confidence and often results in emotional stress for the individuals in the minority (Fisher-Ari et al., 2016; Louis, Thompson, Smith, Williams, & Watson, 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015). However, Ladson-Billings (2014) maintained that teachers need to be nonjudgmental and inclusive of the cultural backgrounds of their students to be effective facilitators of learning in the classroom.
Collier’s and Thomas’ (1988) cultural identity theory offers an understanding of how instructional communication develops in multiethnic classrooms. Minority teachers working in inner-city schools often report frustrations with classroom management more than other teachers with the same cultural background as the students (Deckman, 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015). These teachers also encounter lackluster interactions with professional colleagues, lack of support from administrators, poor parental support and communication because of the mismatch of cultural norms (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Cheruvu, Souto-Manning, Lencl, & Chin-calubaquib, 2015; Philip et al., 2017). Collier and Thomas offered a discourse on how individuals can use communicative processes to negotiate their cultural group identities and relationship contexts among others. These theorists’ concepts acknowledge the problem of racism, microaggression, stereotypes and seek to expand the dialogue on how these phenomena shape the educational outcome for many minorities. They offered transformative solutions to these societal and institutional problems that could affect any group of individuals in the minority.

In Chapter 2, I provide more information about the conceptual framework based on theorists Bell, Collier, and Thomas, Cochran-Smith, and Ladson-Billings. The conceptual framework guided the review of the literature, which focused on how multicultural teacher education, cultural relevant pedagogy, and cultural identity enable minority teachers to be adequately educated to communicate and interact effectively with students, administrators, colleagues, and parents in the inner-city. I also utilize the conceptual framework to guide the research design.

Statement of the Problem

There is a disproportionate percentage and underrepresentation of teachers of color in United States schools despite the growing numbers of students from diverse ethnic and racial
groups (Choi, 2018; Haddix, 2017; Kohli, 2014; Marom, 2019). Authors show that students thrive when taught by teachers of the same ethnic and cultural background (Andrews et al., 2019; Bristol, 2018; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Egalite et al., 2015; Martinez, 2018; Murai, Berta-Ávila, & Figueróa-Ramírez, 2019; Zhou & Li, 2015). Additional authors show the possibility that same-race teachers could increase the likelihood of students’ academic success because they can relate better and are more attuned to their socio-emotional needs, therefore, creating better classroom conditions that facilitate learning (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Bristol, 2018; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Egalite et al., 2015; Haddix, 2017; Morettini, 2017). These authors point to the need to recruit, hire, and retain a diverse workforce to meet the cultural and different needs of the student population (Choi, 2018; Gist, 2017; Haddix, 2017; Marom, 2017; Marom, 2019). The problem is that despite efforts to diversify the teacher population, minority immigrant teachers, who work in inner-city schools, opinions and viewpoints are unknown because their voices are not heard, and refereed literature does not explicitly document their experiences.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study is to explore how minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city school climates. Teaching in an inner-city may be very challenging for teachers, especially those racially or culturally mismatched to the students. Immigrants working in the inner-city represent a new group of minority teachers. Inner-city schools are inundated with challenges that include poverty, school environments, student achievements, and high teacher attrition. There has been little research on the experiences of immigrant teachers as minorities working in the inner-city schools, more so on these new group of teachers. Within this dissertation, I provide insight into how minority immigrant teachers feel
about the relationship with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents; I also explore how these immigrant teachers navigate the U.S. inner-city school climates. Also, to understand their challenges and identify the factors that help them succeed in these school environments. I study the qualities and strengths these teachers bring with them to the U.S. schools and highlight their current teaching experiences. I seek to do so by interpreting and uncovering meaning through the unique lived experiences of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools.

**Research Questions**

The research questions which guide this study are the following:

1. What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?
2. How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools?
3. What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

**Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study**

The rationale for this study is to understand the lived experiences of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools relating to how they perceive inner-city schools’ climates including peer relationship, student-teacher relationship, and parent-teacher relationship. I chose a phenomenological approach because it is the appropriate research design that allows a researcher to focus on a specific topic, construct questions that guide the study, and derive findings that provide the basis for further research and reflection rather than making suppositions (Moustakas, 2011). The researcher in a phenomenological study, has a personal interest in the study and is intimately connected with the phenomenon (Moustakas, 2011). Creswell (2013) observed that conducting qualitative research helps to empower individuals to share their stories;
phenomenology describes the perception of individuals and their unique experience of a phenomenon (Husserl, 1983; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; van Manen, 1977). Also, phenomenological research is appropriate to explore a phenomenon within a group of individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The rationale for selecting phenomenology as the approach to this study is my desire to access the unique experiences of minority immigrant teachers as they describe their feelings, thoughts, and mindset about the phenomenon of marginalization (Husserl, 1983; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology helps reveal teachers’ experiences that may have been hidden or identify the impact of the phenomenon.

Using phenomenology allows the collection of data through interviews that helps participants give a rich description of their experiences and offer interpretations that accurately describe what it means to live the experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell (2013), conducting qualitative research helps to empower individuals to share their stories; phenomenology describes the perception of individuals and their unique experience of a phenomenon (Husserl, 1983; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Maxwell, 2012a; van Manen, 1977). Also, phenomenological research is appropriate to explore a phenomenon within a group of individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenological research design is the most effective at capturing the essence of the participants’ unique experiences and does not confine the research participants to a prescribed set of data or a bounded system. Interviews, questionnaires, and a focus group provide the measures in this phenomenological study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). These methods allow the participants to describe their opinions, experiences, and reflections of their lived experiences and the effect of the inner-city school climate on their professional performance and relationship with students.
and others. Using a phenomenology approach with an emphasis on collecting and analyzing data that is qualitative in nature is most suitable for this study.

This study is relevant because it adds to the body of knowledge about minority immigrant teachers and contribute to the educational community that employs similar populations in terms of supporting them to succeed. The results of this study may help administrators who currently supervise minority immigrant teachers to understand the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about their challenges in inner-city schools. The results of this study may increase awareness in the school community about the strengths and challenges of minority immigrant teachers. Through this understanding, administrators, students, and other teachers may see that even though minority immigrant teachers may speak with different accents, they are competent professionals who deserve respect.

The significance of the study is that it offers a resource for minority immigrant teachers to know how other immigrants meet the challenges of working in inner-city schools. It provides socio-emotional support to minority immigrant teachers. The results of this study may help to identify: (a) how minority immigrant teachers cope with the challenges of inner-city schools’ climates; (b) how minority immigrant teachers resolve problems of prejudice, discrimination, and microaggression from students, peers, administrators, and parents; (c) how minority immigrant teachers develop strategies that help them succeed in the inner-city schools; and (d) how minority immigrant teachers contribute to inner-city schools. The findings could guide curriculum developers in multicultural education programs and decision-makers in inner-city schools to understand the challenges of minority immigrant teachers and to implement changes that assist them. It may add to the body of literature on the topic of multicultural-teacher education programs.
Definition of Terms

This list of terms and definitions are provided below to help the reader understand and interpret essential concepts:

**Comprehensive High School**

This type of school is a free public educational institution that is open to all and teaches a wide range of subjects. Comprehensive High Schools enroll and serve a diverse student body. They do not select students based on their academic achievement or aptitude like other selective schools who limit students’ selection to a basis criterion. They are the most popular schools in the inner cities in the U.S. and offer college preparatory courses, vocational courses, and other extracurricular activities (Hunt, 2010).

**Critical Race Theory**

This theory is a movement by a group of activists and authors who engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2011). CRT identifies the power structures which are based on White privilege and supremacy but marginalize people of color. CRT explores liberalism and meritocracy as a vehicle for self-interest, power, and privilege (Delgado, 1995).

**Immigrant**

A person who relocated from their country of origin to permanently reside in a foreign country in hopes of having a better life (Dettlaff & Fong, 2016; Jackson, 2006).

**Inner City**

A large city located in a metropolitan area, primarily associated with social and economic problems and mostly populated by poor minorities (Gadsden & Dixon-Román, 2017).
**Microaggression**

Any derogatory, spoken or unspoken communication used to discriminate against people of color or other marginalized groups consciously or unconsciously. An example is: “You speak good English; where are you from?” (Kohli, 2014; Kohli, 2019; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017).

**Microassaults**

Any conscious and explicit nonverbal or verbal derogatory racial attacks on people of color with the aim of harming them (Cole, McGowan, & Zerquera, 2017; Endo, 2015). It includes discriminatory actions as name-calling, avoidance, using racial slurs, and treating people of color with hostility, resentment, and suspicion when they enter predominantly White spaces (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2014).

**Microinsults**

Verbal or nonverbal attacks that are intended to offend someone because of its insensitivity; there is a disregard for the race or identity of the person. Examples include racial slurs and showing a racially charged symbol such as burning cross or noose (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Thai et al., 2017).

**Microinvalidations**

Unconscious behaviors or verbal comments that may alienate people because of their race. An example is a pretense that a White person does not see skin color or race (Cole et al., 2017; Louis et al., 2017; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017).

**Minority Immigrant Teachers**

A minority group of teachers who have immigrated to the U.S. from other countries including Africans, Asians, and Latinx (Cherng & Halpin, 2016).
People of Color

An umbrella or general term used to describe people who do not racially identify as White (Al-Yagout, 2017).

Racial Identity

Elements of one’s broader social identity and self-concept and reflect individual experiences and traits. Racial identity problems refer to the issues associated with social identity of individuals (Harris, Ravert, & Sullivan, 2017).

Racism

A racial prejudice supported by institutional power used to the advantage of an individual’s race and to the disadvantage of another race. It alludes to the actions of a group of dominant or privileged people that discriminates against, marginalizes, or oppresses another group that is seen as being racially different (Miller & Garran, 2017).

School Climate

The foundation that supports the structures of teaching and learning including the physical environment, cultural belief systems, and values, as well as the social interactions between students, teachers, and parents (Freiberg, 1999).

Students of Color

Students who are non-White, including students of other minority races like African American, Asians, Latinx, and Native Americans (Jackson, 2006).

Teachers of Color

Individuals who teach in K–12 public schools and are non-White but are of African descent, Asian, Latinx, or Native American (Jackson, 2006).
Assumptions

The following assumptions underlie my study on the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates. First, I assumed that most minority immigrant teachers might encounter some form of social integration challenges in inner-city schools. Mispronunciation in English is expected to cause a breakdown in communication among non-native speakers of the English language (Zoghbor, 2018). Therefore, it is assumed that since the study participants emigrated to the U.S. as adults, they speak English with a different accent or as a second language. Also, it is assumed that since minority immigrant teachers may mispronounce some standard U.S. phonetics, they may encounter communication problems as educators. It is also assumed that participants are honest when reporting and analyzing their experiences working in inner-city schools through personal interviews or during focus group sessions. This study also assumed that my personal bias as a minority teacher working in an inner-city public school might contribute to researcher bias. So, to eliminate bias, the participants’ words would be used to create the final themes that answer the research questions.

Summary

Within this chapter, I offer a broad understanding of the perception and experiences of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. I provide an insight into inner-city schools’ background and identified the research problem which was the need for data-led descriptions of the challenges of minority immigrant teachers working within inner-city schools. The research questions were presented with focus on the perceptions of minority immigrant high school teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. Also, the conceptual framework with a brief description of different theorists’ perspectives on racism, stereotyping, marginalization, and
education of minorities in institutions that guide the research design. Within this chapter, I provide an overview of this hermeneutic phenomenological study through a brief summary of the relevant research literature. Previous studies highlight the fact that racial microaggression is a challenge to minority teachers (Choi, 2018; Fisher-Ari et al., 2016; Kohli, 2019; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Palmer & Maramba, 2015; Thai et al., 2017). However, the authors fail to directly explore the phenomenological experiences of minority teachers who immigrated from other countries; within this study I describe the experiences and reflections of these teachers affected by the school climate in the inner-city schools.

In this chapter, I include a summary of the methodology to be used in conducting the study, definitions of key terms used in the study to enable the readers to understand the topic. I also highlight key terms, listed my research assumptions, and identify the scope of the study. Within Chapter 2, I provide a full discussion of the literature that is relevant to the topic of this dissertation and highlight the complete conceptual framework being utilized in this study, as well as an examination of the peer-reviewed literature, including background information about minority teachers.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Teachers who instruct within inner-city schools should be dedicated and committed to overcome the challenges associated with the climate and culture of the schools (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Gaikhorst, Beishuizen, Zijlstra, & Volman, 2015; Gallagher, 2016; Weber, 2017). Authors showed there are positive academic outcomes when students and teachers share the same race and ethnicity because such teachers can serve as role models, mentors, advocates, or cultural translators (Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015; Santoro, 2015; Zhou & Li, 2015). However, demographic or cultural mismatch of the urban school teachers and the students as well as other key players in the inner-city school is of great concern (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Egalite et al., 2015; Martinez, 2018; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015; Zhou & Li, 2015).

Cultural disconnection makes it difficult for minority teachers to effectively relate to the school community; in some cases, this may lead to early attrition from inner-city schools (Choi, 2018; Magaldi et al., 2018). Many assumptions about minority teachers are made because of limited interactions and lack of knowledge of their cultural backgrounds. Authors showed how minority teachers sometimes experience stereotypes, microaggressions, and discrimination from others due to their different approaches to certain issues (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2018; Louis et al., 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015). Each member of the educational community has a unique perspective on the matters that arise from their enculturation to the field, previous experience, personal beliefs and values, and daily work (Cole et al., 2017; DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Endo, 2015; Hopkins, Regehr, & Pratt., 2017; Louis et al., 2017; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015).

Inner cities within the U.S. have become home to diverse populations from across the world, and the schools are increasingly becoming demographically diverse (Hachfeld et al.,
Creating and maintaining a learning community with a diverse group of teachers is an ongoing process (Santoro, 2015). Inner-city or urban schools are always in need of passionate and competent teachers who can make differences in the lives of the students (Kohli, 2018). However, the volatile school climate, and other socioeconomic factors ranging from poverty, lack of resources, truancy, a high number of students designated as Special Education, and overcrowded classes, among others, affect the learning and development of the students in the inner-city schools (Blaisdell, 2016).

Within this study the lived experiences of minority immigrant teachers are explored and how they are affected by the school climate within inner-city schools. I discuss previous research on minority teachers and other interrelated fields, the conceptual framework on which the study is grounded, as well as the strategies employed in searching and identifying literature in Chapter 2. In addition, I review refereed literature related to the experiences of minority immigrant teachers affected by the school climate within an inner-city school to provide a framework for the study. Within the literature review, key conceptual frameworks are drawn from the theories of Cochran-Smith (2003), Bell (1995), Ladson-Billings (2014), and Collier and Thomas (1988).

**Literature Search Strategy**

I performed an initial keyword word search with the terms *minority teachers* and *inner-city schools* utilizing the Concordia University and Seton Hall University libraries. The librarians at these colleges helped to identify sources for literature review. Parameters for the literature search include peer-reviewed journals, primary studies, and documents. The searches were limited to only academic journals, educational periodicals, and books from the last 5 years, 2015 to 2019. Databases used throughout the literature search include ERIC, ProQuest, Education Research Complete, Taylor & Francis Online, JSTOR, and SAGE Premier.
search, a few primary sources were obtained but the sources were limited using the phrase minority teacher as a search parameter.

Next, I expanded the search to include teachers of color and urban schools, minority teachers and urban school climate, or school environment with the terms effect, influence, teacher attrition, and teacher retention. This technique yielded 21 relevant articles relating to the topics outlined in the literature review. The subject and index terms for each article in the expanded search were examined, and additional keywords searches including immigrant teachers of color, and school culture, were done and it yielded 12 relevant articles; these were research studies relating to the impact of the school environment on minority teachers.

I continued to expand the search. As relevant topics relating to the outlined keywords were identified, 22 additional authors were discovered. Reference lists from textbooks were used to find other sources used for the conceptual framework. Marilyn Cochran-Smith, Derrick Bell, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Mary Jane Collier, and Milt Thomas were authors cited consistently throughout the articles and literature searches were expanded using their names and key concepts associated with them. The Concordia University librarian facilitated the borrowing of relating materials through interlibrary loans.

**Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework shows the argument of why a research topic studied matters and why the theoretical and methodological tools for conducting the study are suitable and rigorous (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). The framework shows a series of sequenced, logical propositions aimed to convince readers of the importance and accuracy of a study. It shows how a researcher conceives the relationships between phenomenon with an explanation of how they are associated with each other to help provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in a study relate to one
another. A conceptual framework identifies the factors and variables relevant to the problem at hand (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017).

A conceptual framework is the building block for research work. It helps to shape the design and direction of the study while guiding its development. The theorists’ concepts link together all research elements like the personal interests and goals of the researcher, the identity and positionality, context and setting, formal and informal theory, and method (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). The concepts help to convince readers of its significance and meaning; therefore, the argument connects the study to critical theories and theoretical perspectives, policy issues, problems of practice, or social and political issues and realities that affect lives and society generally (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). Theories try to explain why things work the way that they do, by identifying and examining their relationships among things. I based the conceptual framework for this study on Marilyn Cochran-Smith’s multicultural teacher education theory, Derrick Bell’s critical race theory, Gloria Ladson-Billings’ culturally relevant theory, and Jane Collier’s and Milt Thomas’s cultural identity theory which is strictly related to the professional contexts and lived experiences of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools.

Marilyn Cochran-Smith (2003) designed a framework that helps researchers, policymakers, and educators to understand the meaning of multicultural teacher education and learn how to recruit, prepare, and support teachers for a multicultural society; she suggested that using a multicultural teacher education framework will help to address the problem of dealing with diversity of cultures in schools. Cochran-Smith (2004) claimed that conceptualized structure of multicultural teacher education is organized to answer questions relating to issues of diversity, ideology, knowledge, teacher learning, teacher practice, outcomes, and teacher selection. Teaching diversity addresses the challenges or problems of the various student populations in
U.S. schools for teachers and teacher preparation programs. It also proffers solutions to issues of deprivation, disadvantage, and lack of equality and diversity (Cochran-Smith, 2003). Contrary to the historical assumption that diversity associates with deficiency, Cochran-Smith noted that the solution to it lies in integration which automatically provides a one-size-fits-all curriculum and that teacher education should see diversity as worthy to be preserved rather than tolerated or expected to go away.

Ideology or social justice deals with ideas, ideals, values, and assumptions, and is closely related to diversity (Cochran-Smith, 2004). The purpose of schooling, the role of public education in a democratic society, as well as the role of schooling in maintaining the economic structure of society, have to do with the notion of social justice. Cochran-Smith’s (2009) opined that social justice goes beyond the concepts of non-discrimination and equal opportunity. She noted that justice must be defined through equal, anti-oppressive, multi-perspectival terms, and be rooted in critical race theory. Cochran-Smith proposed that teacher education programs should be committed to social justice.

According to Cochran-Smith (2003), knowledge, beliefs, and attitude are necessary to teach diverse populations about culture and its role in schools; Cochran-Smith stated that an essential characteristic of the knowledge question is that it has to do with what teachers need to know about culture. She claimed that teachers understand the meaning of culture and its impact on learning and schooling. Cochran-Smith (2006) stated that prospective teachers need to learn and know about their culture as well as see themselves as cultural beings with the responsibility of developing critical cultural consciousness to approach students from a different culture with a positive attitude.
Cochran-Smith (2003) addressed the interpretive frameworks, beliefs, and attitudes needed to teach diverse populations effectively, especially knowledge about culture and its role in education. She discussed how teachers learn to teach diverse populations and the pedagogy of teacher preparation such as coursework, field experiences, and readings that prepare them for the learning. Cochran-Smith conceptualized that inquiry is the most promising answer to teacher-learning as lifelong learners who can effectively work in a diverse environment. The competencies and pedagogical skills needed for teachers to effectively teach diverse populations include their roles as members of school committees, school leaders, and their responsibilities to students and their families; she affirmed that teachers need to develop cultural competence to work effectively with parents and families, draw on community and family resources, and know about the cultures of their students by using culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy (Cochran-Smith, 2003).

Social justice outcomes or consequences are essential goals and are fundamental in a democratic society (Cochran-Smith, 2003). She discussed that many policies and initiatives relating to teachers focus on student achievement on standardized tests, however, the outcome is advocated in the name of equity while the consequences are different. Cochran-Smith (2003) stated that in order to meet the needs of students from varying backgrounds, teacher selection or recruitment should be based on diversifying the teaching force which will give students of color the opportunity to be taught by teachers of the same cultural, racial, linguistic background as them and look like them.

Understanding Cochran-Smith’s theory of multicultural teacher education will help understand the competencies and required pedagogical skills needed by minority teachers to effectively teach diverse populations while improving their roles as members of the school and
their responsibilities to students and their families. Cochran-Smith’s multicultural teacher education theory will be useful in enabling teachers in the fight against social injustice caused by racism and marginalization as advocated by Bell (1995) in his critical race theory. These theories will provide a good insight into understanding the plight of minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools and expand the dialogue on how to improve their competencies in handling racial issues.

Derrick Bell, a Black lawyer known as the father of the critical race theory (CRT), challenged the coherence of ideas such as rationality, objective truth, and judicial impartiality. Bell (1995) examined and challenged the ways race and racism indirectly and overtly impacted social structures and practices; he based his philosophical framework of the CRT on Marxist beliefs on class relations and social conflicts. Bell focused on the realities of the lived experience of racism of Black and other suppressed groups. Bell’s CRT changed the perception of the relationship between race, racism, and power. He conceptualized an approach that helped to define the roles played by race and the cultural competency of minorities.

Bell (1995) theorized that CRT is about people who are ideologically committed to the struggle against racism, mostly in institutions and by law. He used the theoretical frameworks to examine racism in education and to understand the inequities that occur in schools. Bell theorized a commitment to anti-racism which transcends civil rights, integration, affirmative action, and other ideologies. He claimed that scholarly resistance would lay the foundation for a broader level of resistance to fight the standards and institutions created by White power (Bell, 1995). Together with other CRT theorists, Bell strived to challenge the ways race and racial power are constructed by law and culture (Bell, 1992). Bell and the other CRT theorists strived
for the empowerment and inclusiveness of those who were previously excluded because of their race.

Bell (1995) discussed how racism is an ordinary, everyday occurrence for people of color, rooted profoundly in the social fabric of U.S. society. He asserted that racism permeates the social structures and practices in institutions. Bell (1995) contended that even the most successful people of color are vulnerable to aggressions of racial fear and hostility irrespective of their income, achievements, and prestige (Bell, 1989). Despite today’s diversity in the U.S., racism is still prevalent and is not a series of isolated acts, but legally entrenched, culturally entrenched, and even psychologically entrenched in every sphere of life and it is difficult for people of color to defend themselves or others against racial hostility they encounter, regardless of their status (Bell, 1989). He emphasized the marginalization of the people of color and turned it to advocacy and perspective change for the oppressed race and other suppressed factors such as gender, economic, class, and sexual orientation (Bell, 1995).

Bell (1995) noted that racism is still an unfortunate, prominent factor in U.S. society because the dominant racial group maintains an ideology that is color-blind to disguise racist practices and unjust social orders. In doing so, the dominant racial group tend to preserve their privileges from the racial status quo. So, contrary to the beliefs of many in the U.S. that the society is fair and just, Bell asserted that racism was still alive, normal, and deeply ingrained in everyday life in all institutions, including education. Bell discussed how racism has become an integral and permanent aspect of U.S. society and that the struggle for equality of Blacks will continue to fail if the dominant White race does not feel that the status quo is being threatened (Bell, 1992). His critical race theory strives to uphold racial and social justice for all. The commonality and structural functions of racism and its effect on the ways of thinking are often
invisible, especially to the privileged race. Bell and other critical race theorists seek to expand
the dialogue on the subtle ways in which race and racism shape the educational outcome for
many minorities. They opposed the idea of Blacks remaining silent because of poverty and other
lack of opportunities.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) developed the culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) theory
which is closely related to Bell’s critical race theory; she noted how teachers need to be
nonjudgmental and inclusive of the cultural backgrounds of their students to be effective
facilitators of learning in the classroom. Ladson-Billings’ (2014) culturally relevant pedagogy
theory related to practical ways of improving teachers’ education to raise new generations of
teachers who will bring an appreciation of their students’ strengths’ in their work in urban
schools with Black students. She identified three major domains of teachers work including
academic success, cultural relevance, and sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 2014).
Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) suggested that teachers and their students could be susceptible
to *classroom death*, which she described as teachers’ refusal to reach every student or teachers
who yield to rules and regulations that dehumanize and deskill students. She explained that
academic death is evident in students’ disengagement, academic failure, suspension and
expulsion, and dropout. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) opined that to disrupt the vicious cycle
of academic death in the classroom, there must be a pedagogy that will address the difficulties of
social inequalities.

Ladson-Billings (2014) suggested that teachers take culturally relevant pedagogy and
infuse it with new and exciting ideas to meet the needs of the students. The cultural relevant
pedagogy proffered by Ladson-Billings recognized that information, as well as culture, offers
more critical and more equitable access to education for students. The beauty of the pedagogy
designed by Ladson-Billings is that it can meet the demands of the dual responsibility of assessing external performance and community and student-driven learning without diminishing either (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

As minority immigrant teachers strive to navigate the rough terrain of inner-city schools’ climates, Ladson-Billings’ CRP is most suitable to equip them with the culturally relevant education to better adjust to the system. It also resonates to Bell’s (1989) CRT which theoretical frameworks examined racism in education, especially the inequities that occur in schools. Besides, multicultural teacher education as theorized by Cochran-Smith (2003) provide minority immigrant teachers the needed skills to work effectively with parents, students, colleagues, and administrators by using the culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy proffered by Ladson-Billings (2014).

Mary Jane Collier and Milt Thomas (1988) developed the cultural identity theory as an interpretive inquiry into cultural identity. These theorists developed the theory during a period when there was a paradigm shift in intercultural communication the U.S. Collier and Thomas suggested that there is a relationship between inter-cultural competence and cultural identity. The theorists suggested that different developments associated with cultural identity representation include cultural avowal, acknowledgement, scope, importance, and intensity (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Cultural identities, according to Collier and Thomas (1988), differ in scope in relations to the number of people or frequency with which a certain identity such as nationality or class applies. The concept of cultural identity refers to how people interact and communicate about their contacts to build an understanding of the individuals’ experiences. She theorized that cultural identifications are co-created with others through interaction (Collier, 2009). She stated that cultural identifications are created, sustained, and challenged in interaction and relationships.
Collier’s and Thomas’s (1988) theory referred to how individuals use communicative processes to construct and negotiate their cultural group identities and relationships contexts; they characterized intercultural communication as contact between people of different cultures. Collier and Thomas believed that the continuum of cultural differences existed and showed interest in how people conduct themselves when interacting with others who are culturally different. Collier and Thomas (1988) stated that cultural background affects attitudes, beliefs, and values about how students and teachers supposed to interact, how to run classes, and ideas about education. Collier (2009) discussed that a variety of cultural differences existed and was interested in how people conducted themselves among others who are different culturally. Collier sought to know how instructional communication develops in multiethnic classrooms.

Cultural identity is evident in discourses where individuals express pride in identity positions, and there is a high degree of affirmations (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Cultural identity extends to include one’s desire to locate his identity positioning and alignments in complex cultural structures and dynamic relations with others (Collier, 2009). However, ideologies, institutional practices, and social norms may help or challenge the relationships and interactions among different people of different cultures. For instance, Collier and Thomas (1988) explained that there may be specific things in an African American community that may have specific meanings within that culture and their specific ways of behaving that may be culturally acceptable to them and not with people of other culture.

Conceptual Framework Summary

As classrooms around the country become more diverse, the need to hire multicultural teachers who can effectively teach students from different ethnic backgrounds is extremely important. Minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools need to be culturally responsive to
the identities of their students, as well as feel welcomed in the school environment that may be different from their culture. For the framework of this study, I applied Cochran-Smith’s (2003) multicultural teacher education theory, Bell’s (1995) CRT, Ladson-Billings’ (2014) culturally relevant pedagogy, and Collier’s and Thomas’s (1988) cultural identity theory to do justice to the complexity of the challenges faced by minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools. Cochran-Smith’s theory of multicultural teacher education guides an understanding of the competencies and required pedagogical skills needed by minority immigrant teachers to effectively teach diverse populations while improving their roles as members of the school and their responsibilities to students and their families.

Likewise, Bell’s (1995), CRT which explored the marginalization of minorities and their struggle for empowerment and inclusiveness in institutions including education will serve as a framework to study the effects of marginalization such as stereotyping and discrimination of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools where students, administrators, and parents belong to the dominant culture. Bell’s theory, like the multicultural teacher education theory, will provide meaningful insights into the roles and experiences of minority teachers in expanding the dialogue on race and racism and how an appropriate multicultural education could help to improve the cultural competency of the minority immigrant teachers as they strive for social justice. Collier’s and Thomas’ theory on cultural identity may enable minority immigrant teachers to learn how to communicate and interact effectively with students, administrators, colleagues, and parents in the inner-city who belong to other cultures.

While Bell’s (1995) CRT focused on the ways race and racism indirectly and deliberately influence social structures and practices, Collier’s and Thomas’s (1988) cultural identity theory affirmed that a variety of cultural differences exist, but offered ideas of how people can conduct
themselves among people of other cultures. Cochran-Smith’s (2003) framework provide researchers, policymakers, and educators a better understanding of multiculturalism in teacher education, recruitment, preparation, and support to address the problem of diversity of cultures in schools. Ladson-Billings’ (2014) culturally relevant theory suggested using a multicultural teacher education framework to address the problem of diversity of cultures in schools.

The interconnection between these theorists’ concepts is that they all acknowledge the problem of racism, microaggression, stereotypes and seek to expand the dialogue on how these phenomena shape the educational outcome for many minorities. They offered transformative solutions to these societal and institutional problems that could affect any group of individuals in the minority. I believe these theories offer a pivotal framework to study the effect of school climate on minority teachers, who in their circumstances are subjected to the social issues addressed by Bell (1995). Teachers should develop skills to work effectively with parent, students, colleagues and administrators by using the culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy proffered by Ladson-Billings’ (2014) and Cochran-Smith’s (2003) multicultural teacher education theory.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Issues

Within this literature review section, I provide current research-based perspectives on factors affecting the work of minority teachers in an inner-city school climate. The context of this research is within a phenomenological study discovering the experiences of minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools. The purpose of this literature review is to understand the lived experiences of minority teachers through an in-depth analysis of past, theoretical, refereed literature. The selected literature includes research on the disparity between minority teachers and students in schools divided along racial or ethnic lines (Adair, 2014; Aujla-Bhullar,
2018; Borrero, Flores, & de la Cruz, 2016; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Choi, 2018; Chow, 2017; D’Amico, Pawlewicz, Earley, & McGeehan, 2017; Deckman, 2017; Egalite et al., 2015; Endo, 2015; Farinde et al., 2016; Gist, 2017; Gist, 2018; Haddix, 2017; Kohli, 2014; Martinez, 2018; Philip et al., 2017; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015; Stoll, 2014), the importance of matching minority teachers with students of the same background (Andrews et al., 2019; Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Bristol, 2018; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Egalite et al., 2015; Haddix, 2017; Morettini, 2017; Murai et al., 2019; Philip et al., 2017; Santoro, 2015; Shady, 2014; Souto-Manning & Cheruvu, 2016; Zhou & Li, 2015), racial microaggression as a challenge to minority teachers (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2018; Kohli, 2019; Louis et al., 2017; and Palmer & Maramba, 2015; Thai et al., 2017).

Other selected literature include research on the characteristics of school environment that affect the performance of minority teachers (Creasey, Mays, Lee, & D’Santiago, 2016; Djonko-Moore, 2016; Gallagher, 2016; Huang, Eddy, & Camp, 2017; Jain, Cohen, Huang, Hanson, & Austin, 2015; Kohli, 2018; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Kraft et al., 2015; Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017; Kuriloff, Jordan, Sutherland, & Ponnock, 2019; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018; Whipp & Geronime, 2017), teacher preparation programs for minority teachers (Borrero et al., 2016; Brown, 2014; Durden, McMunn Dooley, & Truscott, 2016; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Moles, 2014; Solic & Riley, 2019; Weber, 2017; Whipp & Geronime, 2017), challenges of minority teachers (Brown, 2018; Choi, 2018; Creasey et al., 2016; D’Amico et al., 2017; Dubbeld, Hoog, Den Brok, & de Laat, 2019; Farinde et al., 2016; Fitzpatrick, Henninger, & Taylor, 2014; Gaikhorst et al., 2015; Pabon, 2014; Weda & de Villiers, 2019), and teacher coping strategies (Choi, 2018; Farinde et al., 2016; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Jahng, 2014). The review is organized
into recurring themes found in the literature and concludes with how the current authors build on prior research.

**Racial Disparity Among Minority Teachers and Students in Schools**

Minority teachers are disproportionately underrepresented in U.S. schools despite the fast-growing student demographic diversity (Choi, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015; Endo, 2015; Philip et al., 2017). Similarly, other authors affirmed that there is a shortage of teachers of color compared to the growing number of racially diverse students of color, and it is a significant concern among educational stakeholders (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Endo, 2015; Farinde et al., 2016; Haddix, 2017; Kohli, 2014). The lack of racially and linguistically diverse teacher population is not matching the increasing diversity of the student population (Chow, 2017; Haddix, 2017). The cultural divide persists despite attempts to increase and sustain the variety of the teaching force (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Magaldi et al., 2018).

The disparity between minority teachers and minority students is a result of a persistent demographic pattern of an overwhelmingly White teaching force in schools with most of the student population being students of color (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cheruvu et al., 2015). The employment rate of African American candidates are disproportionately to their White counterparts (D’Amico et al., 2017; Farinde-Wu, 2018). The racial composition of the teaching force is impacted by supply-side economic factors because minority teachers are more likely to experience specific adversities such as financial difficulties, social isolation, difficulty obtaining certification, and hostile learning environments with peers and students when compared to White teachers (Adair, 2014; D’Amico et al., 2017; Gist, 2017; Gist, 2018). Similarly, minority teachers do not have positive and supportive experiences in their teacher education programs (Cheruvu et al., 2015; Chow, 2017).
D’Amico et al. (2017), examined the demographic composition of teachers in the labor market by analyzing the teacher application data and subsequent hiring decisions in one school district. The data revealed that the percentage of job offers extended to minority teachers including Asian, Black, and Latinx teachers during the period of the study fell far below the rate of Asian, Black, and Latinx, students in the district. Their findings showed that even though the minority teachers applicants have many attributes like their White counterparts, they encountered a significantly lower likelihood of being offered a job. Blaisdell (2016) suggested that when teachers have a better understanding of the necessary level of racism in their schools and classrooms, they can change the institutional practices that contribute to the racial disparity.

Borrero et al. (2016) stated that though the demographic makeup of the U.S. student population is diverse, the public-school teachers are predominantly European-American. About 84% of all public-school teachers are White, and more than 40% of schools do not have one teacher of color in their employ (Kohli, 2014). Cheruvu et al. (2015), suggested that teachers of color do not have much in common with their peers because their racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds were different from most of their peers.

Lack of cultural affiliation between teachers and students could result in poor student outcomes even when the teacher has a good knowledge of the content (Murai et al., 2019; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015). Other concerns are high stakes accountability, educational gaps in opportunity and achievement between students of different racial, cultural, linguistic, learning and economic backgrounds. Issues of racial differences, or diversity in classrooms and schools can have consequences for educators and students (Deckman, 2017). Considering the claim by authors that teachers of color are more suited to teach students of color, the shortage of teachers of color may impact the academic and social progress of students of color (Farinde et al., 2016;
Similarly, the limited presence of teachers of color creates a climate of isolation and racialization (Farinde et al., 2016; Kohli, 2014).

Increasing the number of minority teachers is a complicated process that involves many interrelated social, and economic factors (Cheruvu et al., 2015). As initiatives to increase teacher diversity are projected, an understanding of the experiences of minority teachers is necessary (Colomer, 2018; Haddix, 2017). The demographic divide in schools requires a conscious effort to check the cultural disparity between teachers and students by bringing in more teachers of color (Borrero et al.). There is a need to employ and retain a diverse teaching force in the U.S. to serve the sociocultural interests and academic needs of marginalized students (Choi, 2018; Gist, 2017; Murai et al., 2019), by aggressively addressing the issues related to the recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers of color (Cheruvu et al., 2015). Encouraging a multicultural outlook and knowledge of the teachers can improve the racial and linguistic gap between teachers of color and students (Cheruvu et al., 2015). Teachers must understand the issues of diversity and develop culturally relevant and responsive teaching practices (Blaisdell, 2016; Souto-Manning & Cheruvu, 2016), change their perceptions of their racial and linguistic identities with their racialized experiences (Gist, 2017; Haddix, 2017).

Cherng and Halpin (2016) investigated the differences among teachers of various racial and ethnic backgrounds and students’ perceptions of the teachers. They used a multilevel linear regression analyses as a control for students’ demographic and academic characteristics as well as teacher characteristics, teaching conditions, and teacher effectiveness. The authors used the method to examine whether students’ perception of teachers of same race or ethnicity favorably through their daily interactions. Their findings showed evidence that students have more favorable perceptions of Black and Latinx teachers compared to White teachers. There was
evidence that the student perceptions were formed by their performance, the characteristics of teachers, teaching conditions, and teacher effectiveness. Similarly, Scott’s and Rodriguez’s (2015) findings from their phenomenological analysis of the interview transcripts given to Black male teachers revealed that there is a need for a diverse teaching population and the recruiting of more Black males is imperative to ensure students exposure to different perspectives in teaching and learning.

Matching Minority Teachers With Students of the Same Background

A racial mismatch between teachers and students has become an essential issue in reversing the historical failure of students of color (Souto-Manning & Cheruvu, 2016). Many researchers have stressed the importance of culturally matching teachers with students of the same background (Andrews et al., 2019; Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015; Murai et al., 2019; Zhou & Li, 2015). Andrews et al. (2019) observed that teachers of color make up approximately 20% of the U.S. public school teacher population while students of color represent approximately 52% of public-school students. The mismatch between teacher populations and student populations have resulted in demands to diversify the teaching profession and to recruit higher numbers of ethnic and racial minority teachers (Haddix, 2017; Santoro, 2015). When teachers and students share the same race or ethnicity, students perform better (Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015; Murai et al., 2019). Ethnic or racial matching of students and teachers in urban schools lead to improved learning outcomes for Black students (Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015). However, the underrepresentation of minority teachers in schools contribute to achievement gap in test scores between minority students and students from the other races in the U.S. (Chow, 2017; Egalite et al., 2015).
Black and Asian Americans have a very low proportion of people in the teaching profession (Andrews et al., 2019; Morettini, 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015). Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education (2016) showed that only about 7% of teachers are Black and 2% of teachers are Asian; these percentages have remained the same between 2012–2016. Factors such as race, culture, language, and religion affect how minority teachers perceived and interpreted their lived experiences (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Zhou & Li, 2015). Teachers must have a knowledge base in the social and cultural context of teaching in the culture of the students they intend to teach because lack of racially and linguistically diverse teachers means that students are encouraged to see things exclusively through the lens of a monolingual, cultural lens (Bristol, 2018; Chow, 2017; Haddix, 2017; Shady, 2014; Zhou & Li, 2015). The problem of racial mismatch is particularly prominent in the urban school districts and affect minority students resulting in large achievement gaps between these students and their peers of the major race and ethnicity (Egalite et al., 2015).

Culture-specific issues are a lived reality for minority teachers as they develop relationships with their students and families (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018). Philip et al. (2017) suggested that increasing the proportion of teachers of color in education without paying attention to how they will address and guide racial matters in the classroom may create new racial discourses and practices that negatively impact students of color. Minority teachers working in inner-city schools often report frustrations with classroom management than other teachers with the same cultural background as students, lackluster interactions with professional colleagues, lack of support from administrators, poor parental support and communication because of the mismatch of cultural norms (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Deckman, 2017; Philip et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015)). Minority teachers can assist students of color to
improve their educational experiences by serving as cultural intermediaries, who are aware and sensitive to the challenges faced by minority students and can engage in culturally relevant and sustainable teaching (Cheruvu et al., 2015).

When students and teachers are racially matched together, a higher teacher expectation is encouraged leading to better academic and social outcomes (Andrews et al., 2019; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Martinez, 2018; Murai et al., 2019). In addition, students are found to have more favorable perceptions of minority teachers (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). Egalite et al. (2015) examined the effects of race matching by using a large administrative dataset from the Florida Department of Education where minority teachers are underrepresented, and the ratio of White students to White teachers is much smaller than the comparable statistics for Black and Latinx students. The use of the large dataset allowed the researchers to follow many students from elementary through high school for 7 years, helping them to estimate how the same students would fare when matched to a teacher with a similar background as they move through grades 3–10. By tracking changes in achievement at individual levels, they were able to analyze students’ achievement outcomes to know whether the academic performance of students who do not match the teacher’s race or ethnicity is significantly different from those matched to teachers of the same ethnicity. Their findings showed that students’ achievement seemed to improve when taught by teachers of the same race or ethnicity. They found that there was a statistically significant positive achievement effect associated with race matching for minority students.

Similarly, Cherng, and Halpin (2016) collected Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) data on 2,756 teachers in 317 schools in six U.S. school districts for 2 academic years focusing on teachers of mathematics and English language arts in Grades four through nine and ninth-grade biology teachers. They examined whether students have favorable perceptions of teachers
of the same race or ethnicity as the students. The key variables in their analyses were teacher race or ethnicity, whether teachers are Black, Latinx, or White as a reference category and students’ race or ethnicity. Their study indicated that students identified important features of their teachers’ practices. The authors claimed that minority student groups have favorable perceptions mainly for minority teachers, and student perceptions are shaped by their teacher characteristics, teaching conditions, teacher efficiency, and students’ performance.

The cultural mismatch between teachers and students results in teachers misunderstanding their students’ behaviors which, in effect, undermine teacher efficiency and students’ academic achievement (Choi, 2018; Kohli, 2018; Scott, S. & Rodriguez, 2015). Zhou and Li (2015) affirmed that the cultural mismatch between foreign teachers and their U.S. students could be disastrous because the teachers are inexperienced in U.S. pedagogy. However, the most common challenges faced by international teachers working with students in the U.S. are problems associated with a cultural mismatch, including language, accents, and lack of cultural cues (Kohli, 2018; Shady, 2014; Zhou & Li, 2015). The cultural and educational experiences of teachers help them to convey their expectations in classroom, balance their teaching styles while adapting new classroom management practices to accommodate the different cultural beliefs of their students (Chow, 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015).

The participants of the study by Zhou and Li (2015) involved six Chinese immersion language teachers working in five different schools with classes of multicultural students from different ethnic backgrounds. The authors analyzed data from three different sources including interviews, teachers’ weekly blog reflections, and biweekly participant observations in their immersion classrooms, using qualitative content analysis. They found that the teachers’ high cultural expectations like respect, proper physical behavior, and study attitude was challenged by
the students’ actual classroom behavior rooted in child-centered U.S. culture. These challenges are worsened by insufficient training regarding cultural differences and practices. Chow (2017) noted how the lack of Asian-American teachers is purely the personal choice of the minority teachers who feel inadequate to work with students of different races, or feared failure and discrimination from students, colleagues, and parents.

However, contrary to the argument by many authors (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Magaldi et al., 2018; Martinez, 2018; Pabon, 2014), students of color will learn better when taught by teachers of color; the findings of Philip et al. (2017) showed that a teacher of color could inadvertently hinder the students’ analyses of race and racism by invoking an assumed cultural synchronicity with the students. Teachers of color in their bid to change the ideology of Whiteness and marginalization inflict damage on students of color by re-inscribing dominant ideologies that present race as a static identify or place people of color as lacking (Philip et al., 2017). Jahng (2014) suggested that teachers sharing the same cultural background and identity with students do not ensure a better understanding of the students; through an autoethnography, he analyzed his experience as a minority teacher supervisor and teacher that worked with students from the same cultural background as him. His self-study challenged the assumption that cultural compatibility does not necessarily allow for culturally responsive education that supports and empowers students (Jahng, 2014). The authors discussed how the number of minority teachers does not matter in providing culturally responsive teaching for minority children. Instead, the teacher needs to figure out how discourses affect the ways they think, behave, and teach children.
Racial Microaggression as a Challenge to Minority Teachers

Racial microaggressions are everyday spoken and unspoken communication that may be derogatory to people of color, done consciously or unconsciously, because they belong to a minority group (Kohli, 2014; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). Although there is significant literature highlighting racial microaggressions against minority students (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2014; Louis et al., 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015), there have been fewer studies examining racial microaggressions experienced by teachers of color (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). Microaggression is a subtle and an aversive form of racism where the racist hides his intentions through the avoidance of interaction (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). Microaggressions may be very subtle but tend to denigrate and erode self-confidence and result in emotional stress for the minority individual (Fisher-Ari et al., 2016; Louis et al., 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015).

Many minority teachers are often racially isolated or treated with hostility, resentment, and suspicion by other staff in the majority, which may eventually provoke mental, emotional, and physical problems (Choi, 2018; Fisher-Ari et al., 2016; Kohli, 2019; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Palmer & Maramba, 2015; Thai et al., 2017). Teachers of color in higher education experience different types of microaggressions, including invisibility, marginalization, or hypervisibility (Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Thai et al., 2017). Invisibility involves not being noticed or recognized by colleagues and devaluing the skills and scholarship of individuals based on race. For example, invisibility gives the minority the feeling of being unnoticed or unheard, overlooked, or treated as if he does not exist, and being dismissed, devalued, ignored, and delegitimized by others because of race. Hypervisibility is when a person of color is required to act as the spokesman of the race or considered as an expert on race issue like being asked to recruit people of the same
race (Mena & Vaccaro). Similarly, some authors articulated that despite a society deemed multicultural in composition, minority teachers continue to express concerns and frustrations about working against an ingrained belief system that conflicts the culture of multiculturalism (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017).

There are three types of interpersonal racial microaggressions including, microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Louis et al., 2017; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). Microassaults are considered as traditional hate speech and symbols because they are openly racist remarks (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016). Microinsults are direct and simple verbal or nonverbal attacks that are intended to offend someone because of its insensitivity or disregard for the race or identity of the person and include the use of racial slurs or showing a racially charged symbol such as noose (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Thai et al., 2017). Microinsults are subtle and aversive ways of communicating racist beliefs (Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Thai et al., 2017). Microinsults are used to indirectly insult a person’s racial heritage or racial identity by offering a negative compliment (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Louis et al., 2017; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017).

Examples of a microinsult and microinvalidations include ascribing intelligence to a cultural group like the assumption that all Asian Americans are skilled in mathematics and science and viewing every one of them through the stereotypical lens and failing to recognize their individuality (Endo, 2015; Kohli, 2014; Palmer & Maramba, 2015). Similarly, the assumption that all people of color are criminals and inappropriately reporting them to law-enforcement officials because their presence is perceived as threatening (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016), rating individuals as second-class citizen, or treating cultural values or communication styles as abnormal like telling an African American man that he is so well
spoken and articulate (Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). The idea of Microinsults is rooted in beliefs of that Whites are superior (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016).

Microinvalidations are unconscious behaviors or verbal comments that alienate people in their land (Cole et al., 2017; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017). It includes color-blindness or the pretense that a White person does not see skin color or race; the myth of meritocracy or having the notion that hard work rather than racism plays the more significant role in success, denial of one’s position in racism, invalidating the feelings or thoughts of people of color (Louis et al., 2017). Also, the blatant disregard for the lived emotions and experiences of people of color (Endo, 2015; Palmer & Maramba, 2015). Microassaults are conscious and explicit nonverbal or verbal derogatory racial attacks on people of color with the aim of harming them (Cole et al., 2017; Endo, 2015). It includes discriminatory actions as name-calling, avoidance, using racial slurs, and treating people of color with hostility, resentment, and suspicion when they enter predominantly White spaces (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2014; Kohli, 2019).

The experience of racial microaggressions negatively affects the job satisfaction of educators in higher education who often engage in detachment coping to deal with abuse (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016). Kohli (2018) affirmed that racial microaggressions and color blindness are macro and microforms of racism that affect the professional growth and retention of teachers of color. Mena and Vaccaro (2017), carried out an ethnographic study to obtain an account of the experiences of women faculty and staff of color experiencing microaggressions at a predominantly White institution of higher education. The participants of the study were 13 women, out of which 10 identified as Black or African American, two as Asian, and one as Latina. The participants ranged from 30 to 63 years with a mean of 48. They studied the women’s experiences as individual employees and as members of the Organization for Women
of Color (OWC), a culture-sharing group of the university. The critical ethnography study drew attention to the challenges of microaggression and attempted to address methods of unfairness or injustice experienced by women of color. Through interviews and observation of the participants, they provided a consistent shared narrative about invisibility microaggressions. Their findings showed that that environmental microaggression was rooted deeply in the history of the institution and manifested in the form of environmental microaggressions (invisibility around the campus, discipline or profession, and the community), interpersonal microaggressions (invisibility in leadership and professional).

Similarly, Endo (2015) investigated how 10 Asian-American female classroom teachers experienced racial microaggression from their pre-licensure preparation years to professional careers as classroom teachers. The participants of the study were from culturally and ethnically diverse Asian backgrounds including biracial, Filipina, Hmong, Chinese, Korean, Korean-adoptee, Vietnamese, and Japanese teachers who brought critical perspectives on the connections of race with class, gender, and language and how these dynamics impact the identities of K–12 teachers from diverse backgrounds. DeCuir-Gunby and Gunby (2016), utilized a critical quantitative analysis approach to show how African American educators’ experienced racial microaggressions in the workplace. By using quantitative data collected from demographic surveys collected a total of 75 African American educators including 22 participants: 4 men and 18 women working in primary and secondary education and 53 participants: 9 men and 44 women in higher education. After recruiting participants through social media like email, Facebook, and various academic listserv, they collected data anonymously and analyzed the data using Pearson’s correlations. Their findings indicated that African American educators in all educational settings experienced racial microaggressions in the workplace.
The Challenges Faced by Minority Teachers

Minority teachers face many difficulties resulting from racial inequities which limit their professional development opportunities, create barriers in access, promotion, tenure, and retention especially at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs; Choi, 2018; Dubbeld et al., 2019; Louis et al., & Watson, 2017). Other external variables such as issues of race, credit, gender, and family income also affect minority teachers (Colomer, 2018; Creasey et al., 2016; Weda & de Villiers, 2019). Minority teachers have often faced threats to their employment and retention in schools and the education profession (Colomer, 2018; Dubbeld et al., 2019; Weda & de Villiers, 2019; Whipp & Geronime, 2017) and challenges in classroom discipline (Deckman, 2017).

The ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity among teachers is an area in education that has received much attention as it relates to unbiased work environments, teacher-student relations, teacher-peer relations, and multi-cultural education (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018). However, tensions still arise when minority teachers attempt to define their identity in multicultural settings (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Colomer, 2018). Studies showed that minority teacher faces many types of barriers (Brown, 2018; Choi, 2018; Creasey et al., 2016; D’Amico et al., 2017; Farinde et al., 2016; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016). Most times, the school culture often conflicts with the community-orientation that minority teachers bring to their work with students of color. Despite the connections between community-oriented teachers of color and students of color and their communities, there are still some ideologies within schools that promote individualism and make it difficult for the teachers to teach in a way that reflects their shared ethics (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).
Another challenge faced by minority teachers is social isolation. Aujla-Bhullar (2018) used a narrative inquiry in a study to examine the challenges, barriers, and successes of minority female teachers working in K–12 institutions. The narratives of the eight minority teachers identified as Asian, South Asian, and South East Asian women working in a large urban center in Western Canada showed how discrimination and empowerment are a few of the experiences lived out by minority teachers and language, culture, and identity exist as powerful but marginalized identifications of the minority. Aujla-Bhullar claimed that the experience of discrimination for these participants was painful and distressing and the shame and feelings of helplessness were apparent in their accounts of discrimination.

Likewise, Pabon (2014) conducted a qualitative study to explore the life histories of four African American male teachers in urban schools. By using methodically transcribed interviews, the author found that African American male teachers experience challenges starting from the job interview stage when they realize that they had not been adequately prepared to teach in urban schools. The participants, through the narratives shared that they were discouraged by an irrelevant curriculum and devalued by teacher educators who muzzled them in their courses. Pabon claimed that Black male teachers are also likely to face stereotypical expectations to become Black Supermen in their schools by the administrators while they are under-supported and pushed out of the very schools that claim to need them.

Even though minority teachers may have the necessary credentials, they face different kinds of challenges during the employment process (Colomer, 2018; Whipp & Geronime, 2017). D’Amico et al. (2017) examined the racial composition of a public-school district’s teacher employment process using the application data and hiring decisions. Their study focused on the number of completed applications for teaching positions for the 2012–2013 academic year,
including the EEOC data. They also considered information on position openings, applicants’ zip code, prior school experience, and level of education. Considerations were given to student population, data for schools in the district and demographic information about race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status of students published on the district’s website. The data were compiled on hiring decisions and the dates of job offers. The findings of the study showed that Black candidates hired are disproportionate to their White counterparts. Also, there was significant evidence of workforce segregation showing that Black teachers were often placed in schools with large populations of poor minority children or struggling schools.

Gaikhorst et al. (2015) examined the effects of a professional development program in helping teachers overcome the challenges of teaching in urban schools. The author used a quasi-experimental design to measure the contribution of 133 participants in the program using dependent variables like their competences, professional orientation, self-efficacy, job motivation and career choices. The results of the knowledge test and questionnaires of information on teachers’ evaluation of the program were analyzed qualitatively. The authors used multilevel modeling to determine the effects of “Mastery” on the different dependent variables. The findings showed that teachers develop several competencies for teaching in inner cities, such as dealing with cultural diversity and language deficiencies. Also, teaching in an inner-city environment places heavy and diverse demands on the quality of teachers. The teachers’ interviews revealed that the program challenged them to deal with educational issues that are beyond those they encounter in their daily teaching practices.

In her research, Brown (2014) considered the challenges that preservice minority teachers encounter in teacher preparation programs and the effect on their recruitment and retention. In framing the study, Brown drew from CRT in education. After reviewing the existing literature on
preservice teachers, she presented a plethora of challenges relating to the goal of preparing minority teachers in ways that are relevant and socially transformative. Fitzpatrick et al. (2014) conducted a case study which looked at six participants who were minority undergraduate students enrolled in music education degree programs at three large public universities located in the Midwest and the Southwest. The authors relied on data from a semistructured interview with each of the participants to know more about the participant and to provide triangulation of data regarding the participant’s preparation for a music education degree program, admission to the program and retention. The questions given to the participants focused on their individual experiences and data triangulation was accomplished through comparison of data from the participant and their high school music teacher interviews. The goal of the study was to find ways to improve the experiences of students from traditionally marginalized populations in the undergraduate music education degree programs,

**Characteristics of School Environment That Affect the Performance of Minority Teachers**

The school climate generally refers to both physical and social characteristics of the learning and teaching environment, values and beliefs held by teachers, students, and parents, and the relationships among these stakeholders (Huang et al., 2017; Jain et al., 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Inner-city school environments are complex with several challenges for teachers, like dealing with cultural differences and violence (Gaikhorst et al., 2015). Also, other factors that characterize a school environment include school size, location, student demographics, diversity of the school population, school type, working conditions, instructional resources, and administrative support (Whipp, & Geronime, 2017). The effects of poverty, insufficient and disproportionate allocation of resources create an environment that is detrimental to the academic success of students in the inner-city school (Blaisdell, 2016; Kraft et al., 2015).
An inspiring school climate is essential in achieving educational goals in the classroom and the school community (Creasey et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2017; Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017; Kuriloff et al., 2019; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). A motivational school climate is closely related to the success of the teachers’ instructive task and outcome (Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). Organizational and social factors, arising from the school climate such as a lack of administrative support and classroom management issues, are important causes of teachers’ stress (Creasey et al., 2016). Many studies have emerged on the effect of the school environment on the work of teachers in high poverty urban schools (Djonko-Moore, 2016; Gaikhorst et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2015). Kuriloff et al. (2019) believed that teacher performance in the classroom is highly influenced by school settings. Huang et al. (2017) suggested that school climate with consistent rule enforcement and supportive teachers and administrators play roles in reducing victimization of teachers. Gaikhorst et al. (2015) in their study observed that teaching in an inner-city environment places substantial and different demands on the quality of teachers. The authors demonstrated how school’s orientation to its environment affect teachers’ work and how uncertainty about students and the school environment remains a persistent and challenging condition of teachers’ work in high-poverty urban schools. School culture regularly conflicts with the community-orientation that teachers of Color bring to their work with minority students (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).

A supportive atmosphere at school encourages shared views, values and, responsibilities (Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). Teachers and school administrators play a significant part in determining the condition of the school climate, by enforcing disciplinary rules (Huang et al., 2017); similarly, school climate may affect the job satisfaction of staff and teachers (Jain et al., 2015). Teaching in an urban environment places challenging
pressure on the quality of teachers (Gaikhorst et al., 2015). Staff perceptions of school climate vary according to the schools racial/ethnic composition (Kohli, 2014). Favorable school climate is considered particularly crucial for racial minority and poor students (Jain et al., 2015). School environments with racially charged personal and peer interactions do not prepare teachers for multicultural awareness and counseling needs of minority students (Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017). Racism occurs on organizational levels through policies, infrastructures, and school-wide practices that maintain the racial status quo (Jain et al., 2015; Kohli, 2014; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).

Differences in school climate have implications for academic disparities because schools with favorable school climate have a higher percentage of students performing better (Jain et al., 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2017). A positive school climate is associated with good student academic performance (Jain et al., 2015). A favorable school climate provides students with suitable support, structure, and opportunities to learn and help to alleviate all barriers to learning that students may encounter (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Other important aspects of school climate that affect teacher attrition are parental and community engagement (Djonko-Moore, 2016; Huang et al., 2017), student behaviors such as discipline problems, absenteeism, lack of involvement or readiness (Djonko-Moore, 2016; Jain et al., 2015). Kohli and Pizarro (2016) found that a school culture often conflicts with the community-orientation that teachers of color bring to their work with students of color.

Kraft et al. (2015), through empirical research, interviewed a diverse set of 95 administrators and teachers in an urban school who examined the effect of the school environment on the work of teachers in high poverty urban schools. These authors found traditional public schools require some organization to address the uncertainty introduced by
their school environments. Jain et al. (2015) examined how school climate differs by the characteristics of schools. They employed the California School Climate Survey (CSCS), California Basic Educational Data Systems data files (CBEDS), and the Academic Performance Index research files (API Research files) for 2 academic years. The participants included all certificated staff working in grades at schools that administer the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) and other Title VI schools that are required to complete the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 survey. Other participants included personnel working in the health, prevention, and safety department of the schools. The California State Board of Education and the California Department of Education have since replaced the Academic Performance Index (API) with the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) to improve the measurement of California’s education goals (California Department of Education, n.d.).

The authors provided the means of the school’s socioeconomic status (SES), racial and ethnic composition, urban and rural area, school type and used the complex survey procedures to perform statistical tests and estimate standard errors that account for the grouping of staff within schools. The finding showed that elementary schools reported more positive school climate than middle and high schools while high schools are perceived to be the worst environments and reported less favorable school climates. Also, the perceptions of staff about school climate differed across schools with different socioeconomic status (SES). Their finding showed that staff in large cities perceived the school climate to be less favorable than staff in rural towns. A quantitative study by Whipp and Geronime (2017) analyzed how prior experiences of 72 graduates of an inner-city teacher education program were associated with commitment and retention in urban schools. Their finding showed that there is a higher turnover of teachers in the high-poverty urban schools relating to the urban environment due to the location and lack of
commitment to the environment by teachers. The authors indicated that teachers who had prior urban experiences during their teacher preparation as volunteers or students and teachers who attended high-poverty urban elementary or secondary schools show a stronger commitment to teaching in urban schools.

**Teacher Preparation Programs**

Teachers are influenced by their social, personal, and educational experiences and bring those ideas into their practice (Borrero et al., 2016; Farinde-Wu, 2018; Kuriloff et al., 2019; Magaldi et al., 2018; Moles, 2014; Solic & Riley, 2019). The most important key to helping preservice teachers make optimal use of their experiences and successfully transition to teaching is the quality of a teacher preparation program, especially developing pedagogical and management skills in an actual classroom through urban clinical experiences (Creasey et al., 2016). A successful teacher preparation program requires a combination of coursework and clinical experience (Brown, 2014; Creasey et al., 2016; Kuriloff et al., 2019; Solic & Riley, 2019; Weber, 2017). Studies have shown that enrollment in teacher preparation programs has significantly declined in recent years and teachers receive little or no multicultural training during their studies (Haddix, 2017; Magaldi et al., 2018). The authors suggested that teacher preparation programs should clearly teach teachers relevant multicultural competence (Brown, 2014; Dubbeld et al., 2019; Magaldi et al., 2018) and create a multicultural curriculum that is infused with more culturally relevant pedagogy rather than behavior management courses (Borrero et al., 2016; Magaldi et al., 2018). Multicultural training will help teachers become more sensitive to the experiences of others who do not belong to the same culture or background as theirs.
Durden et al. (2016) examined the concept of the culturally relevant teaching of two teacher candidates through their written and spoken reflections. Using a qualitative case study approach, the authors carried out an in-depth examination of the teachers’ critical reflections on their developmental process of identity over the length of the teacher education program. The data were collected throughout the teacher education program using three data sources, interviews, course documents and written records. Their findings showed that teachers’ racial identities influence their developing conceptions about teaching culturally diverse students and shaped their constructions of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Weber’s (2017) research involved a quantitative study which used paired samples t-test to investigate the effects of continued, supervised, course-based service-learning experience on teachers’ presumptions and attitudes towards urban education. The participants of the study were 38 teacher candidates enrolled in the Introduction to Literacy Instruction course at a local college. Weber measured the teacher candidates’ attitudes and perceptions of inner-city teachers by administering a pre-survey and post survey. The scholar analyzed the data using an independent samples t test. The finding showed that the teacher candidates had more positive views about some facets of urban education after completing a semester of the program.

Edelmann, Bischoff, Beck, and Meier (2015) conducted a mixed method study using an online survey to determine how in-service teachers deal with the diversity of their classes. The DIVAL (Diversity of preservice teachers: focus migration) research project gathered empirical data from 891 participants at the University of Teacher Education St. Gallen, Switzerland. The authors indicated that while studies about the diversity of student populations in schools receive a lot of attention, there are no relative studies about preservice immigrant teachers.
Borrero et al. (2016) also used the grounded theory inquiry to analyze the experiences of novice teachers of color entering the profession in urban public schools to investigate how they transition from an urban education teacher preparation program into the classroom. The participants of the study were seven minority teachers in their final semester of a teacher preparation program or the first full year of teaching. Borrero et al. used focus group interviews to encourage dialogue among participants, the transcripts of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using codes. The findings showed that new teachers’ understanding of self, community, and collaboration helped them to transition from their teacher preparation program into the urban classroom. In a quantitative study by Bastian, McCord, Marks, and Carpenter (2017), the authors assessed the relationships between personality traits and teacher effectiveness. The study showed how personality trait affect teacher behavior, decision making, and learning. They used an online survey platform to distribute a self-measurement tool known as the M5-120 to check the personality traits of new teachers hired at North Carolina Public Schools (NCPS). The M5-120 allowed the test-takers to respond to items on a 5-point Likert-type scale to show how statements like very accurate, inaccurate, neither inaccurate nor accurate, accurate, and very accurate applied to their personalities. The authors chose the M5-120 because of its reliability in measuring multiple samples.

Whipp and Geronime (2017) used the SSPS correlation analysis to determine how the experiences of teachers before and during teacher preparation are related to their commitment to work in a high-poverty urban school or remain employed in the same type of school for three or more years. Using data collected from 72 student teachers who completed surveys and interviews, they dummy coded the experiences of the teachers according to their enrollment in high-poverty schools, the racial composition of the family, cross-racial relationships, willingness
to perform volunteer work in high-poverty schools, employment in multi-racial settings, and student teaching in a high-poverty school. Their findings showed that there is a higher turnover of teachers in the high-poverty urban schools relating to the urban environment due to the location and lack of commitment to the environment by teachers. They found that the urban experiences during teacher preparation and a strong commitment to urban teaching may indeed be needed in predicting teachers’ urban school retention.

In the same way, Moles (2014) analyzed data using the grounded theory approach. The scholar used the narrative interviews of eight early childhood graduate teachers in New Zealand who completed their Diploma or Bachelor of Teaching (ECE) within the two-year period of the interview. The participants of the study are from several Asian and Pacific nations and several different teacher education programs. Moles found that Teacher education can improve the learning experience of minority teachers significantly by incorporating their existing knowledge and understanding in the course and delivery of instruction. The authors affirmed the need to recognize the pressure associated with being a minority teacher and the strategies to ensure they remain in the education system.

Creasey et al.’s (2016) study involved 377 undergraduate college students majoring in a large Midwestern University. The participants completed questionnaires administered to them in a group testing facility. Using data from 78-item Urban Teaching Barriers (UTB) survey, the authors analyzed the results to aggregate UTB items to construct relevant dimensions to extract six factors that will most likely affect the decision to work in an urban school setting. Creasey et al. claimed that the barriers regarding inadequate teacher training in urban education were related to lower self-efficacy towards urban teaching intentions. Hachfeld et al. (2015) collected data from 433 beginning teacher participants in a COACTIV-R study conducted to assess their
professional competence and development during induction. The data collected between 2007 and 2009 in Germany was administered as questionnaires to tap the teachers’ beliefs, knowledge, socio-demographic data, and information on the teacher training program. Their finding showed that, in Germany, engaging teacher candidates in an active discussion on multiculturalism is an important and a challenging aspect of teacher education programs.

**Teacher Coping Strategies**

Minority teachers employ different coping strategies to negotiate and respond to their experiences with racial microaggressions (Choi, 2018; DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Endo, 2015). Coping is the technique of minimizing stress or conflict by regulating emotions. DeCuir-Gunby and Gunby (2016) noted that coping examples include the individual pretending that he or she did not experience a racial microaggression. There are different types of coping strategies including avoidance coping approach (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016) and verbal silence approach (Endo, 2015). The avoidance approach strategy allows the individual to adopt a problem-solving approach to solve the problem of microaggression. For example, an educator may join a forum to discuss race in the classroom after experiencing racial microaggression (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016). Coping by avoidance is a passive or maladaptive approach where an individual uses the avoidance strategy to address the issue of microaggression (Choi, 2018), by pretending not to experience discrimination.

An individual’s approach to coping depends on the context and the nature of the emotional experience (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016). Research conducted by Choi (2018) investigated two Korean American Social Studies teachers’ experiences in a diverse school setting and their unique coping strategies within a multi-cultural, urban public high school. The
authors found that the two teachers overcame the challenges of racism and survived in the racialized institutional construct by highlighting their ethnic and cultural heritage and beliefs.

When Teachers develop a positive connection to their school communities and perception of self-efficacy, they feel less overwhelmed with school climate difficulties and overcome professional burnout (O’Brennan, Pas, & Bradshaw, 2017). The authors collected data from 3,225 high school staff in 58 high schools (Grades 9–12) in 12 of Maryland’s 24 school districts through a secure, password-protected website. The staff completed the Maryland Safe and Supportive Schools (MDS3) School Climate Survey as part of a larger multiyear study of school climate in high schools (O’Brennan et al., 2017). The data from the study showed that the staff tends to feel less burnout when they believed they had developed the skill set needed to deal with the challenging behaviors of the students. Also, staff who create a sense of belonging in their school communities and connect with their students and principals tend to feel less professional burnout.

Teachers’ opinions influence their perceptions, decision and behaviors in the classroom (Hachfeld et al., 2015). In their COACTIV-R quantitative study, the authors used a framework of professional competence to investigate the relationship between multiculturalism and colorblindness, and other professional competence for teaching minority students. The participants in the study carried out in Germany were 433 new teachers. Data for the study was collected over a period of two years to assess their professional competence and development during the induction phase of their teaching profession. Using a 4-point, 6-point and 5-point (agree/disagree) response questionnaire, they assessed the specific self-efficacy and enthusiasm, participants’ agreement with negative stereotypes about minority students’ motivation to actively engage in academics, and whether the beginning teachers reported being willing to adapt their
teaching to a culturally diverse student body respectively. Their findings reveal that teachers with multicultural beliefs have higher motivation, self-efficacy, and enthusiasm for education, and more positive values or lower agreement with negative stereotypes and are more willing to adapt their teaching.

Al-Khatib and Lash (2017) investigated the role of race, school setting, and professional experiences in establishing the identities of minority teachers in early childhood education programs. They stated that teachers’ identities may change, and the change may be accompanied by tensions and dilemmas relating to identity formation including family influence, teaching values and beliefs, emotions, personal experiences and school contexts. They collected data through in-depth personal interviews and stimulated recall interviews, observations, formal and informal conversations, and document analysis. The authors decided to use many sources of evidence to get a comprehensive perspective in the study. The findings stressed the importance of engaging teachers in discussions and reflections of their identities and concerns so that support can be provided in these areas of interests. They suggested that the emotions or feeling of alienation, anxiety, anger experienced by minority teachers should be considered and more space for discussions and dialogues allowed on race issues (Al-Khatib & Lash, 2017).

Review of Methodological Issues

Within this review of methodological issues, I explore the methodologies employed by the authors to study the roles, challenges, and preparation of minority teachers in urban schools. Creswell (2014b) identified three categories of methodologies used by researchers as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. By studying and analyzing the methodologies used by these researchers, it was helpful for me to understand how they shaped the arguments presented and the choices of research designs. This review of research methodology provided an
understanding of how the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches can play out in varieties of studies examining the impact of racial equality on minority teachers working in urban schools with many minority schools. Also, the recognition of any methodological weaknesses in previous studies will guide me to propose a new and better methodology for my intended study on minority teachers.

**Qualitative Approaches Using Self-Reported Data**

Various research methods and measures focus on the qualitative phenomenological methodology as well as case studies (Creswell, 2014a), which provided a plethora of information regarding the teachers’ experiences in inner-city schools. Many of the literature reviewed used surveys and questionnaires. These approaches used self-reported data to address issues relating to minority teachers and their experiences in urban schools. Borrero et al. (2016) studied how novice teachers’ understanding of self, community, and collaboration helped them to transition from teacher preparation program into urban classrooms. Data were collected from seven minority teachers in their first year of teaching using focus group interviews and concentrated on their experiences as new minority teachers in local schools. Participants were asked about their successes and challenges as new teachers with a specific focus on how integrated critical frameworks from their teacher education program into their classroom teaching. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed by the authors using the grounded theory method.

In their research on the retention of Black female teachers in urban schools, Farinde et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative study with the phenomenological design utilizing purposive and snowball sampling. Participants were selected from a major urban school district in a southeastern region of the U.S., and the author used phenomenology to explore their lived experiences to gain an understanding of the essence of a phenomenon. The data collected
through interviews conducted with the 12 participants was broken down, compared, and
categorized using conventional content analysis. Investigator triangulation ensured the quality of
the data analyzed. The use of triangulation allowed the researchers to identify emerging codes,
groups, and themes related to the guiding research question and to confirm the validity of the
research processes.

Among the dialogic approaches, two studies by Pabon (2014) and Stoll (2014) used
formal observations and conducted semistructured interviews with the participants. These
interview-based reflective dialogues provided insight into the participants’ reflections on their
experiences as minority teachers in urban schools. Borrero et al. (2016) and Louis et al. (2017)
used self-study sampling open coding and axial coding. Kohli and Pizarro (2016) researched in
part the racialized experiences of racial justice minded minority teachers. The authors developed
questionnaires by which teachers self-reported their experiences commitments towards working
for racial and social justice and how they struggle as minority teachers in urban public schools.
In an ethnological study, Mena and Vaccaro (2017) used the accounts of 13 African American
women to examine the experiences of women faculty and staff of color with microaggressions at
a mid-sized predominantly White institution of higher education in the Northeast. The authors
relied on direct quotes from interview transcripts, as they yielded rich and direct evidence
regarding microaggression. The research employed an ethnographic multi-case study and data
were collected based on snowball sampling and community nomination (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Qualitative Approach Using Narratives

A significant portion of the studies I reviewed used surveys or questionnaires. Louis et al.
(2017) studied the issues of marginalization, microaggression, isolation, and stereotyping of
Afro-Caribbean teachers in a predominant White space through a qualitative study that employed
the Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN) procedure. The SPN uses the perceptions of the scholar as the primary source of data. This method used the participants’ words to be the focus of the study and used their perception to explain, interpret, and validate the experiences. The scholar formulated a series of questions and prompts so that the participants can develop their narratives. A combination of purposeful self-study sampling and convenience sampling were utilized for this study.

Aujla-Bhullar (2018) studied the experiences of minority women teachers in Canada as it relates to their work environment, teacher-student relations and multicultural education using narrative inquiry that was guided by three principle questions: (a) In what ways has their identity as visible minority woman inform participants’ teaching practice both in the classroom and school level? (b) Does teacher reflection impact a teacher’s role in and out of the classroom? (c) Do visible minority teachers have a unique experience about their race and gender that could impact the way schools develop and meet the needs of a multicultural society? Kohli (2018) researched how minority teachers are exposed to racism in schools and how it takes a toll on their well-being, growth, and retention.

Kohli (2018) used a short answer questionnaire to seek thematic patterns from a pool of 218 participants and in-depth interview with 16 self-selected participants. The scholar developed a questionnaire through which she studied the impact of the racial climate on their professional experience and retention in the education. The questionnaire asked three key questions relating to their commitments to work for racial justice, how race and racial inequality shaped their school site? And what they struggled with as minority teachers in urban public schools? The data collected was included as part of their application process to a professional development conference. The interviews elaborated on the questionnaire to provide depth, probing for specific
descriptive accounts of their professional experiences with racial injustice and inequality. Madsen and Mabokela (2014) employed a qualitative thematic strategy by interviewing intergroup conflict theory to generate a data analysis code that could be applied to these participants’ interview data. They used a comparative method to create a match between the interview data and intergroup theory (Madsen & Mabokela, 2014).

**Experimental Approach**

Many of the authors reviewed used the experimental designs approach and nonexperimental designs, such as surveys (Creswell, 2014a; Kraft et al., 2015) conducted empirical research with a diverse set of 95 teachers and administrators in an urban school. The authors analyzed the interviews of the teachers by drafting them into thematic summaries, coding interview transcripts, creating data-analytic matrices, and writing analytic memos. Huang et al. (2017) used mathematical statistics to determine the effects of teacher-directed violence in an unsupported and chaotic school environment on minority teachers and the broader community. The authors used multilevel logistic regression models with state fixed results to analyze the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) dataset. O’Brennan et al. (2017) also used quantitative research with 3,225 high school staff to examine how the perceptions of connectedness, safety, and self-efficacy and staff demographics relate to experiences of staff burnout. Cherng and Halpin (2016) studied the importance of recruiting and retaining minority teacher using a quasi-experimental method.

The data were collected using the Measure of Effective Teaching (METS) study database and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The distinguishing feature of the study is that students evaluated their teachers. Djonko-Moore (2016) used statistical methods to examine the movement and attrition patterns of teachers in high poverty, racially segregated schools. The
authors used statistical methods of correlation analysis to compare the extent of teacher attrition and mobility. Gallagher’s (2016) study used an analytical strategy as a quantitative research method to measure how a teacher can transform the classroom into a unit that represents a family. The authors focused on an in-depth analysis of one teacher’s pedagogical practice in the classroom. Martinez’s (2018) empirical research also involved the use of data analysis and descriptive statistics of data from staffing survey and questionnaires.

Some of other literature reviewed used a mixed-method research approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2014b); the study by Gaikhorst et al. (2015) used a quasi-experimental design that measured data using a knowledge test and questionnaires (pre- and post-measures). The mixed method research design involved multilevel modeling in determining the effects of “Mastery” on the different dependent variables. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis, and the authors coded the responses to the questions. Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2017) also used the mixed method design that involved criterion-sampling scheme, convenience sampling technique, semistructured and focus group interviews. Unlike data gathered from the interviews, the focus group interviews gave the opportunity for the authors to gain insight and understanding of the two cultural and educational contexts in which participants operated within a social framework.

Synthesis of Research

Multiple articles from peer-reviewed journals were examined throughout the review of literature; I identified authors who used different methodologies including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods to explore the experiences of Minority teachers in a White-dominated populated profession. I also examined several studies regarding the marginalization of the minority teachers, the disparity of minority teachers in inner-city schools and some studies
relating to the characteristics of the inner-city school environment and the retention and attrition of minority teachers in the inner-city schools. Additionally, other primary research studies regarding the challenges of minority teacher, teacher preparation programs were examined Borrero et al., 2016; Brown, 2014; Durden et al., 2016; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Moles, 2014; Solic & Riley, 2019; Weber, 2017; Whipp & Geronime, 2017).


The qualitative studies synthesized in the review of literature employed narratives and interviews approach, self-study, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling. The quantitative research used surveys, cogenerative dialogue (Cogen), interactive practices, and utilized at least one of the interconnecting elements described within the conceptual framework regarding racial
equity in the field of education, lack of minority teachers compared to the high number of minority students in the inner-city schools and the cultural relevant pedagogy necessary to facilitate the effective teaching to challenge minority stereotypes (Bristol, 2018; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Gaikhorst et al., 2015). Although the authors expressed varying perspectives on marginalization of minority teachers and different types of stereotype faced by each minority group in the urban school, the results showed a substantial effect of teacher education programs on teacher knowledge and self-efficacy. Also, teachers appreciated the programs and acknowledged that it made positive impact on their competences, self-efficacy and professional orientation (Cheruvu et al., 2015).

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study were:

1. What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?
2. How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools?
3. What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

Although several of the studies used surveys which provided large samples, some of the qualitative studies were conducted with a very small sample. Ngai (2015) conducted a thematic analysis on the transcriptions of interviews with the 17 teachers while O’Brennan et al. (2017) used data on 3,225 high school staff and Cheng et al. collected data on 2,756 teachers in 317 schools in six U.S. school districts. The use of researchers is still very relevant to analyze responses that may require attention to detail and expert knowledge of the process than most coding procedures done technologically now.
Critique of Previous Research

This section of the literature review explores the methodologies employed by the authors to study the roles, challenges, and preparation of minority teachers in urban schools. Creswell (2014b) identified three categories of methodologies used by researchers as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. By studying and analyzing the methodologies used by these researchers, it will help to understand how it shapes the arguments presented and the choice of research designs. This review of research methodology provided an understanding of how the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches can play out in a variety of studies examining the impact of racial equality on minority teachers working in urban schools with many minority schools. Also, the recognition of any methodological weaknesses in previous studies will serve as a guide to propose a new and better methodology for my intended study on minority teachers. Various research methods and measures focus on the qualitative phenomenological methodology as well as case studies (Creswell, 2014a), which provided a plethora of information regarding the teachers’ experiences in inner-city schools. Many of the literature reviewed used surveys and questionnaires. These approaches used self-reported data to address issues relating to minority teachers and their experiences in urban schools.

Borrero et al. (2016) studied how novice teachers’ understanding of self, community, and collaboration helped them to transition from teacher preparation program into urban classrooms. Data were collected from seven minority teachers in their first year of teaching using focus group interviews and concentrated on their experiences as new minority teachers in local schools. Participants were asked about their successes and challenges as new teachers with a specific focus on how integrated critical frameworks from their teacher education program into their
classroom teaching. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed by the authors using the grounded theory method.

In their research on the retention of Black female teachers in urban schools, Farinde et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative study with the phenomenological approach utilizing purposive and snowball sampling. Participants were selected from a major urban school district in a southeastern region of the U.S., and the scholar used phenomenology to explore their lived experiences to gain an understanding of the essence of a phenomenon. The data collected through interviews conducted with the 12 participants was broken down, compared, and categorized using conventional content analysis. Investigator triangulation ensured the quality of the data analyzed. The use of triangulation allowed the researchers to identify codes, search for patterns, and commonalities, and themes related to the guiding research question and to confirm the validity of the research processes.

Among the dialogic approaches, Pabon (2014) and Stoll (2014) used formal observations and conducted semistructured interviews with the participants. These interview-based reflective dialogues provided insight into the participants’ reflections on their experiences as minority teachers in urban schools. Borrero et al. (2016) and Louis et al. (2017) used Self-Study Sampling Open coding and axial coding. Kohli and Pizarro (2016) conducted a researched on the experiences of minority teachers who they termed racial justice minded teachers of color. The authors developed questionnaires by which these teachers self-reported their experiences and commitments towards working for racial and social justice and how they struggle as minority teachers in urban public schools.

In an ethnological study, Mena and Vaccaro (2017) used the accounts of 13 Black women to examine the experiences of women faculty and staff of color with microaggressions at
a mid-sized predominantly White institution of higher education in the Northeast. The authors relied on direct quotes from interview transcripts, as they yielded rich and direct evidence regarding microaggression. The research employed an ethnographic multi-case study and data were collected based on snowball sampling and community nomination (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

A significant portion of the studies reviewed used surveys or questionnaires. Louis et al. (2017) studied the issues of marginalization, microaggression, isolation, and stereotyping of Afro-Caribbean teachers in a predominant White space through a qualitative study that employed the Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN) procedure. The SPN uses the perceptions of the scholar as the primary source of data. This method used the participants’ words to be the focus of the study and used their perception to explain, interpret, and validate the experiences. The scholar formulated a series of questions and prompts so that the participants can develop their narratives. A combination of purposeful self-study sampling and convenience sampling were utilized for this study.

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Survey (SASS) dataset. O’Brennan et al. (2017) also used quantitative research with 3,225 high school staff to examine how the perceptions of connectedness, safety, and self-efficacy and staff demographics relate to experiences of staff burnout. Cherng and Halpin (2016) studied the importance of recruiting and retaining minority teacher using a quasi-experimental method.

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understanding of the two cultural and educational contexts in which participants operated within a social framework.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I reviewed research literature focusing on the experiences of minority teachers affected by the many factors originating from the school climate school within inner-city schools. Drawing from vital conceptual frameworks grounded on the theories of Cochran-Smith (2003), Bell (1995), and Mary Jane Collier and Milt Thomas (1988), the literature focused on the challenges emanating from the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the minority teachers working within the urban city climate and the many ways they struggle to mitigate the problems. The research was organized around the following themes (a) racial disparity among minority teachers and students in schools, (b) matching minority teachers with students of the same background, (c) racial microaggression as a challenge to minority teachers, (d) characteristics of school environment that affect the performance of minority teachers, (e) teacher preparation programs for minority teachers; (f) the challenges of minority teachers, and (g) teacher coping strategies. The final section of the review of literature explored the methodology used to investigate the experiences of the minority teachers relating to their race and the complexities of working in the inner-city school’s climate.

The cited authors provided evidence that the idea of culturally matching minority teachers with students of the same background is a legitimate response to close the disparity gap between minority teachers and students of the same background. Through the study of minority teachers, it was possible to determine commonalities that lead to better outcomes and can be used to improve the experiences of minority immigrant teachers working in the inner-city schools. Also, the exposure to urban schools can change previous misconceptions and help teachers to
develop, skills, attitudes, and knowledge that will support their work with children from urban communities (Weber, 2017). It is necessary to provide minority teachers with the appropriate preparation to enable them to serve students well (Magaldi et al., 2018). In concluding the review of the literature, I analyzed the methodology used in current research on the factors affecting the work of the minority in an inner-city school climate. The peer-reviewed literature gave support for pursuing a qualitative research study on the factors affecting minority teachers within an inner-city school.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Globalization has encouraged mass migration of people who relocate and work in the new locations (Banks, 2017; Saw, 2018; Shan & Fejes, 2015). The changing demographics of urban schools show a diverse population including educators from different ethnicities, races, and color (Creasey et al., 2016; Howard & Milner, 2014; Madsen & Mabokela, 2014). However, despite the diversity in the U.S., racism is still prevalent and is ingrained deeply in the cultural and psychological facets of the society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Racial microaggressions negatively affect the job satisfaction of teachers and force them to engage in detachment coping (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016). Also, school climate issues directly and implicitly impact minority teachers (Cole et al., 2017). Unfortunately, these family, school, and neighborhood related characteristics of the inner-city also affect academic outcomes of students.

The literature I reviewed in Chapter 2 provided insight into the complexity of teachers’ experiences with racial disparity and the role multicultural education plays in expanding the dialogue on race and racism. Although these authors provided insights into the effects of marginalization, stereotyping and discrimination on minority teachers, a few took a comprehensive qualitative look on the physical and social characteristics of the school climate that affect the performance of minority teachers (Creasey et al., 2016; Djonko-Moore, 2016; Gallagher, 2016; Huang et al., 2017). The conceptual framework theorists explained the various positions used to study cultural identity and multicultural education. Using this framework, I presented a description of the relevance of culturally relevant pedagogy and the importance of equity and inclusiveness in addressing the complexity of racial and ethnic diversity.

Within Chapter 3, I provide a detailed description of the methodology of the study including research questions that guided the research and the research design. The first section
provides a discussion of the rationale for choosing a phenomenological approach to describe the experiences of minority immigrant teachers affected by school climate in inner-city public schools. It provides a detailed description of my role as the researcher, and the methodology section described how the study was conducted. It describes participants’ selection logic, how data were collected and analyzed, and the instrumentation used for the research. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion on how I established trustworthiness by addressing the internal and external validity, dependability, conformability, and all ethical procedures followed to carry out the study.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study were:

1. What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?
2. How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools?
3. What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

**Role of the Researcher**

My role as the researcher in this study involved identifying minority immigrant teachers that fit the study criteria and are members of [Redacted] Professional Network. I sought and obtained consent from participants before their recruitment. Seidman (2013) observed that a researcher who is studying the experience of people at a site, needs to gain access through the person who has responsibility for the operation of the site. I applied and was granted Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Concordia University–Portland. I was a spectator, listener, data collector, and data evaluator (Stake, 2010). I interviewed the participants, transcribed the
interviews, analyzed, and synthesized the data results. As a researcher using the phenomenological approach, I assumed the role of an expert researcher who asked the best questions but framed interview questions that can be refined during the research process to reflect a better understanding of the problem. I asked open-ended questions that allowed me to listen to the participants of the study. I collected various sources of data including information in the form of words.

My role included generating detailed descriptions of the essence of the experience of the effect of school climate on minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools, developing themes, and interpreting the data gathered using perspectives reviewed in the literature. I do not portray myself as a voice of authority, but as a person with specific interests and ideas (Silverman, 2005). I bracketed my assumptions and experiences in the data analysis; but instead, I described my assumptions as part of the discussion with the participants of the study.

My role as a researcher was influenced by my own experiences as a minority teacher in an inner-city high school. I have experienced a number of forms of discrimination and prejudice, including being stereotyped, marginalized, isolation, and some other hostilities from students, parents, colleagues, and administration. Over the past 16 years, I have worked for 3 years as a substitute teacher, and 13 years as a full-time teacher in an inner-city school. I have encountered several personal experiences relating these phenomena. These experiences may have influenced both the objective and subjective stance required in phenomenology. I bracketed and journaled my feelings regarding the phenomenon of marginalization and focused on the opinions and ideas of other minority immigrant teachers to formulate the results (Burke Johnson & Christensen, 2014; van Manen, 1977). The purpose of the research was to look into the phenomena based on the life experiences of the participants rather than me as the researcher.
As an immigrant teacher working in the inner-city school who has experienced this phenomenon, I acknowledge that I have a perspective in this study recognized by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) as an essential inclusion. However, I did not pose any risk to the participants of this study. By recognizing my position concerning the participants’ views, and experiences, I avoided bias by not sharing my personal or professional experiences and opinions with interviewees during the study. I put aside all preconceptions while examining the data collected from the participants’ perspective (Creswell, 2013). All names of participants and interview transcripts was kept confidential by storing all materials relevant to the study in a locked cabinet in my home office. I did not share study findings with others until the publication of the study.

**Purpose and Design of the Study**

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore how minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city school climates. The lived experiences of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city environment can best be gathered through the recollections of the participants. I analyzed the experiences to provide information about commonalities which may lead to a better understanding of needs in this area (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The design of the study is a qualitative, phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is used to describe the common meaning for several minority immigrant teachers of their lived experiences of working in inner-city schools (Creswell, 2013). Using the phenomenological approach allowed the collection of data through interviews thereby allowing these participants give rich description of their experiences and offer interpretations that accurately describe what it means to live the experiences of a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The phenomenological approach helped me as a researcher to
describe what all the participants have in common as they experience the concept of inner-city school climate.

**Research Population and Sampling Method**

For a phenomenological study, Creswell (2013) recommends that five to 25 participants be used because qualitative analyses require smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. However, the number of participants needs to be large enough to gather enough data that satisfactorily describe the phenomenon and address all the research questions. For this study, I recruited 13 high school teachers as the research population. This sample size allowed the essence of the phenomenon to be explored and analyzed in depth. By using 13 study participants, data saturation also occurred. Morse (1995) stated that saturation is the key to excellent qualitative work.

The teachers selected are members of [Redacted] Professional Network who work in different comprehensive high schools serving diverse inner-city student population in a large school district in the Northeastern U.S. According to the school district, the demographic breakdown of the over 35,000 students includes approximately 46% Latinx, 43% Black, 8% White, 2% two or more races, less than 1% Asian, and less than 0.5% Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander. The demographic breakdown of the district’s approximately 2,700 teachers are as follows: 40% White; 37% Black; 22% Hispanic; and less than 1% Asian, Native Americans, or others. Teachers who are immigrants from other countries were selected as study participants. Silverman (2005) observed that since each participant represented a unique interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation, multiple participants provided a deeper understanding. The participants worked in the district for a minimum of 3 years.
Participants for this study were selected using a purposeful sampling method (Patton, 2014). Purposive sampling is used when a different sample is necessary or the opinion of experts in a field is needed for a study. The selection of the participants was based on preselected criteria grounded on the research questions. Purposeful sampling selects information-rich cases for in-depth study and the size, and specific cases depend on study purpose (Patton, 2014). A purposive sample of 13 immigrant teachers comprising of four men and nine women teaching in comprehensive high schools in a northeastern school district serving inner-city students participated in this hermeneutic phenomenological study. Participants were immigrants from at least four countries in proportionate distribution. They are licensed teachers working in one inner-city district for at least three years. The interviews with participants were conducted in a comfortable environment where they did not feel restricted or uncomfortable to share their experiences.

Participant Selection Logic

The target population for this study was high school teachers in comprehensive inner-city public schools in one school district in the northeast who are members of [Redacted] professional network. The purposeful sampling method was used to select the participants for the study (Patton, 2014). According to Patton (2014), a purposeful selection of participants is a foundational step for robust qualitative research. Also, all the individuals selected need to have stories to tell about their lived experiences about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The total number of teachers selected was 13, comprising of women and men with different years of teaching experiences. Maxwell (1992) warned against the use of convenience sampling where the researcher uses whoever is available as participants in a study. The participants for this
study were selected based upon their ability to meet the criteria of having experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

The selection process for these participants was based on preselected criteria that resulted from the research questions. The criteria for participant section for this study were immigrant teachers: (a) born in foreign countries but migrated to the U.S. as adults and currently working as teachers in a comprehensive public school; (b) spoke English as a second or foreign language; the participants’ primary or first language was a different language other than English—even though the participants were fluent in reading and writing English, they spoke with foreign accents alien to the standard U.S. accent; (c) received formal education up to high school in their mother countries—participants would have been educated up to high school or higher degrees in their countries of origin; (d) came to the U.S. as adults after they completed high school or some level of college degrees in their home countries; and (e) are currently working as full-time certified teachers in a comprehensive high school in one inner-city school.

**Procedures for Recruitment**

In recruiting participants, I considered the population and phenomena which is appropriate to the focus of this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Since my research is to explore the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates, I identified minority immigrant teachers working in a school district by going through the biographic information of their [Redacted] professional profiles. I purposefully selected 13 participants who matched the preselected criterion and showed interest and willingness to participate in the study. For this study, I choose 13 participants as the sample size believing that this number allowed the phenomenology to be fully explored and analyzed in an in-depth capacity. This sample size fits well within Creswell’s (2013) suggestion of using between five
and 25 individuals in a phenomenological study. Johnson and Christensen (2014) suggested that consideration should be given to the population and phenomena appropriate to the focus of a study. Since my study explored the experience of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools, a sample of teachers from at least four foreign countries of origin was a priority of the purposeful selection process. The age at which they migrated to the U.S. and years of experience as teachers in inner-city schools was considered.

I sent a detailed letter describing the study and methods of gathering information, including questionnaire, interviews, and focus group to potential participants (see Appendix E). I provided an informed consent form to each participant to understand the purpose of the study as well as give their consent. Interested and willing participants had a time frame to acknowledge and submit their agreement and willingness to participate. After identifying eligible participants and obtaining their consent, I contacted participants through email and phone calls. A supplemental list of five additional teachers who meet the study criterion was compiled to serve as substitutes in case any selected participant chose to withdraw from the study. The interview process started after the participants had given their permissions in a written form. I conducted the study after the procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection was proposed and approved by the Concordia University Institutional Review Board.

**Instrumentation**

Instrumentation refers to the tool or means used to measure variables or items of interest in the data-collection process; it relates to the instrument design, selection, construction, and assessments used by researchers to collect data, as well as the conditions under which the designated instruments are used (Salkind, 2010). Data collection in research requires the use of specific instruments. Data for this study was collected through researcher-created instruments.
including semistructured interview questions (see Appendix A), Qualtrics questionnaire (see Appendix B), and focus group questions (see Appendix C). I designed an interview protocol (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) to serve as a procedural guide to direct me through the interview process. The protocol ensured that the interview questions aligned with research questions and generated an inquiry-based conversation. The interview questions was designed in an open-ended way to allow flexibility in questioning and answering the questions (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). The questions focused on understanding the primary phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2013).

The semistructured interview offered flexibility in questioning and enabled the researcher to develop a rapport with the participants. It elicited participants’ views and descriptions while uncovering the issues that might not have been anticipated by the researcher. For the focus group, researcher-designed questions (see Appendix C) were used to urge the participants to share more information on their experiences. As the purpose of the study was to find out how minority immigrant teachers are affected by school climate in inner-city schools, it was essential to allow broad answers to questions. Personal information of the focus group participants was withheld. A researcher-designed protocol sheet (see Appendix B) was used as an instrument to guide the session. Notes was taken during the interview sessions as a supplement to the digital recordings.

**Data Collection**

Data gathered from different sources guarantee a better variety of diverse perspectives for analysis and representation (Creswell, 2013). Data for this hermeneutic phenomenological study was collected using Qualtrics questionnaire (see Appendix B), one-to-one interviews (see Appendix A), and a focus group (see Appendix C). I followed Creswell’s (2013) suggestions for
data collection by developing open-ended questions for the interviews and focus group. The research questions guided the unstructured interviews to allow the discovery of new ideas and themes from the participants. Interviews help a qualitative researcher to obtain unique information or interpretations of the person interviewed (Stake, 2010). The questions for the interviews were asked in ways that prompted subjects to give adequate views and opinions (Creswell, 2013).

The open-ended questions were developed in ways that allowed the participants to share their personal perspectives and interpretations of their reality (Creswell, 2013). All interviews probed for explanation of responses. Brinkmann (2013) explained that small amounts of qualitative data which provide a rigorous and thorough description of the phenomenon are preferable to broad and abundant data. Participants completed the online questionnaire through Qualtrics to provide their demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, years of residence, educational background. The interviews were audio recorded so that it could be transcribed verbatim.

The focus group involved open-ended questions with a group of five people to discuss the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. The purpose of the focus group was to identify common trends among the participants. The interviews and focus group meetings were tape recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed verbatim. I also took handwritten notes to supplement the tape recordings. The focus group interview protocol included research questions that the researcher shared with the interviewees before the scheduled focus group interview. During the focus group session, participants answered questions from a semistructured protocol (see Appendix C). The open-ended research questions allowed participants to express themselves freely. The focus group session was audio
recorded to make sure that the ideas and quotes are recorded and attributed to the correct participant (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of the focus group was to identify participants’ attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions as well as common trends among the group. The focus group discussion allowed participants to freely express their deep-rooted feeling and experiences about their work in the inner-city (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I bracketed my personal thoughts and feelings before and after each interview or protocol session, to ensure a great potential for neutrality and accurate representation of data.

Identification of Attributes

Throughout this study, I sought to provide the how minority immigrant teachers from different cultures perceive inner-city school climates. The phenomenological design was employed to expand experiences into meaning as the phenomenon is considered and data reconsidered and interpreted through reflective processes. Throughout the interview process, there were four phases: participant background and education in their home country, teaching experiences in the inner-city school, perception of the inner-city school climate, and closing. The presence of minority immigrant teachers has become commonplace in most inner-city schools in the U.S. because of the diversity prevalent in such cities.

The accounts of teachers currently working in a culture different from their home countries can bring awareness to their lack of culturally specific educational knowledge. They can also reflect on their experiences to create a self-awareness that can help them bridge professional practices between their former ways of teaching and adapting to the new. During the different phases of the interviews, the main attributes to be considered include inner-city school climates, racial identity problems, challenges, and coping strategies for cultural adjustment. These four attributes should encompass all the data that are collected and will be used to
establish themes. In turn, the themes discovered within the data can be used to create a shared experience.

Minority immigrant teachers are racially minority educators who immigrated to the U.S. from other countries and had formal education from their countries of origin. Inner-city school climate relates to the physical environment, social interactions between students, teachers, and parents, cultural belief systems, and other values in any urban area school. The inner-city school climate is usually inundated with social and economic problems that affect the structure of teaching and learning. Culture is a people’s ways of life, including their beliefs, values, symbols, and behaviors. It comprises their language, social practices, religion, food, arts, and music (Zimmermann, 2017). Racial or ethnic identity is about the social identity and self-concept of an individual and reflects the experiences and traits. Racial identity problems denote the issues associated with the social identity of individuals.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Data collection and consolidation are essential steps that lead to effective data analysis (Creswell, 2013). The results of the data analysis in qualitative research need to be trustworthy, credible, and dependable (Creswell, 2013). During the process of data collection, I recorded individual interviews and focus group using a voice and digital recorder and also took handwritten notes in a journal to supplement the tape recordings. The digital recordings were labeled and secured in a locker in my house. I transcribed the interviews verbatim to ensure the accurate documentation of the participant’s original ideas. In this study, I followed the suggestions of Creswell (2013), Moustakas (2011), and Colaizzi (1978) to analyze transcripts from participant’s interviews. In this method, all the transcripts was read thoroughly. According
to Creswell (2013), it is important to read collected data multiple times before the interpreting phase of a research.

I coordinated the information gathered through memoing and reflected on the data collected. Important statements were coded to highlight similarities with other data that might be beneficial to highlight the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2015). Significant phrases or sentences that pertain to the lived experience of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools were identified from each transcript as part of this open coding process (Creswell, 2013). Similar concepts that emerge from the raw data were grouped into conceptual categories for further analysis.

Next, axial coding was used to classify the information gathered from the open coding process. Merriam (2015) stated that axial coding allows the researcher to relate data together in order to reveal codes. Meanings were articulated from these essential themes. The formulated meanings resulting from each transcript were clustered into themes to allow the emergence of themes common to all participants. The result was integrated into a detailed, rich, thick description of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Lastly, selective coding was used to analyze data and synthesize themes relating to the phenomenon (Merriam, 2015). As the purpose of the research is to identify the unique experiences of individuals, the data were compared.

Ethical qualitative research is written in a way that all aspects of the analysis are transparent to readers and allows them to understand what occurred throughout the research process (Creswell, 2014a; Panter & Sterba, 2011). This analysis includes showing how any potential researcher bias was controlled or acknowledged throughout data collection. I used member checking to determine the accuracy of their account and to validate the findings (Creswell, 2013). No new relevant data arose from member-checking. To increase the validity of
qualitative findings, it is essential that a researcher states her possible biases before data
collection (Creswell, 2014b). I stated my assumptions and bias before collecting data and relied
solely on the data collected from participants to ensure that my bias does not influence the
validity and trustworthiness of the study as a minority immigrant teacher and the researcher.

**Limitations of the Research Design**

According to Creswell (2013), a qualitative research process is always changing and
requires the use of the best methods to obtain information. There may be some limitations in
conducting this study of how minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city schools’ climates.
Some participants may find it difficult in recollecting and expressing their feelings and
experiences in the inner-city school climate. Additionally, general findings from this study may
be limited by the small sample size and experiences of the participants, who work at different
school settings within an inner-city district.

The unique experiences of the participants were completed already; therefore, the impact
of time on memory may have influenced the responses to questions. I used a self-designed
interview (see Appendix A) and focus group questions (see Appendix B) to elicit answers to the
research questions. The study did not include minority school administrators or teachers in
elementary schools but focused only on 13 minority immigrant teachers in high schools spread
around the inner-city schools. Also, the study did not include teachers from the city’s top magnet
schools and charter schools, but only teachers working in the comprehensive high schools were
part of the study.

**Validation**

Validity in qualitative research are the measures that the researcher uses to demonstrate
the accuracy of the findings to convince readers of the accuracy of the study (Creswell, 2013). It
is one of the strengths of qualitative research because it shows the accuracy of the study from the standpoints of the researchers, participants, or the readers of the research (Creswell & Miller, 2007). A researcher may use multiple validity strategies to check the accuracy of research findings as well as to convince the readers of the accuracy of the study. Creswell (2013) recommends including multiple strategies like triangulation, member checking, rich, thick description of findings, and clarify researcher bias to enhance the accuracy of the qualitative results. The use of multiple approaches improves the researcher’s ability to assess the accuracy of the findings. Triangulation of data sources can be accomplished by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a comprehensive explanation for the themes (Creswell, 2013). Member checking is used to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings, by taking the a sumary of the data and specific themes back to the participants so that they determine and confirm the accuracy of the information that was provided by the participants of the study.

For this study, I used a rich, thick description of the qualitative data provided by the research participants (Creswell, 2013) to communicate the findings. This description will help the reader to understand the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2013). I also used member checking to ensure that the participants reviewed a summary of the findings and provided feedback to alleviate a misinterpretation of data (Creswell, 2013). As advised by Stake (2010), the participants were notified before data gathering of my intention to member check. As an immigrant teacher working in an inner-city school, who has experienced my fair share of discrimination, stereotyping, isolation, and alienation it is necessary that I clarify the bias that I bring to the study. Examining my assumptions and biases helped me to remain open to the phenomenon of the study.
Maxwell (2012b) described external validity as the generalizability of research results and findings to the population the sample was taken from and can be applied. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) opined that the generalizability or external validity of the findings in qualitative research is to be provided by the reader rather than the researcher. As the researcher, I gave enough description of the findings to allow the reader to determine the similarities of situations and the transferability of the results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). My conceptual framework based on theorists Bell (1995), Cochran-Smith (2003), and Ladson-Billings (2014) also provided a theoretical understanding of multicultural education.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research is comparable to reliability in quantitative research, which requires verification through duplication. It refers to the consistency of the inquiry procedures used over time (Brinkmann, 2013). Since this hermeneutic phenomenological study is to explore the experiences of a specific group of participants at a time, it will be difficult to conduct the research again with a different set of people and achieve the same findings. To measure the dependability of this study, I maintained an audit trail in the form of a journal which can be used to carry out the dependability audit. The journal provides a detailed account on how the study was conducted as well as the data analysis processes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Delimitations

The study was delimited to data collection and analysis associated with participants’ interviews about their perception about inner-city schools’ climate. The study did not include minority immigrant school administrators but only focused on 13 minority immigrant teachers. The results of this study could be generalizable to minority immigrant educators who (a) teach in
comprehensive inner-city high schools, (b) speak with a foreign accent, and (c) received formal education through high school in their home countries.

**Ethical Issues**

A researcher faces many ethical issues in the field during data collection, and in the analysis, and dissemination of qualitative reports (Creswell, 2013; Panter & Sterba, 2011; Trochim, 2006). It is essential to make ethical considerations in qualitative research to ensure that all issues about all stakeholders in the study are acknowledged, and the interests and perspectives of the subjects and the society at large are respected (Rog & Bickman, 2009). Ethical issues include informed consent procedures, deception, confidentiality toward all stakeholders in the study, benefits of research to participants over risks, and other participant requests that may be beyond social norms (Lipson, 1994). For this study, ethical considerations of all the stakeholders including the teachers who are the participants and their schools was ensured. This consideration requires skillful planning, effective communication, risk reduction, and the creation of benefits (Rog & Bickman, 2009). I submitted the methodology of this proposal to the IRB at Concordia University–Portland for approval. Interviews were conducted in a conducive private setting and pseudonyms was used to substitute participants’ names to ensure confidentiality. Participants were given the opportunity to review interview transcripts and to offer revisions if necessary.

The personal information of participants was securely stored to ensure confidentiality and coding was used to protect the individual’s identity during the process of data analysis and in the publication of research results. Informed consent was obtained from the participants to meet the required standards of ethical research (Creswell, 2013). The informed consent document (see Appendix F) was written in a language understandable by all participants and include an
understanding that the participants can voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time. All 13 participants signed the informed consent form which indicated the purpose, guidelines, risks, benefits for participating in the study. I protected the confidentiality of the participants by allowing them to choose pseudonyms used in place of their names. Electronic data collected during interviews were secured by means of electronic encryption while the physical data were locked inside a personal file cabinet located in my home office. Upon publication of the dissertation, the transcripts will be shredded, and the recorded interviews will be deleted from all backup systems.

Conflict of Interest Assessment

As the researcher, I did not have any conflict of interest with the study because it was not intended for any economic or marketing outcome. As a teacher and a researcher, I had no supervisory role over the participants of the study that could unduly influence their perception or coerce the participants who were fellow teachers. I understood during the study that I might have been in a position that conflicts with the participants of the study as I was teaching in a local school and may have shared experiences with participants. However, I bracketed my expectations, preconceptions, and feelings to avoid any conflict of interest (Burke Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The aim of bracketing is to suspend or set aside one’s beliefs about the phenomenon being studied to avoid influencing both the collection and interpretation of data (Cohen, 1987; Knaack, 1984; Oiler, 1982). I did not receive any funding from any outside sources to carry out this research so there would not be any financial conflict of interest.

Researcher’s Position

In conducting research regarding how minority immigrant teachers perceive the inner-city schools’ climate, I am conscious of my personal biases, as an immigrant teacher who have
experienced culture shock firsthand. Berger (2015) suggested that positioning refers to how researchers see themselves through a process of self-evaluation or reflexivity. Since relocating to the U.S. from Nigeria in 2003, I spent 3 of the 16 years working as a substitute teacher and the last 13 years as a full-time teacher in inner-city schools. As an immigrant teacher and the researcher, I was motivated by an interest in understanding how other minority immigrant teachers perceive the inner-city school climates and how they respond to the challenges of teaching in a culture different from their home countries. I have experienced some type of stereotype, discrimination, marginalization, prejudice, and isolation from students, parents, and some colleagues. I also have very positive experiences.

My responsibility as a researcher is to inform the participants what the study involves, explain the purpose of the research and how long they were expected to be involved, and describe any probable risks or benefits (Hatch, 2002). By recognizing my position concerning the participants’ views, and experiences, I avoided bias by not sharing my personal or professional experiences and opinions with interviewees during the study. I did not allow my preconceptions to affect the respondents views and examined the data collected from the participants’ perspective (Creswell, 2013). I bracketed my feelings regarding the phenomenon of marginalization and focused on the opinions and ideas of other minority immigrant teachers to formulate the results (Burke Johnson & Christensen, 2014; van Manen, 1977).

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the research rationale, participants, and phenomenological methodology that I chose to study the perception of minority immigrant teachers on inner-city schools’ climate. Minority teachers are likely to experience specific adversities such as social isolation, microaggression, and hostile teaching with peers and students (Adair, 2014; Gist, 2017;
Gist, 2018). By using the phenomenological qualitative approach to research, it helped to generate a description of the teachers’ experience and their perceptions of the inner-city school climate, their challenges, strengths as teachers in the inner-city. The review of current, referred literature provided insight into the complexity of teachers’ experiences with racial disparity and the role multi-cultural education plays in helping minority teachers to teach diverse populations effectively. A phenomenological approach allowed me to participate in the meaning-making process with my participants (Moustakas, 2011).

I also explained my role as the researcher, including the recruitment of participants from comprehensive high schools in a Northeastern public school district. The methodology detailed the participant selection logic, the procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection, the instrumentation including the use of questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and focus groups to elicit information from the participants were presented; also, the data analysis plan was discussed. The data analysis plan includes the use of coding, reflection, and member checking, based on the suggestions of Creswell (2013) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Also included is an overview of trustworthiness including internal and external validity, dependability, and ethical procedures. I concluded this chapter with records of the agreements, researcher-created protocols, other documents introduced in the chapter, and an attestation of originality of the study which is included in the appendices. While this chapter has detailed the methodology of the study, in Chapter 4, I present the details of data analysis and findings from the study.
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Minority immigrant teachers work in school environments that are culturally and linguistically different from their home countries. The teachers bring their past experiences, including their personal and professional identities, which are different from what exists in the inner-city schools. This hermeneutic phenomenological study explored the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates through interviews and a focus group interaction. The study of minority immigrant teachers’ perception of the inner-city school climates provides an understanding of the challenges of working in a foreign culture. Also, the strategies adopted by the teachers to make their work more comfortable and the strengths and contributions of the minority immigrant teachers to inner-city schools. Through this study, I provide insights, meaning, and enhanced understanding to serve as a guide for future decision making by educational leaders while adding to the body of literature on the topic of multicultural teacher education.

In Chapter 4, I provide a summary of the study sites, including the physical and social settings, description of the participants, overview of the data sample, analysis process, and summary of findings. The first section describes the sample used in data collection, including the study site, target population, and participants selected for the study. Also discussed is the research methodology and a detailed description of the data analysis. Common themes and summaries from participants’ responses are described. The results of the research are discussed according to the study’s three research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?
2. How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools?

3. What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and a general chapter summary.

Description of the Sample

The study settings were public, comprehensive high schools located in one northeastern school district serving inner-city students. The demographic breakdown of the district’s approximate 3000 teachers are as follows: 40% White; 37% Black; 22% Hispanic; 1% being Asian; Native Americans; and others. The population sample for this study included 13 minority immigrant teachers who are members of the [Redacted] professional network and work at comprehensive high schools located within the district. The participants are from the continents of Africa, Europe, and South America. Out of the 13 participants, six participants identified as Black from Haiti, Jamaica, and Nigeria; one participant was White from France; four participants identified as Hispanics from Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru; and one participant identified as Arabic from Algeria. Of the 13 participating teachers, nine are females and four are males (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Study Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The participant sample included three participants who migrated to the U.S. between the ages of 16 to 20 years; five participants who migrated to the U.S. between the ages of 21 to 25 years; and three participants who migrated to the U.S. between the ages of 26 to 35. The last two participants migrated after the age of 35. Only one participant has worked in the inner-city between six to 10 years; four others have worked between 11 to 15 years; while the last seven have worked in the district for more than 15 years. Also, apart from one participant that has lived in the U.S. for less than 15 years, the other 14 participants have lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years (see Table 2).

All the participants were purposely selected using preselected criteria. The criteria for the selection of the participants included: (a) only teachers born in foreign countries but migrated to the U.S. as adults, (b) currently working as full-time, certified teachers in a Northeastern school district serving inner-city students, (c) speak English as a second language, (d) fluent in reading and writing the English language but speak with foreign accents alien to the standard U.S. Accent, and (e) received formal education up to high school in their countries of origin. The sample number was consistent with Creswell’s (2013) recommendation of using between five and 25 individuals in a phenomenological study. According to Hagaman and Wutich (2017), 16 or fewer interviews are enough to identify common themes from sites with relatively homogeneous groups.

I followed the recruitment procedures outlined in Chapter 3 and approved by the IRB. After sending recruiting emails requesting their permission to participate in the study, prospective participants replied to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. I engaged eight of the participants working in different locations in personal interviews, while the other five participants were selected for the focus group interview because they all taught at the same
school. One of the participants, who earlier agreed to participate in the study, asked to withdraw during the interview process; she claimed because of her immigration status, she was untenured even after working as a certified teacher in the district for 18 years. She was promptly excused from the study and subsequently replaced with another teacher from a supplemental list of alternate participants who met the study criteria and was willing to participate as outlined in Chapter 3.
Table 2

A Summary of Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants (Pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Level of Education Attained in Home country</th>
<th>Age at Migration</th>
<th>No of Years in America</th>
<th>Number of Years in District</th>
<th>Other Languages Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adah</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>26–35 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrid</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>Over 35 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>6–10 years</td>
<td>Native Lang/French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darcey</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>2-year college</td>
<td>21–25 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>French/ German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldane</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>2-year college</td>
<td>16–20 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisa</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>3-year of college</td>
<td>16–20 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>21–25 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>French/Creole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edosah</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>26–35 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denilson</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Medical Degree</td>
<td>26–35 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krish</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>Above 35 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunmi</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>21–25 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana María</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>21–25 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariane</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>21–25 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>1 year of College</td>
<td>16–20 years</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>11–15 years</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodology and Analysis

In this study, I explored how minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city schools’ climates, as well as participants’ interpretations of their experiences in inner-city schools. The
research design uses a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The methodology was implemented using semistructured interview tools derived from refereed literature (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Kohli, 2018; Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017; Madsen & Mabokela, 2014). Using the semistructured interview helped me gather rich, in-depth narratives of participants’ perception of the inner-city schools’ climate. The methodology was designed using a conceptual framework based on Cochran-Smith’s multicultural teacher education, Dell’s CRT, and Collier’s and Thomas’s cultural identity theories.

I collected data through multiple instruments: Qualtrics questionnaire, semistructured interviews questions, and focus group questions. The interview protocol was predesigned to serve as a guide for the interview process. The protocol ensured that the interview questions aligned with research questions and generated inquiry-based conversations. The interview and focus group questions focused on the following themes: challenges of racial microaggression to minority teachers, characteristics of the school environment that affect the performance of minority teachers, and teacher preparation programs for minority teachers. Other included themes were challenges of minority immigrant teachers and teacher coping strategies. The interview and focus group questions were open-ended and allowed flexibility in questioning and answering the questions (Gall et al., 2003). The semistructured nature of the interviews and focus group helped to elicit participants’ views and descriptions while uncovering the issues that might not have been anticipated by the researcher.

The Qualtrics questionnaire (see Appendix B) was emailed to all participants a week before the scheduled interview dates and their responses sent back to me upon completion. Audio recorded personal interview sessions with eight of the participants were held at mutually agreed times and at locations considered to be quiet, comfortable, and convenient to the teachers.
The focus group interview was held inside a private conference room in the library of the focus group participants’ school for confidentiality purposes. I was able to stimulate the discussion among the group to enable the easy discussion of some sensitive issues that could not be discussed individually. The atmosphere for the focus group was open and comfortable and participants were involved in the discussion. The interviews were conducted in quiet settings that allowed minimal interruptions. An EVISTR voice recorder was used to record the interviews and subsequently transferred by me to a computer. After the initial interview sessions, I asked some follow-up questions and a transcript review was allowed with the participants. These occurred via email. Immediately after the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim by using Temi, a transcription application. I followed Creswell’s (2013), Moustakas’s (2011), and Colaizzi’s (1978) suggestion to analyze transcripts from participants’ interviews. I read each transcript thoroughly several times and corrected mistakes to make sure that it was precisely verbatim.

Transcribing the interviews manually allowed me to listen to participants’ interviews repeatedly and analyze their responses more than once. According to Creswell (2013), it is crucial to read collected data multiple times before the interpreting phase of the research. The transcribed interviews were provided to the participants by email within three days of their interviews for the transcript review; there were no changes made to the transcripts by the participants. I coordinated the information gathered through memoing and reflected on the data collected. Relevant statements were highlighted as data that might be beneficial to the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2015). Significant phrases or sentences that pertained to the lived experience of minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools were identified.
from each transcript (Creswell, 2013). Finally, similar concepts that emerged from the raw data were grouped into themes for analysis.

Using the information from the research questions, I went through the data from the interview transcripts and highlighted significant statements, sentences, and quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. According to Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2015), this practice is known as open coding and consists of identifying similar words, experiences, and perceptions shared by participants throughout the interview process. Using this recommendation, I completed the initial open coding by examining the transcript for noticeable categories of information and identification of concepts within the data. I reviewed the data and highlighted the key points. Highlighters were used to code each semistructured interview response according to similar experiences and perceptions. A different colored highlighter was used for each recognized similarity. All significant statements highlighted were further analyzed and the frequency and consistency of responses noted. I concluded the open coding process by transferring consistent codes into a table aligned to the study’s central research questions.

The open coding process was followed by axial coding, which involves interconnecting the categories into common themes. Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2015) explained that axial coding consists of consolidating the open coding data into core themes. I reviewed the transcripts to ensure the highlighted similarities and perceptions represented in the data were accurate and pertained to the study’s research questions. Then, the highlighted data were synthesized and annotated by identifying core themes and the axial themes imported into a table (see Table 3). The common themes expressed by participants are described in detail in a subsequent section of this chapter. Data were then compared to assist in identifying the unique experiences of the
individuals. Saturation was reached when no new common themes was produced. Data were then compared to assist in determining the unique experiences of the individuals. Finally, selective coding was used to connect the themes to specific stories, summaries, and descriptive details shared by participants highlighting their perceptions about inner-city schools’ climates.

The themes correlated with the theories of Bell, Cochran-Smith, Collier, and Thomas, and Ladson-Billings with participants indicating their understanding of themselves and their cultures, having the responsibility to improve competencies and pedagogical skills needed to effectively teach diverse populations, developing critical skills to approach students, peers and administrators from a different culture with a positive attitude, and creating and sustaining their cultural identity with others through interaction and relationships. Creswell (2013) explained that significant statements, meaning units, textural, and structural descriptions might be written as memos. I used memo-writing as a core component of the analysis process and to maintain an understanding of what was shared and to reduce the possibility of bias (Groenewald, 2004).

I analyzed data by transcribing the main ideas, patterns, comparing codes and data, and identifying any existing connections and translating the data to information through common themes. Through memo-writing, I was able to read over notes and transcripts of the interviews and process and think about the data to recognize qualitative codes as categories to analyze, interact with the data, and analyze the data. I kept a memo for all the individual interviews and focus group interview until saturation or no new common themes and no new insights were being generated from the interviews. The use of the outlined multiple techniques helped me to review, analyze, and synthesize data to record the unique experiences and perception of minority immigrant teachers of the inner-city schools’ climates. The following sections will describe in detail the themes revealed in this data analysis process.
Summary of the Findings

I explored how minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city schools’ climates. The findings of this study are a culmination of data derived from the participants’ perspectives of their experiences in the inner-city schools. Three data sources was utilized: (a) Qualtrics questionnaires for the demographic information of participants, (b) one-on-one interview with eight individual participants, and (c) focus group interview of five participants. I revealed the findings of the study through one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews where participants were engaged in discussions. Each participant’s perception of the inner-city schools’ climate differed relatively, but an analysis of the data revealed some common themes including: (a) sociocultural orientation, (b) socioeconomic issues, (c) communication, (d) prejudice and marginalization, (e) lack of parental involvement, (f) lack of school administrators’ support, (g) coping strategies, and (h) strengths and contributions. I consciously bracketed my presuppositions to avoid inappropriate subjective judgments.

Analysis of the interviews indicated that while the overall rate of marginalization, prejudice, and discrimination was high, participants thought it better to demonstrate resilience by asserting themselves as professionals who pursued their dreams and goals in the face of challenges. The participants believed that it would be beneficial to have multicultural education programs that will help minority immigrant teachers understand the U.S. culture, as well as provide informational opportunities for the school community to embrace diversity. Most of the findings were consistent across interviews. However, there were disconnects between participant perceptions in some cases specifically related to receiving needed support from school administrators. The results of the study will be outlined in detail in the following section.

Question #1: What are the Perceptions of Minority Immigrant Teachers About Inner-City
School Climates?

All interviewed participants described their inner-city school climate as very challenging because it is plagued by poverty. Other characteristics include lack of parental involvement in the education of their children resulting in less value for education. They described the environment as permissive, which allows students to get away with a lot of things. The common themes from the data collected that address this question include sociocultural orientation and socioeconomic issues.

Sociocultural orientation. Participants believed that the social-cultural orientation of the inner-city students is influenced by their family structure, which is mostly one-parent homes with women (mothers or grandmothers) as the heads of the family. Based on their responses, five participants attributed this to the permissiveness that permeates the school climate because students lack the authority of male father figures, making them controlling and disrespectful to other adults. The participants alluded the problem of “children raising children” as another common theme relating to a sociocultural orientation that is observed in inner-city schools. Some participants attributed the lack of exposure to other cultures to be a social-cultural issue experienced in the inner-city schools.

Socioeconomic issues. According to the participants, social, economic issues like poverty inundate the inner-city schools. These issues affect the school climate because most students come in without the required necessities. Some participants agreed that it is impossible to teach a group of hungry students. Of the 13 participants interviewed, nine attributed the lack of parental involvement to poverty. They feel that some of the parents are overwhelmed with multiple jobs to sustain their families that they do not have the time to raise the students. Also, six other participants suggested that some students are involved in illicit money-making
businesses that affect their scholarship and value placed on education

**Question #2: How are Minority Immigrant Teachers Challenged by the Climates of Inner-City Schools?**

Based on the data collected within this dissertation, all participants indicated significant differences between the educational system and practices in the U.S. and their home countries were a challenge. They attributed the different values placed on education and impacts the teaching and learning styles. It was a consensus among the focus group participants that they faced the problems of acculturation and disrespect for being different. Some of the participants indicated that they experienced a lack of empathy and support from school administrators who do not understand their predicaments but used them against them in evaluations. The common themes from the data collected that address this question include acculturation, differences in the educational system, and practices. Other themes are communication, prejudice and marginalization, lack of parental involvement, lack of resources, and lack of support from school administrators.

**Acculturation.** All the participants indicated that they all experienced culture shock at the inception of the teaching appointments in the U.S. They explained that they were shocked at the level of disrespect shown to teachers by students and the lackluster attitude of students towards education. All the participants suggested they had made attempts to assimilate into the foreign culture to ease their working relationship with their peers, students, and administrators. They also indicated that by changing their perceptions and learning the language and culture of the new country.

**Differences in the educational system and practices.** Based on the responses, all the participants indicated that they were challenged by the significant differences in the educational
system and practices between the U.S. and their home countries. Of the 13 participants interviewed, eight of the participants explained that they migrated from developing countries regarded as the third world, where the burden of education lied heavily on the parents rather than the government. Education is considered a privilege and not a right. Because of their limited resources and the exorbitant fees charged, students take it seriously. However, most of the participants indicated that here in the U.S., where education is a right of every child governed by the No Child Left Behind law, which offers free education, free food, better opportunities like classification of students with special needs, and providing Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), they are taken for granted. Some participants noted that the learning styles in their home countries were mainly teacher-focused, but they preferred the student-centered learning that is the focus of the U.S. schools.

**Communication.** Overall, all the participants perceived that language and accent are some of the foremost challenges of minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools. All the participants explained that they had been mocked at some point because of their accents. Some of the participants who said that they spoke English as a second language indicated that it is the most challenging problem. They always strive to communicate effectively with the students, peers, parents, and administrators. Based on their responses, three of the participants mentioned that they had been asked to “speak English” by the students. While two other participants said that parents had told them during phone calls to put someone else who could speak English on the phone. In the same way, two of the participants who said that English was the lingua franca in the home countries but spoke with it heavy accents explained that some students had used their accents as reasons to disrupt their teaching with the excuse that they could not understand them. Based on their responses, six of the participants mentioned that some administrators are
indifferent to the challenges of teaching with other accents and use that against them for lacking classroom management skills.

**Prejudice and marginalization.** Overall, 11 of the participants explained that they have, at one time, experienced some prejudice and marginalization by the actions of some biased colleagues, administrators, and parents. Of all the participants, two participants indicated that they have not had negative personal experiences but have seen or heard of other colleagues who have experienced some marginalization. Based on the responses, five participants indicated that students have transferred out of their classes at the beginning of the school year because they claimed they do not understand their accents and would rather be in native teacher’s classrooms. A participant who said she shared a class with another teacher explained that she felt marginalized and socially excluded when her classroom ignores her exchange of pleasantries but interacts wholeheartedly with other teachers.

**Lack of parental involvement.** Overall, all the participants described the lack of parental involvement in the education of the students as a significant challenge. However, two of the participants who have worked in parochial schools before transferring to the inner-city schools observed that the level of parent involvement in those schools was greater. All the participants mentioned that very few parents attend programs like parent/teachers’ conferences, back to school nights, and other programs where they could interact with the teachers for the progress of the students. A participant mentioned that students in her class taunt her to call their parents knowing that such calls will not yield any result. Some participants indicated that they have dealt with angry parents who tend to believe their children over the teachers.

**Lack of resources.** All the participants mentioned the lack of resources as one of the challenges of teaching in inner-city schools. The participants suggested that students do not have
required school supplies because most of them are from low-income families. Overall, 12 participants indicated that they have resorted to using their finances to provide necessities to their students. A participant mentioned that the lack of uniformity in pay structure across districts has led to the attrition of teachers from the inner-city schools to other better-funded school districts.

**Lack of support from school administrators.** Based on their responses, nine participants described the challenges of lack of support and lack of empathy from school administrators. Overall, seven of the participants believed that some school administrators are biased and intolerant towards immigrant teachers. They explained that they use a one-size-fits-all approach in evaluating the teachers without helping them deal with issues that they encounter and showing a lack of understanding of the predicaments of immigrant teachers. Based on the responses, one of the participants noted that she had heard administrator threatening to deal with the immigrant teachers in her school who she said think that they were better than others. Based on the responses, four of the participants indicated that they had very great and understanding administrators who have supported and encouraged them to take up higher responsibilities because of their outstanding efforts.

**Question #3: What Factors Help Minority Immigrant Teachers to Succeed in Inner-City schools?**

When asked about what has helped them to succeed in inner-city schools, all the participants attributed their successes to different coping strategies, including personal dispositions, religion, professionalism, and professional and social networking. Of all the eight participants who participated in the 1:1 interview, four participants said that they become apathetic and indifferent to the problem of racial profiling. Some said they rose above it through flexibility, and acculturation and by trying to adjust and learn about the new culture. All
participants attributed their strengths and contributions to their multicultural experiences and international teaching experiences. The common themes from the data collected that address this question include coping strategies, professional/social networking, and strengths and contributions.

**Coping strategies.** All the participants indicated that they had adopted various coping strategies to deal with the challenges of the inner-city schools’ climates. However, there is some level of differences and nuances on how each person coped. Overall, seven of the participants attributed their positive personal dispositions such as attitude, friendliness, trustworthy, and open-mindedness as strategies they employed in working with the inner-city school community. Additionally, four participants explained that they became indifferent and used the silence strategy to overcome prejudice and marginalization. A participant mentioned that he always resort to traveling back to his home country as a way to reconnect and refocus on the reason he does what he does.

**Professional and social networking.** Overall, seven of the participants mentioned that one of the factors that helped them succeed as immigrant minority teachers in inner-city schools is through professional networking with other teachers. Also, two of the participants noted that they relied on veteran teachers who know the school very well in charting the course of their teaching career in the inner-city. Based on responses, five of the participants explained that they use professional and social networking with other immigrant teachers, especially those who speak the same language or from the same region as their support system.

**Strengths and contributions.** Based on their responses, 12 of the participants indicated that they derive their strengths from personal dispositions like tenacity and their passion for teaching. Of the 13 participants interviewed, five of the participants explained that they took
teaching as a career because of the love for children, and they will not give it up for anything. In response to the question about their strength, nine participants indicated that their strengths come from the fact that they always ensure that they go above and beyond expectations in their professional responsibilities to remain relevant in the schools. Similarly, three other participants attributed their strengths to their upbringing in their home countries, which had prepared them to never give up in the face of tough situations. Based on their responses, two of the participants attributed their religion and faith as the source of their strengths. They explained that their religious virtues like humility, perseverance, and forgiveness help them to cope and deal with problems of racial profiling and marginalization.

Regarding their contributions to the inner-city schools, 10 of the 13 participants believed that they had contributed positively to the growth and progress of the schools by being the best at what they teach. Similarly, seven of the participants explained that they bring diversity to the school by organizing multicultural activities for their schools. In addition, two of the participants mentioned that some of their students have traveled to their home countries on vacation because of the interest they aroused in them to know more about other cultures.

**Presentation of the Data and Results**

The collection, review, analysis, and synthesis of data in this study generated the information necessary to answer the following research questions: (a) What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates? (b) How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools? (c) What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

Interviews
In this study, I conducted two sets of semistructured interviews, including eight 1:1 interviews lasting approximately 35 minutes each. The individual interviews were conducted at different locations deemed appropriately quiet, comfortable, and convenient to the participants. Participants were asked the following questions (see Appendix A).

**Question #1: What are your teaching experiences in U.S. schools?** All participants indicated that their experiences were quite different from the experience they had in their home countries as students or teachers. Participants also described some negative teaching experiences in the inner-city school system while a few narrated positive teaching experiences. Some of the comments from participants included:

- “There was a problem with the fact that I could not communicate with the parents because they spoke Spanish.”
- “There were a lot of challenges that I had overcome. One is the cultural impact. Whereas in the Caribbean, students respect teachers. Here in the inner city, it’s a tough call.”
- “Teachers must be more compliant and a bit more open to the student. Even if the students disrespect teachers, teachers deliberately remain calm and collective and do not try to aggravate the situation within the classroom or the school.”
- “The way teachers teach, and the ways students learn is very, very different from what I was used to.”
- “It was challenging because I brought the Jamaican concept where I figured when a teacher spoke, students listened. But that was different. I had to change my whole approach to teaching, and that somehow made me question my abilities.”
- “Most of the parents are not involved in the school or the kids’ lives.”
**Question #2: What was your first-year teaching in the U.S. like?** When asked to narrate their first-year teaching experiences in the U.S. explicitly, all the participants repeated that it was challenging. All the participants expressed that they experienced cultural shock at the level of disrespect shown to teachers and lack of value placed on education. All the participants expressed that their accents were the most significant challenge they faced. Some of the comments from participants included:

- “My first-year teaching in the U.S. was challenging.”
- “In the beginning it was really hard because I didn’t understand the culture and the kids were really tough.”
- “It was like night and day compared to my two previous schools. It was quite different in terms of lack of respect, lack of regard for education. The “I don’t care” attitude of the students and parents, students not paying attention to authority figures.”
- “It was challenging. Can you imagine a Jamaican trying to teach U.S. kids with my strong accent, my lack of knowledge of the U.S. culture and teenagers?”

**Question #3: What kinds of responsibilities did you have?** In response to the question about the responsibilities they had as educators, all the participants stated that they had their usual teaching assignments as well as other extracurricular activities. Some of the comments of the participants include:

- “I worked with the outward-bound program in the city.”
- “I was responsible for recording all the discipline cases in the system.”
- “I am a big soccer fan. So ever since I got my foot into the district, I’ve been coaching soccer.”
• “I beautified the school by planting flowers around the entire school, in the hallways and have my class take care of the plants.”

**Question #4: What is your relationship with other teachers like?** In response to the question of how they relate with other teachers, four of the participants indicated that they have excellent working relationships with their peers. Based on the response of the participants, eight of the participants explained that while they like to relate with all their peers, they found that some of the teachers alienate or avoid them for flimsy reasons. They state that the same teachers who avoid or ignore them, interact differently with other colleagues who are natives. Comments from participants included:

• “It is difficult to relate with most people who are born here because they look at you like what she’s doing in their place, but you can relate with other immigrants.”

• “They look at you like- she has an accent and how is she going to teach the children.”

• “I try to interact with other teachers that are in the majority without feeling like I am in the minority.”

• “I think my relationship with other teachers is very positive because that was my first role. I could relate to them because we are peers.”

• “In my relationship with other teachers, I have to choose wisely because there are teachers who are not sympathetic to an immigrant’s cause, so you have to choose the right teachers who will sympathize with your plight.”

• “I share a room with a teacher. He allowed me to use the room because the principal asked him. But he only gave me space, but he always has something on the board. He did not allow me to use the board. I stop to say hello to him, and he never says hello to me. He doesn’t say hello or anything to me. When I enter the room, he leaves the
room. We never had a conversation as coworkers like, how are you? How do you do?”

• “They don’t pay attention to you. They talk to you like you are nobody.”

• “For the most part, I had good experiences because one thing I realized is that when you’re the new kid on the block, you should go around and introduce yourself to teachers, especially veteran teachers who have been around, don’t just walk by and pretend you don’t see them because that’s a big problem.”

**Question #5: How do your students respond to you?** When asked how the students respond to them as immigrant teachers, their responses varied from positive to negative experiences. Based on their responses, six of the participants suggested that the students’ response depend on how the teachers present themselves. They indicated that students respond positively to teachers who they feel care for them. Comments from participants included:

• “I have never experienced any negativity from the students. The only difference is that sometimes when I tell them about the performance of the students in the Caribbean, I get the response that we know that you people in the Caribbean are smart.”

• “I think I’ve gone through a thousand students already in my time. I mean you will have some who will say wonderful things about me, while others would say, Boy, he is so aggravating.”

• “There were certain protocols that I expected students to follow with teachers, so when I started here, it was hard for me to bend students towards me because then it would end up into a lot of arguments.”
• “I guess I may say; I have some good relationships, and some bad. But for the most part, I’ve always had good relationships with my kids, and I use my cultural experience. And I think that’s one good thing that bridges the gap.”
• “Since I started saying hello to everybody and calling everybody by name and asking questions about their personal lives, I do not have any disciplinary issues in my classroom anymore.”
• “I think the students can see through you, because the moment you walk into the class, and they see that you care about them, they can relate more to you.”

**Question #6: What is your relationship with school administrators?** On the question about their relationship with school administrators, six of the participants indicated that they maintained formal working relationships with the administrators. They suggested that when they followed laid out school policies and did their work as required, they do not have problems with the administrators. Overall, seven of the participants indicated that they had encountered some administrators who had issues with their accents and tried to make things difficult for them. Participants’ comments included:

• “Administrators relationship with the teachers sometimes is difficult, like in other places. If you do your work, follow the policies and directions, you will be successful. Otherwise, you fail.”
• “My personal experience with the administration is normal. I work with them on a formal relationship.”
• “I’ve never had a negative relationship with any administrator that I can think of because I’ve always known how to toe the line. I need this job. This is my career, not a job. So, I’ve gotten along well with administrators for the most part.”
• “The first thing the supervisor does to me knowing that I’m immigrant. She’s a chairperson for the English department. She gave me a two-page document and told me that I must read the article to all other teachers who teach English in the departmental workshop. To embarrass me.”

• “I expect my supervisor to help and encourage me, but she disrespected me. She kicked me out of the program, but she said get out, get out, get out. Screaming at me. I don’t want someone to put my self-esteem down and having a supervisor that put you down instead of helping.”

**Question #7: What is your relationship with the parents?** On the question about their relationship with parents, some of the participants suggested that many parents are not involved in the education of their children, so it is challenging to communicate with them. All the participants observed that many parents blame teachers for students’ failures. A participant indicated that only the parents of good students are always available for discussions.”

Participants’ comments include:

• “It is tough to say about parents because like I’ve said, I don’t see parents at parent-teachers’ conferences.”

• “Well, every time I call parents, I only speak to parents of the good kids because you barely have the correct number for the bad kids, their numbers are always disconnected.”

• “I called a parent about a student who never comes to class, because he doesn’t want to learn French. The mother before hanging up, said he didn’t have to learn French. It should be English. That’s enough. And she hung up.”
• “I have parents that I see on the streets, and they stop to talk about their children and say oh, that’s my daughter’s teacher, that’s my son’s teacher. Oh, is that the teacher that usually call me on the phone about you?”

• “I have had negative experiences with some parents that will call yelling and screaming, why is my student failing, like their child is an A or B student.”

**Question #8: What are the most challenges you face as a teacher?**

When asked about their challenges as immigrant teachers in the inner-city schools, the participants repeatedly mentioned that the most significant challenge they have is lack of cultural diversity in the inner-city school. They suggested that students’ lack of exposure to other cultures makes it difficult for them to understand why others speak differently and make them unreceptive to the teachers who they feel are not knowledgeable. The participants indicated that some of their peers and administrators also lack exposure to other cultures and see them as threats to their jobs. The participants indicated that students’ lack of interest in education poses the challenge of teaching effectively. Based on their responses, six of the teachers who speak English as a second language mentioned that their limited vocabulary in English is a challenge. The participants’ comments include:

• “I think most immigrant teachers face the challenge of imparting knowledge onto students who believe that you are not knowledgeable.”

• “Our kids are not culturally exposed, and that is a big issue. If you’re not culturally exposed, it is hard for you to sit with somebody from another culture or be taught by someone from another culture.”

• “Students lack interest in learning.”

• “The language is one of the biggest issues we have.”
• “The kids make fun of my language when I don’t say the words right. I teach Spanish; some will say I don’t care. I don’t want to learn. I do it because it’s mandatory.”
• “Lack of teaching supplies.”

**Question #9: What did you do to meet those challenges?** When asked how they meet the challenges that they have mentioned, the participants explained that they adopt different strategies. All the participants suggested that they try different strategies and stick with whatever works for them. They also stated that they look for ways to makes things work effectively for them rather than focusing on the challenges. Some of the comments of the participants include:

• “You need to be the change, be positive. Let your knowledge and expertise speak for itself because students learn by example.”
• “I have to work smart; I have to network with other experienced teachers who are going through the same issues, know what other schools are doing, look for other strategies that will help me manage my classroom.”
• “We had to learn their words so I can be part of their culture. I had to fit with them.”
• “Talking with other people with the same experience as you. By going to other immigrant teachers, you become a community. You get a little bit of support.”

**Question #10: What or who helped you meet the challenges?** When asked what or who helped them overcome the challenges they mentioned, seven of the participants indicated that they are well-trained professionals, so the knowledge of their subject areas help them to succeed. Also, five participants credited their religion to instilling the values and virtues that help them overcome their challenges. All the participants indicated that their personal attributes also helped them to meet the challenges. Some of the comments from participants include:
• “I am well prepared and well educated actually. These are my strengths, and I’m very sociable.”

• “I’m very affectionate towards my students. I feel their pain. I can tell if a student is really upset when they walk into my classroom. I get to know them with time. I can tell if a student is upset just by looking at them, I can tell what’s going on. At times I walk up to them and say, is everything okay? Oh, I’m not feeling good. I like to deal with them at that level. There is no point aggravating the issue, especially when you are in the inner-city schools because our children have so many issues. So that has helped me through the years.”

• “I pray to God every day for strength.”

• “Well, I came from a country where we didn’t have any issues between races. In my country, we have a mix of Black and White people. I don’t believe in different races. I believe in one race, “the human race.” So, I see every single human being the way they are supposed to be—a human being. I treat everybody with love and respect, so this is the response that I expect from people, right?”

**Question #11: Are there any programs such as in-service teacher education at graduate school that has helped you deal with the challenges?** When asked if there were any programs during their teacher education that prepared them to deal with the challenges they experienced in the inner-city school, most of the participants indicated that there had no program during their college days that prepared them for the real-life experiences. A participant mentioned that the closest program she had was a multicultural class project that involved students from other nationalities. She explained that while the project helped her to learn how to relate to others, she noticed that her colleagues did not trust her academic ability until she started
to contribute to the project. Based on their responses, three of the participants who have not advanced their education since their relocation to the U.S. indicated that since their countries were mainly monoracial, that they were not exposed to any multicultural education. Some of the participants’ comments include:

- “A school teaches you a lot of things and make you knowledgeable. But they don’t prepare you for the reality of what is outside.”
- “I took a class in the graduate school known as Social Problems. During that class. We were placed in cohorts with people of different cultures, and I was able to see that our thinking was different. I was able to prepare myself to work in a diverse community.”
- “Not really, however, I think my preparation began in Jamaica. The rigor of education in Jamaica is what has kept me in this profession for over 15 years because I’m not deviating from what I was taught. So, I still make my old teachers proud by maintaining their visions, their standard, and their way of teaching.”

**Question #12: Do the district offer any professional development that was helpful to you in dealing with the challenges?** When asked if the school district provides any staff development that helps to deal with the aforementioned challenges, all the participants responded that the district offers behavior, academic, and content-related professional development but does not offer any professional development in cultural responsiveness. Some of the participants’ comments include:

- “The district does not provide cultural professionals developments or workshops. I’ve never gone to one. I’ve never heard of one. All workshops are focused on academia.”
• “No, all faculty professional developments offered relate to teaching and learning or content-level staff developments. Everything I’ve learned is what I’ve read about myself, or through interactions with other people. I learned from experience.”

• “I learned through personal interactions with other teachers.”

Question #13: What are your strengths and contributions to U.S. schools? When asked about their strengths as teachers and the contributions they have made in the inner-city schools, most participants attributed their skills to their multicultural experiences, international teaching experiences, professionalism, the quest for continuous professional improvement and keeping good relationships with students, peers, and school administrators. Overall, seven participants attributed their attributes of working above and beyond expectations and their passion for teaching as the driving forces that keep them going. Participants’ comments include:

• “One of my strengths is my ability to turn a serious situation into a joke. By diffusing the situation and making the student laugh, they listen and say. You’re funny.”

• “My strengths as a teacher are that I care a lot about my students. I always think of ways I can help them grow as human beings. I don’t put them down but try to help them. I have faith in them, I try to encourage them.”

• “I like to be friendly, but at the time very strict. The flexibility is what allows me to get through to the students and keep myself going.”

• “My positives teaching experiences are to see former students and present ones achieve, especially passing those external exams.”

Question #14: Who and what contributed to your strengths? Based on the responses to the question, the participants attributed the source of their strength as coworkers, family, God, and the resilience they learned from their home countries. They responded by telling the
moments that their teaching affected your students and the school community positively.

- “I believe one of my biggest strengths comes from my coworkers, who are going through the same things with me, who share in the same issues. And we learn how to overcome these problems by advising each other.”

- “I derive my strength from my family, especially my daughter, who is a psychologist and a school administrator in Florida. Whenever I have any difficulties, I talk with her. And of course, God because I pray to him every day.”

- “Another strength comes from traveling back to my home country from time to time to reconnect and refocus. That refreshes me on how to deal with these children because I visit schools over there to see what’s going on.”

- “My strength comes from so many motivational factors. It comes from my past, the struggles that we went through, and things we didn’t have. I draw my strength from them because I can’t give up on myself now.”

**Question #15: What else would you like to tell me about your teaching experiences in the U.S.?** In addition, participants were asked to summarize their teaching experiences in the U.S. All the participants narrated the high points of their teaching careers, recollected some positive teaching experiences, and the moments they felt competent, valued and appreciated because of their positive contributions to the schools. Comments from participants included:

- “I have some positive experiences, like when I ran the Kids in Business program in my school. Students were able to make tee shirts with imprints. We organized fundraising for the school. As a result, I was sent to NYU for an entrepreneurship program. Coming back and being able to help students to become entrepreneurs when they leave school. That was my highest point.”
• “One of my great experience is helping the seniors to graduate by assisting them with their personal college statements. Also, the times when I assist other teachers by sharing ideas and strategies they could employ.”

• “I am the head coach of the soccer team, and we have been doing good things on the soccer field. That way, the school is positively affected because as a teacher, I am involved in a wide variety of things.”

• “The inner-city school is dynamic. It is changing. We must also be constantly revising our crafts. I think one needs to constantly try to improve oneself because once you know your area of expertise, you will be alright.”

Focus Group Interviews

The focus group followed a semistructured format with an open discussion of questions among five participants lasting approximately 30 minutes. The focus group was given a protocol (see Appendix C) as a guide, and it included group expectations about confidentiality. The focus group questions are as follows:

**Question #1: Describe the school climate of the school you teach.** The focus group members were asked to describe their school climate. The participants described different characteristics of the inner-city school, including the physical, social, and economic challenges that define the school climate. Comments of participants include:

• “The inner-city schools are highly challenging in the sense that a very high percentage of the students are from backgrounds that make it a little difficult for them to fix the causes of their educational challenges.”

• “We have students who probably have one parent who is not quite actively involved in their lives.”
• “Education is not valued. Most students do not see education as a valuable tool for changes in their lives. So, they try in every way to prevent teachers from teaching and disturb learning.”

• “My students believe they make more money on street corners than any other job could offer, and do not take their studies seriously.”

**Question #2: Are there significant differences in the education system between your home country and the schools in the U.S.?** In response to the question about differences between the education systems in their countries of origin and the U.S., respondents suggested that students’ and parents’ attitude to education is considerably different because of the free education provided. Participants indicated that because of the level of poverty in their home countries, more value is placed on education while the students in the U.S. have more opportunities like individualized education plans: therefore, have laissez-faire attitudes towards learning. Comments from participants included:

• “We don’t have special needs students. We don’t have ESL students or bilingual students.”

• “I do believe that the U.S. system is good because they put students at different levels.”

• “In my country, the parents support the teachers when they punish their children, and the teachers are respected, here the parents believe the students over the teachers.”

• “I discovered that the system is very permissive. Students have the upper hand. Teachers are kind of limited in things that they can do.”
• “In my country, teachers had to deal with teaching and have no problems with
disciple because the same respect the students show their parents at home, they give
to teachers at school and as such value teachers’ work.”
• “Parents and the society expect a whole lot from the teacher, but for children that are
coming from a faulty foundation, where the orientation is porous, there’s little that the
teacher can do.”
• “U.S. system provides special opportunities for children.”
• “Some of the parents do not have time for their children because they work multiple
jobs to be able to take care of the families and these take them away from their homes
most of the times.”
• “There are so many that allowed their children to be classified when they don’t even
have the disability that they claim. They abuse the privilege because there are
monetary values attached when these children are classified.”

**Question #3: What are your experiences as a minority immigrant teacher in an
inner-city school?** All the participants recounted their different experiences as minority
immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools. Based on responses, two participants
described positive experiences overall, while others some had negative experiences. Overall,
three of the participants indicated that they were made fun of because of their accents, and most
students become disinterested and disruptive in class. All participants believed that they had
some culture shock on the total disregard to education and disrespect shown to teachers. In all,
five of the participants expressed that they have suffered some form of prejudice,
microaggression, and microinsults from students, colleagues, parents, and administrators with
comments like “you people are always smart,” “Can you braid my hair,” and “do you live on trees.” Comments from participants include:

- “The accent was an issue with the students, as soon as they don’t understand you, they turn you off.”
- “I was in the middle of teaching a lesson when a student raised his hand to ask what my husband does for a living. When I asked him to ask relevant questions, another student replied- her husband must be a cab driver, that’s what Haitian men do.”
- “Oh, Ms., you look pretty, you don’t look Haitian.”
- “When I wear any form of braided hairstyle, the students will ask me if I braided my hair. Others will ask, Miss, when will you braid my hair. They assume that since I am African, I should know how to braid hair.”

**Question #4: What are the school-based factors that challenge you as a teacher in the inner-city school?** The participants responded to the question of school-based factors that challenge immigrant teachers in inner-city by suggesting the family structure of the students was a significant factor. They indicated that different teaching style, lack of resources, lack of administrative support also impacts the work of minority immigrant teachers in inner-city schools. Comments of participants include:

- “Lack of support from the administration.”
- “I think it’s a different culture and a different style of teaching style.”
- “No consequences for attitudes and behaviors. It all still boils down to shifting of responsibility.”
- “There is a shift in accountability. Teachers are held accountable to children’s learning, but where I come from, children are held accountable to their learning.”
**Question #5:** How well did your teacher education prepare you for teaching in the school climate you described? Based on the responses from all the participants, there was no teacher education program that equipped them for cultural responsiveness. The participants suggested that the professional developments provided by the district and schools were purely academic and content-based, with nothing to address acculturation or assimilation. Comment from the participants include:

- “No, not at all, it didn’t really prepare me. None of these things I am experiencing were even mentioned. I was told it was not going to be that easy to motivate the students or get them engaged, especially in the inner city. However, the unfair treatment and discrimination we face were never mentioned.”

**Question #6:** What types of problems do minority immigrant teachers encounter with students in the school? In response to the problems the immigrant teachers encounter with students, participants indicated the problems of disrespect, rejection, lack of motivation, lack of exposure to other culture, and lack of trust of people who they don’t know much about. Comments from participants include:

- “There is a high level of disrespect, lack of discipline, and rejection. They don’t want to be in your class because they do not trust people who they do not know much about.”
- “One of the problems with our students is lack of motivation. They don’t aspire to do better; they will rather disrupt the class than pay attention to the teachers, especially if they have problems with your accent.”
- “Once they know you are from a different culture, and you are trying to discipline them so they can apply themselves to learning. They see you as an enemy instead of
someone helping them. They will say you are mean. And whenever they have anything against you, that’s enough to create big problems for you.”

**Question #7: What types of problems do minority immigrant teachers encounter with peers in the school?** In answering the question on the types of problems they encounter with their peers, some participants indicated that some of their colleagues accept them. All the participants feel that they were always excluded, belittled, scorned, or seen as incompetent by their peers. One of the participants described how the principal asked her to assist another teacher with classroom management strategies, but the teacher vehemently refused her entry into her classroom, telling her that she doesn’t even understand her. Comments from participants include:

- “A teacher I worked with gave me the shock of my life when she was bold enough to ask me if I lived on a tree from where I came from.”
- “When I was assigned to work with some teachers, they will rather not have me help just to avoid working with me. Usually, I will be the one to ask if they need help, and I will approach most of the students to see how I could help around? But I could feel that they just want to avoid me.”
- “Some of them could not really cause me problem directly. But use the students to try maybe to make me leave. Because students will later talk and say such and such teachers made me do that.”
- “When some colleagues approach you a certain way, you might think that’s the way the person is. But, when he or she goes to somebody else who is from here, they know exactly how to approach the person. So, it’s different treatment for different people.”
Question #8: What types of problems do minority immigrant teachers encounter with administrators in the school? In response to the question of the problems they encounter with administrators, the respondents described some of their administrators as lacking empathy on their plights by using a one-size-fits-all approach. Some participants explained that some administrators are biased and intolerant towards immigrant teachers and use that against them during evaluations. Some participants’ comments include:

- “From my experience, administrators want everybody to think alike and do things the same. They micromanage teachers, and that does not give room for teachers to use their teaching styles. For them, it is one direction fits all.”
- “I believe it depends on the individual administrator. Some individuals are very biased, and some are racists. So, even though they are administrators, racism, and bias do happen. It depends on how administrators perceive immigrants. If they see the teacher as an immigrant who should be in his or her own country instead of being here, they treat them with indifference.”
- “There are administrators that will still use the language that students are failing because of the immigrant teachers’ accents even when the immigrant teachers work over and above their job description and do what the administrators ask them to do.”
- “I found out that some teachers are not being supported by the administrators. If you get partially effective, you should know.”
- “I have been able to work with administrators well. Whether they are that real or pretentiously nice, I have not had any negative experience.”

Question #9: What types of problems do minority immigrant teachers encounter with parents in the school? When asked the type of problems they encounter with parents in the
inner-city schools, all participants indicated that they have encountered lack of support, poor 
communication and parents who believe their children over the teachers. Overall, two of the 
participants who are World Language teachers explained that parents have told them there was 
no need for their children to study another language that is not the English language. Comments 
from participants include:

- “Parents have the same bias as the students.”
- “One of the problems we encounter with parents as teachers are that most of the 
  children are living with adults who are not their biological parents. These foster care 
  parents don’t care so much about these children. They care about the money, so they 
  don’t even discipline the children as they are supposed to as their own. Because if 
  they try to discipline the child, the child will say, I don’t want to live with you, and 
  they will lose the money.”
- “Most of inner-city students, I will say about 75% to 80% are raised by one parent 
  and among these, 100% percent is the mother or grandmother.”
- “Even when you make phone calls thinking you will get support from the parents, 
  once you introduce yourself; they hear your accent. You start the problem. They will 
  tell you; they want their children to have some particular teacher. These are the kids 
  who give you a hard time because they will say my mom doesn’t care about your 
  phone calls.”

Question #10: How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial identity 
problems? In response to how the teachers deal with racial identity problems, three participants 
indicated that they have become indifferent by trying to rise above it. All participants explained 
that they are flexible and try to adjust through assimilation and acculturation, where they adopt
the norms and practices of the U.S.’ culture. Overall, three participants indicated that they deal with it by relating more with other teachers with the same background. Comments from participants include:

- “I refused to be downgraded because, in my opinion, they are misinformed. They don’t know any better. So, it’s my responsibility to teach them about my identity.”
- “You deal with racial identity problems by rising above it and not taking it personally. It took time for me to realize that it is not about me. It is a difficult issue that the general population of immigrants is facing.”
- “It took time for me to realize that it is not about me or it is not something that is just happening to me. It is a diverse issue that the general population of immigrants are facing. Because it’s harder for me to cope with it. However, I have learnt to focus on positive things that I do and ignore the negativity.”

**Question #11: How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial microaggressions (derogatory communication)?** In response to how the immigrant teachers handle racial microaggressions, including derogatory statements, three participants attributed their faith to equipping them with virtues like humility, tenacity, and perseverance to deal with issues. Comments from participants include:

- “I try not to get offended with anything but to relate to each person according to the way they come.”
- “I pray for God to help me with the challenges because sometimes it’s not easy. I redirect them by educating them because it is because of a lack of understanding.”
- “Personally, I have decided that I will not pay any attention to that because guess what? I don’t allow that to define me. The more I feed into that, the more depressed I
would get and that would definitely affect my job. As long as I have self-confidence, I know my worth; I know what I’m capable of doing and know where I am going. All that, to me it’s just a distraction. I don’t pay attention to it because I’ve decided that I’m going to choose the battles that I fight.”

**Summary**

I began Chapter 4 with an overview of this hermeneutic phenomenological study exploring the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about the inner-city schools’ climates. In addition, I provided an overview of my research methodology which includes the study setting, a detailed account of the total population targeted for the study, the demographics of the participants, and a description of the sample. The chapter included data analysis and research results. A section also explained the data that was collected, and another section outlined the research methodology and analysis plan.

The data collected was outlined in detail and was enough to answer the research questions: (a) What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates? (b) How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools? (c) What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools? Overall, findings indicate the participants perceive the inner-city school climate to be very challenging. In Chapter 5, I will discuss the findings, their relation to the current literature, and conclude with recommendations.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Minority immigrant teachers work in inner-city school climates that are culturally different from their places of origin. The absence of cultural affiliation between teachers and students could affect student learning even if the teacher is knowledgeable of the subject (Murai et al., 2019; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015). Inner-city school environments are complex with several challenging factors including the effects of poverty, violence, insufficient and disproportionate allocation of resources detrimental to the academic success of students in the inner-city school (Blaisdell, 2016; Gaikhorst et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2015; Whipp, & Geronime, 2017). The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. By engaging participants in multiple dialogues and using self-designed codes and interpretational analysis; the findings of this study offered insights into how the inner-schools’ climates impacted the work of immigrant teachers. It describes how the immigrant teachers perceive their working experiences with students, peers, administrators, and parents in inner-city schools. In this study, I collected and analyzed data to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?
2. How are minority immigrant teachers challenged by the climates of inner-city schools?
3. What factors help minority immigrant teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

In this concluding chapter, I provide a summary of the research results, discussion of the results, review of the results to literature, limitations of the study, implications of the findings on transformation, policy, practice, and theory; and recommendations for further research.
Summary of the Results

The results of this qualitative study were found through a hermeneutic phenomenological research design. This design included procedures for data collection and interpretational data analysis that involved the researcher and engaged participants in making meaning of their own experiences. The data sources used in this study came from two instruments: (a) interview questions with participants and (b) focus group questions with participants. In the study, I reviewed data collected from the semistructured interview questions and focus group discussions on understanding the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. I divided the 13 participants into two groups; eight individuals participated in one-on-one interviews while the remaining five participated in a focus group session which met once. There was one alternative participant who replaced an individual who dropped out at the last minute. I interviewed the participants several times until saturation. I identified common themes from the interviews and focus group discussion through interpretative analysis. The research questions were used to guide the design, implementation, and analysis of the study. I examined data collected to ensure that it was enough to answer the critical research questions.

The results of the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussion indicate that minority immigrant teachers find the inner-city school climate very challenging. They believed there were systemic, educational, and cultural differences and practices between the U.S. and their home countries. Interview results indicated that 10 participants described feeling lost, mocked, isolated, marginalized, and disrespected by students, peers, and parents in inner-city schools (see Appendix G). Additionally, eight teachers said they experienced culture shock at the lack of motivation for education shown by students and parents in the inner-city schools. They attributed the lack of motivation to free education, and enormous freedom allowed students,
which makes them pursue other goals other than education. The participants mentioned that the students, parents, and some of their peers lacked exposure to different cultures, which make them reject outsiders. They believed that because of students’ lack of exposure to other cultures, they do not trust immigrant minority teachers to be knowledgeable of their subjects and lead to classroom management issues. The participants felt shunned by prejudiced colleagues who reject their attempts to connect with them. They also stated that their peers looked down upon as inferiors. The participants believed that these behaviors made them gravitate towards other minority immigrant teachers who face the same challenges.

Participants indicated that one of their challenges was poor communication since most of them spoke English as a second language or with a foreign accent. They believed that having heavy foreign accents made some students and colleagues lack trust in their academic abilities with the impression that they are incompetent as teachers. According to them, their students would instead disrupt classes so that they are transferred out to the classrooms of U.S. born teachers. Participants stated that even though they spoke with different accents, they have mastery of their subjects and work above and beyond expectations.

The participants indicated that they encountered classroom management problems as new teachers because students did not trust them and resort to disrupting their classrooms. They attributed their challenges to lacking knowledge of the U.S. culture and educational system. Regarding administrative support, they believed that most administrators who do not understand their predicaments as immigrant teachers do not offer the necessary support to them. All 13 participants believed that they need to be mentored by experienced teachers, accepted by their peers, and supported by the school administrators. The participants described feeling helpless
and indifferent to racial profiling. Participants indicated they had to find ways to work around it or to educate the students and peers about their differences and their countries.

The interview results showed that despite the sociocultural challenges, minority immigrant teachers develop different coping strategies that allow them to survive and achieve rewarding accomplishments. They regard these as their positive experiences. The participants mentioned that their coping strategies include their attributes like humility, resilience, patience, and kindness. Of the 13 participants, seven said that religion and professional networking have helped them to adapt to the inner-city schools’ climate. Results from the interviews indicated are flexible and open-minded to learn and assimilate the new culture. They believed that multicultural education and mentoring should be provided to new immigrant teachers to help in the transition and acculturation process. The participants believed that to prove themselves as competent and acceptable to students and peers, they had to work above reasonable expectations of the job. The following section will outline the study results in detail.

Discussion of the Results

Minority immigrant teacher participants in this study reported many cross-cultural challenges in the inner-city school. In comparing the one-on-one interviews and the focus group interviews, the common themes remained the same. Each participant’s perception of the inner-city climate was unique; however, the experiences of all participants regarding their working relationship with students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and other members of the school community were relatively close. While the participants shared some positive work experiences, they also recounted many negative experiences. Many of their negative experiences included communication issues, prejudice and marginalization, lack of respect from students, lack of parental involvement, class management issues, and lack of school administrators’ support.
The expectations of the participants as immigrants from mostly developing third-world countries, was a superior and quality education in the U.S. However, as teachers in the inner-city schools, they expressed shock at the lackadaisical attitude of students and parents towards education. A participant attributed this attitude to the availability of employment opportunities in the U.S., which leads some students to feel that school does not make any difference in improving the quality of life. He stated:

I think because in the United States they offer you too many ways to work and earn money before you graduate from school, they don’t think education is really important because they can start earning money before graduating from the university. So, I believe students in the U.S. do not see the point of setting education as a goal in life.

The challenges regarding cultural and educational expectations were worsened by insufficient professional development regarding culturally responsive practices and lack of understanding and support by some school administrators. The 13 minority participants in this study expressed that they observed many systemic cultural and educational differences between the inner-city schools and their countries of origin. Culturally, many of their students have never interacted with people from different backgrounds. These differences posed challenges ranging from classroom management issues, the need to attend to student misbehavior rather than focusing on teaching frequently, lack of respect from students, and linguistic problems of speaking English as a second language or with a heavy accent. These findings on the cultural differences are consistent with previous studies on the importance of culturally matching teachers with students of the same background (Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015; Zhou & Li, 2015).

Since all the study participants spoke English either as a second language or with a foreign accent different from the U.S. standard accent, they claimed that their lack of oral
fluency posed difficulties in instructing students and communication with colleagues. For those who spoke English as a second language, they expressed that their lack of proficiency in English has made people question their academic qualifications and competence as educators; as a result, they looked down on them. The finding indicated that minority immigrant teachers are subjected to many degrading and dehumanizing ordeals because of communication barriers. A participant stated:

For foreign teachers like us, language is one of the biggest issues because we have an accent when we talk. But it doesn’t mean that we don’t know anything about our subjects, in my case, science. We know science a lot, but we speak with accents when we talk, but we don’t have accents in our brains.

The challenges relating to prejudice, marginalization was such that students, parents, and even their fellow teachers treated them as subhuman. Findings indicated that they experienced a lack of empathy, microaggressions, and microinsults. This finding is consistent with literature that stated that minority teachers sometimes experience stereotypes, microaggressions, and discrimination from others due to their different approaches to specific issues (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Kohli, 2018; Louis et al., 2017; Palmer & Maramba, 2015). Participants indicated both on surveys and in interviews that they experienced some form of discrimination from their colleagues where they were treated differently from other teachers in the majority. They also believed that their colleagues who discriminated against them did not hide their actions because they berated them openly or acted differently towards other teachers in their presence.

The minority immigrant teachers indicated that they were culture-shocked on the dismal level of parental involvement, less value for education, lack of proper classroom behavior, and disrespect for teachers. They also indicated that the inner-city students’ behavior stems from the
child-centered U.S. culture that promotes individual choice and self-expression and allows for various learning styles. These were contrary to the ethics of students in their home countries where students revered teachers, had the right study attitude and habit, and teachers are strict with students and take it as their moral responsibility to guide their conduct.

Irrespective of the challenges faced by minority immigrant teachers, this study revealed that participants showed eagerness towards cultural adaptation and assimilation by learning the new culture, learning and speaking the language, and desiring a better relationship with their colleagues. They engaged in extracurricular and multicultural activities that helped them build better relationships with students outside the classrooms, as well as educate students in diverse cultures. Importantly, the participants of this study suggested that providing professional developments related to diversity, equity, and race matters will be valuable for minority immigrant teachers and U.S. born teachers and administrators to help them understand differences in cultures. These findings support multicultural teacher education studies (Cochran-Smith, 2003) and culturally responsive studies (Ladson-Billings, 2014) that proper teacher education on cultural diversity will help to address the problem of dealing with diversity in schools.

**Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature**

In this hermeneutic, phenomenological study, I explored the challenges of the inner-city schools’ climates from the perspectives of minority immigrant teachers. The review of literature revealed themes including racial disparity among minority teachers and students in schools, matching minority teachers with students of the same background, racial microaggression as a challenge to minority teachers, characteristics of school environment that affect the performance of minority teachers, teacher preparation programs, the challenges faced by minority teachers,
and teacher coping strategies. Each of these themes will be reviewed to the research results of this study in this section.

Though the school district where the participants of the study worked is categorized as an inner-city with a diverse student population, there is still a cultural divide among teaching staff. The cultural divide is evident because the demographic breakdown of the district’s 2,700 teachers are as follows: 40% White; 37% Black; 22% Hispanic; and less than 1% Asian, Native Americans, or others. The percentage of minority immigrant teachers working in the district, therefore, is considerably very low, considering the total number of all the minority teachers. The cultural divide impacts the relationship between the students, parents, and staff in the majority and the minority immigrant teachers because most times, they have never had any exposure to other cultures. Participants’ feedback indicated that racial or cultural disparity between minority immigrant teachers, students, and their peers pose a big problem to the success of the immigrant teachers.

A participant narrated in tears how students called her a name from an African Slavery movie. The participant stated:

The first day I walked into class, the children had a problem with my accent. They will not allow me even to speak because, after the first word I spoke, a child jumped up and started saying *Kunta Kinte* repeatedly. I asked myself, where did this *Kunta Kinte* come from? There was a commotion in the classroom because all started laughing. It was a horrible experience that I was beside myself. I asked myself, is this a school? I’ve been teaching for 21 years since then, and whenever I remember that experience, it still brings tears in my eyes. It is awful.
This problem of racial differences resonates with the literature that acknowledged that racial diversity in classrooms and schools can have consequences for educators and students (Deckman, 2017). Also, it confirms that lack of cultural connection between teachers and students could result in poor student outcomes even when the teacher has a good knowledge of the content (Murai et al., 2019; Scott & Rodriguez, 2015).

In the literature relating to matching minority teachers with students of the same background, authors indicate that the cultural divide persists despite attempts to increase and sustain the variety of the teaching force (Adair, 2014; Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Magaldi et al., 2018). Also, they suggested that teachers of color do not have much in common with their students and peers because their racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds differ (Adair, 2014; Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Borrego et al., 2016; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cheruvu et al., 2015). These are consistent with Cochran-Smith’s (2006) belief that multicultural teacher education will help to address the problem of dealing with the diversity of cultures in schools.

Within the research, perspectives of participants align with authors in that all indicated they observed many systemic cultural and educational differences between the inner-city schools’ climates and their countries of origin (Creasey et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2017; Kum-Yeboah, & Smith, 2017; Kuriloff et al., 2019; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). One participant stated, “Can you imagine a Jamaican trying to teach U.S. kids with my strong accent, my lack of knowledge of the U.S. culture and teenagers?” Another participant noted, “It was like night and day compared to my two previous schools. It was quite different in terms of lack of respect, lack of regard for education. The “I don’t care” attitude of the students and parents, and students not paying attention to authority figures.” A participant expressed shock at the attitude of students
towards education in the inner-city despite the government’s mandatory initiatives to ensure educational opportunities for all. He stated:

- In my country, students do not have an attitude towards education because our schools are “learn or leave.” We don’t have time for kids who fight, disrespect, talkback, or give lots of problems; there are a hundred kids out there who want their seats in the schools. On the other hand, the difference here is, because we believe in the No Child Left Behind. Even a child cusses you out, he’s still got to sit there, and you must teach. He doesn’t have to do homework and calling the parent is just another formality. It is totally different.

The cultural mismatch between teachers and students results in teachers misunderstanding their students’ behaviors, which, in effect, undermine teacher efficiency and students’ academic achievement (Choi, 2018; Kohli, 2018; Scott, S. & Rodriguez, 2015). The cultural mismatch between minority immigrant teachers and their U.S. students could be disastrous because the teachers are inexperienced in U.S. pedagogy, have problems with language, accents, and lack cultural cues (Kohli, 2018; Shady, 2014; Zhou & Li, 2015). The research results indicate that the participants who are foreign-born teachers had to make changes in their teaching styles to accommodate the students’ learning styles. A participant stated,

- It was very difficult because I brought the Jamaican concept where I figured when a teacher spoke, students listened. But that was totally different. I had to change my whole approach to teaching, and that somehow made me question my abilities.

Another participant explained that she had to make changes to how she talked because students and administrators saw her high-pitched tone as confrontational. The participant stated:
During one of my formal observations, I remember my principal asking me to bring my voice down. She explained that my voice level was kind of pitchy and high. And, when it is pitchy and high, it seems confrontational. However, where I’m from, our culture, well, I don’t know if I should say it is cultural; we have high pitched voices. Even when we speak on the phone, the tempo is kind of high. That explained why some students confront me without reason when I talk to them. So, I had to try so hard to learn to bring my pitch down when speaking.

Another element discussed in the literature was matching minority teachers with students of the same background. Authors indicated that when teachers and students share the same race or ethnicity, students perform better (Bristol, 2018; Egalite et al., 2015). Participants’ feedback indicates that culture differences rather than race were a more significant issue in the inner-city schools as most of the participants identify as the same race with the students but still experienced discrimination. The feedback from participants resonates with authors who said that minority teachers working in inner-city schools often report frustrations with classroom management than other teachers with the same cultural background as students (Deckman, 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015). The world language teachers among the participants who teach students who spoke the same language reported that they do not experience classroom management issues or behavior problems in their classes. According to one of the participants:

Since I was transferred to my new school, I have no problem with classroom management or any disrespect relating to my accent, because most of my students are immigrants who speak English as a second language or second-generation immigrants who have parents who speak with foreign accents.
Another participant also reiterated that matching teachers with students of the same ethnicity helps both the teacher and the students as they understand each other’s culture and hold themselves to the same expectations of respect. She stated:

I am in another school now where the discipline is better, most of the students are from my culture. They are Latin American students to put it in that way. And when they understand that I know their culture, they behave better and communicate well with me. The students react to me differently because they are immigrants. They appreciate why you try to do certain things with them, and you had more parent involvement.

Based on the responses of the participants, minority immigrant teachers encountered indifferent interactions with professional colleagues and students, lack of support from administrators, poor parental support and communication because of the mismatch of cultural norms (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Cheruvu et al., 2015; Philip et al., 2017). A participant stated:

It is difficult to relate with most people who are born here because they look at you like, what is she doing in this place? But, you can relate with other immigrant colleagues no matter where they came from because they are more welcoming.

Another participant narrated her experience with an administrator:

We were on a bus with students on a trip to New York, and I overheard a conversation between two administrators who probably forgot I was on the bus. These foreigners get on my nerves. They come here and take over, and they think they know it all. I’m going to fix them in my school. It was not a direct speech to me. But by the time we got to the location and everybody came out of the bus, they saw me. You could just see their reaction. “Oh, Ms. U, you’ve been on the bus this whole time,” I said yes, I have been on the bus and I heard everything that was said. I made sure I told her about that. So, my
point is, they could talk to you nicely, but behind closed doors, they really are not happy that you are here. Their impression is you are taking the job from somebody else that is entitled to it. So that was a big shock to me.”

Another participant narrated how she is ignored and berated by her colleague who shares the same room with her even after her attempts to have a cordial working relationship with him. She stated:

When I enter the room I shared with another teacher; he doesn’t say hello to me nor responds to my greetings; instead, he treats me like a nobody. And I feel like, okay, why is he like that with me because I see him laugh and joke with other coworkers and have fun with the students. I am his coworker; we are supposed to be workmates sharing the same room. He should at the least say hello, how are you? Or in the least be polite. We are educated people. Say, good morning and hello to someone. It will not make you better or worse. It makes you a human being.

The experiences of the participants are consistent with reviewed literature that classified this behavior pattern as invisibility, marginalization, or hypervisibility (Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Thai et al., 2017). The authors stated that invisibility includes not being noticed or recognized by colleagues and devaluing the skills and scholarship of individuals based on race. The participants believed the actions give them the feeling of being unnoticed or unheard, or overlooked.

In responding to their interactions with the students, a participant stated that the lack of exposure to other cultures was the major issue the students have with minority immigrant teachers. The participant stated: “our kids are not culturally exposed, and that is a big issue. if you’re not culturally exposed, it is hard for you to sit with somebody from another culture or be taught by someone from another culture.” These are consistent with Collier, and Thomas’s
beliefs that variety of cultural differences existed in how people conduct themselves when interacting with others who are culturally different and that cultural background affects attitudes, beliefs, and values about how students and teachers interact, run classes, and ideas about education (Collier, 2009).

Microaggression is an indirect and unpleasant form of racism where racists hide their intentions through the avoidance of interaction (Choi, 2018). According to the Chapter 2 authors, many minority teachers are often racially isolated or treated with hostility, resentment, and suspicion by other staff in the majority (Choi, 2018; Fisher-Ari et al., 2016; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016; Palmer & Maramba, 2015; Thai et al., 2017). Most of the participants believed that they had suffered some form of microaggression either in the form of micro insults or microinvalidations from students and peers. The practice involves rating individuals as second-class or treating cultural values or communication styles as abnormal. A participant stated:

I was in the middle of teaching a lesson when a student raised his hand to ask what my husband does for a living. When I asked him to ask relevant questions, another student replied, “her husband must be a cab driver; that’s what Haitian men do.” Other participants expressed that colleagues have told them, “you speak fluent English,” or made comments like “you people are always smart,” “Can you braid my hair,” and “do you live on trees.”

Based on the feedback from the participants, minority immigrant teachers experience racial microaggression in the workplace. This finding is consistent with Bell’s belief as it relates to ways race and racism indirectly and overtly impact social structures and practices even in educational institutions.
According to authors in Chapter 2, inner-city school environments are complex with several challenges for teachers, like dealing with cultural differences and violence (Creasey et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2017; Jain et al., 2015; Kumi-Yeboah, & Smith, 2017; Kuriloff et al., 2019; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). The authors mentioned that other challenges include the effects of poverty, insufficient and disproportionate allocation of resources create an environment that is detrimental to the academic success of students in the inner-city school (Blaisdell, 2016; Kraft et al., 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2017). In the current study, minority immigrant teachers expressed the challenges they face in the inner-city schools’ climate and how they strive to overcome. One participant stated, “The inner-city schools are highly challenging in the sense that a very high percentage of the students are from backgrounds that make it a little difficult for them to fix the causes of their educational challenges.” Another participant explained that “We have students who probably have one parent who is not quite actively involved in their lives.” Participants also indicated that some students engage in illicit businesses to sustain themselves and their families due to level of poverty in the inner-city. A participant stated: “My students believe they make more money on street corners than any other job could offer, and do not take their studies seriously.” Based on feedback from participants, the inner-city schools’ climates in the study sites compare to the literature findings that staff in large cities perceived the school climate to be less favorable to student academic achievement.

Regarding teacher preparation, the authors of the reviewed literature observed that good teacher preparation programs should teach teachers relevant multicultural competence and create a multicultural curriculum infused with more culturally relevant pedagogy rather than behavior management courses (Borrero et al., 2016; Brown, 2014; Dubbeld et al., 2019; Magaldi et al., 2018). Multicultural training will help teachers become more sensitive to the experiences of
others who do not belong to the same culture or background as theirs. According to literature, enrollment in teacher preparation programs has significantly declined in recent years (Brown, 2014; Creasey et al., 2016; Haddix, 2017) and teachers receive little or no multicultural training during their studies (Borrero et al., 2016; Brown, 2014; Magaldi et al., 2018). The participants of the study repeatedly mentioned that they were not offered any multicultural teacher training during their college years or during professional development in the schools and district where they currently work.

A participant stated, “A school teaches you a lot of things and make you knowledgeable. but they don’t prepare you for the reality of what is outside.” Although the participants expressed that they have established collaborative and positive relationships with students, colleagues, administrators, and parents throughout their work in the inner-city, they achieved these at their expense emotionally and through trial and error. A participant emphasized that all faculty professional developments offered relate to teaching and learning or content-level staff developments. “Everything I’ve learned is what I’ve read about myself, or through interactions with other people. I learned from experience.”

These observations resonate with the literature conclusions that teachers receive little or no multicultural training.

The authors also discussed the challenges faced by minority teachers as another element in the literature. Minority teachers face many difficulties resulting from racial inequities including racial isolation which limit their professional development opportunities, create barriers in access to promotion, tenure, and retention (Choi, 2018; Colomer, 2018; Creasey et al., 2016; Louis et al., & Watson, 2017). Based on participant feedback, minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools concur with the literature findings and suffered social isolation
from their colleagues. Participants repeatedly mentioned that many of their peers treated them differently as well as looked down on them. A participant expressed this common theme by stating,

*When some colleagues approach you a certain way, you might think that’s the way the person is. But, when he or she goes to somebody else who is from here, they know exactly how to approach the person. So, its different treatment for different people.*

Another participant stated:

*Teachers from other countries are professionals coming from different countries. People in the U.S. tend to believe that we are not well prepared, and that is not true. We are very well prepared in our countries. We may not have the technology that probably the U.S. has, but the knowledge that we have is really good. The point is people in the U.S. need to see and understand that we are human beings. People have and share the same knowledge around the world. Foreign language could be challenging to understand, but knowledge is universal.*

Another participant stated:

*I share a room with a teacher. He allowed me to use the room because the principal asked him. But he only gave me space, but he always has something on the board. He did not allow me to use the board. I stop to say hello to him, and he never says hello to me. He doesn’t say hello or anything to me. When I enter the room, he leaves the room. We never had a conversation as coworkers, like, how are you? How do you do?*

The findings in this study are consistent with the literature noting that though ethnic and racial diversity in schools, including unbiased work environments, teacher-student relations, teacher-peer relations, and multicultural education has received much attention lately. However,
minority immigrant teachers still experience bias and marginalization in most settings (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018; Colomer, 2018). The participants indicated that their experiences were painful and distressing, and the shame and feelings of helplessness were apparent in their accounts of discrimination and marginalization from their colleagues.

Coping is the technique of minimizing stress or conflict by regulating emotions. According to the literature, minority teachers use avoidance coping approaches to address their experiences with racial microaggressions (Choi, 2018; DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby, 2016; Endo, 2015). Coping by avoidance is a passive approach used by individuals to avoid addressing issues of microaggression by pretending they do not experience discrimination (Choi, 2018). In the current study, most participants mentioned that they have adopted different coping strategies in dealing with microaggressions. Some of them have become indifferent to the discriminations, while others see them as of the struggles immigrants have to in a foreign land. One participant stated: “I try not to get offended with anything but relate to each person according to the way they come.” Another participant attributed her coping strategy to her religious beliefs and practice of prayer and perseverance. She states:

I have a goal, which is to ensure that I do the best to educate my students, improve my relationship with people, and to raise my kids positively. So, with that in mind, I pray to God to help me through all the challenges because sometimes it’s not easy. I keep redirecting my thinking. I ask myself if I react this way, is there a consequence, because I will not let somebody set me off to do something that will make me lose everything I have struggled for.

A participant indicated he treated everybody with respect irrespective of race or creed of the person because of his background and expected the same from others. He stated:
Well, I came from a country where we didn’t have any issues between races. In my country, we have a mix of Black and White people. I don’t believe in different races. I believe in one race, “the human race.” So, I see every single human being the way they are supposed to be—a human being. I treat everybody with love and respect, so this is the response that I expect from people, right?

This coping method would be an opportunity for further research to assess the effectiveness of the avoidance approach on the emotions and professional burnout of minority teachers.

**Limitations**

There were certain limitations in conducting this study of the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates. The literature review was limited because previous studies generalized their findings to minority teachers. Also, the experiences of immigrant teachers are diverse and unique in relation to where they teach, who they teach, their countries of origin, the language they speak, and how long they have been in the U.S. The recollections of study participants limited this hermeneutic phenomenological study. Some of the participants have taught in inner-city schools for more than 15 years and are already well-adjusted to the climate and culture of the schools. The unique experiences and perception of the participants were reflections on their lived experiences. Therefore, the elements of time and its impact on memory may impact their responses to interview questions. Some participants may have had difficulty expressing themselves.

The general findings from this study may be limited by the small sample size and experiences of the participants, who work at five different school settings within an inner-city. The age the participants migrated to the U.S. and the ability to speak English as a second language, guided the selection of participants. The study focused only on 13 minority immigrant
teachers who migrated to the U.S. as adults. The study participants emigrated to the U.S. after completing high schools or colleges in their home countries. Minority immigrant teachers who migrated to the U.S. at an early age or attended U.S. K–12 schools are not included in the study. Also, minority immigrant school administrators and teachers working in elementary schools are not part of the study. The school settings for this study were limited to only comprehensive high schools and did not include top magnet schools and charter schools within the inner-city.

Additionally, the study is limited to participants from 10 countries in three continents, increasing the number of participants in future research to include minority immigrants from more countries may add to the scope of the findings. Also, as an immigrant teacher working in an inner-city high school climate, I bracketed my own experiences and reflections on the data to conduct unbiased research. In aligning with the phenomenological design, I relied exclusively on the experiences and observations of the study participants. I used the data collected from them to create the final themes that answered the research questions of the study (Creswell, 2013). By bracketing my thoughts and experiences, I relied on data collected to reveal the collective experiences of the participants without making any assumptions.

**Implications of the Results for Transformation**

The results of this study have several implications. Transformational learning is a concept that alters problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, reflective, open, and able to change (Mezirow, 1991). This hermeneutic phenomenological study contributes to the literature on multicultural teacher education. The findings from this study provide the developers of teacher education curriculum, educational leaders, and educators insights into the experiences and perspectives of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools. Implications from this study suggest a need to change ways minority immigrant teachers employed in inner-city schools
are treated and mentored to better adjust to the culture of their new climate. This study can contribute to the transformation of the training and professional development provided to educational professionals in inner-city schools on cultural diversity, sensitivity to the needs of others, and tolerance. School administrators can collaborate with teacher education programs in providing minority immigrant teachers adequate professional support; by providing qualified mentors and professional training. These provisions will help them transition into teaching in the U.S. and allow a positive learning process about the inner-city climate and culture.

This study can contribute to the transformation of parents, students, and teachers’ perceptions and treatment of minority immigrant teachers. By sharing the insight of the plights, strengths, and contributions of minority immigrant teachers, all stakeholders will judge them by their teaching competence and qualities, rather than the way they look or sound. School administrators can organize school-wide workshops to bring better interactions between parents and minority immigrant teachers. The minority immigrant teachers’ international experiences and multilingual abilities, which bring a different perspective, could be highlighted as positive contributions that could enrich the lives of students and the school community. These teachers can also talk to parents during teacher-parent conferences or Meet and Greet Nights at school about their life and work as teachers with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge.

Mezirow (1991) stated that transformation occurs when people facing “disorienting dilemma.” or experiences that are alien to their existing beliefs about the world are forced to reconsider their beliefs in a way that fits their new experience into their worldview. This study can contribute to the transformation of minority immigrant teachers’ perceptions of inner-city schools where they work and the ways they interact with students and other members of the
school community. Based on the feedback of the participants of the study, there are opportunities to transform practice, policy, and theory as it relates to addressing the challenges of minority immigrant teachers identified in this research. First, provide diversity training for inner-city teachers to learn about individuals from other cultures. Second, provide new immigrant teachers with mentors who can serve as a guide and a resource for them. Third, provide leadership development programs for school administrators for a better understanding of the diverse teacher population they oversee so that they can better support them all. These recommendations have the potential to contribute positively to transforming the inner-school learning environment.

**Implications on Policy**

Since this study was qualitative and conducted with a small sample size, its findings cannot be transferable to the entire population of minority immigrant teachers. However, the findings may be useful in guiding policymakers in education at the district or state level to put in place internal policies that will ensure that cultural diversity is supported in all schools. By recognizing that inner-city schools have teachers from different cultural backgrounds, it is pertinent that they incorporate an all-encompassing policy to cater to the needs of students and teachers adequately. Policies about new teacher recruitment, orientation, professional developments, and mentoring could be included to benefit the minority immigrant teachers and other teachers in the majority. Policies could be established to make it possible for the recruitment of teachers of diverse cultural backgrounds into teacher education programs.

Policies on professional developments to be made available to educators could be changed to incorporate multicultural education rather than training that is purely academic, or content related. The policy could help to appoint mentors with compassion, multicultural experiences, and genuine interest to understand and work with people of other cultures to guide
newly hired immigrant teachers. Additionally, professional developments should be made available to newly hired immigrant teachers to help them understand the culture of the inner-city schools and how to communicate with students and parents at the U.S. schools effectively. This training will help the new teachers to develop relationships with their students and gain parents’ trust.

**Implications on Practice**

The results of this study have several implications on the practice of educators working in inner-city schools. The findings from this study may provide teachers and administration with an insight into the challenges, strengths, and contributions of minority immigrant teachers to the inner-city schools. Based on the feedback from study participants, some of the challenges faced by immigrant minority teachers in the inner-city schools are social isolation and lack of empathy from other teachers. An implication for practice is introducing professional and social networking among teachers to improve the relationship between peers. The provision of professional and emotional support groups will help minority immigrant teachers to integrate fully as members of the educational community and not to be isolated from other teachers in the majority. Providing instructional support such as instructional coaches and specialists as mentors to new immigrant teachers will help to alleviate the challenges of adjusting to U.S. teaching styles. This practice could shift the paradigm in teacher induction programs and provide a humane space that will acknowledge and highlight the strengths and struggles of minority immigrant teachers to help them adjust to the new culture and prevent the high attrition rate from inner-city schools. The results showed that minority immigrant teachers gravitate towards other immigrant teachers. The implication of this study on teachers’ practice is collaborative planning with other classroom teachers.
Another implication on practice is that experienced minority immigrant teachers may potentially be supportive mentors to newly employed immigrants. Minority immigrant teachers can also be assigned to offer professional development to share their knowledge of cultural diversity with other teachers. Participants discussed the strengths and contributions they brought to inner-city schools. The implication for practice is that if the school administrators acknowledge the value of these teachers add to the school community, they will be more open toward hiring more minority immigrant teachers because of their multicultural experience, work ethics, and diligence. By identifying and lauding the contributions made by minority immigrant teachers to the inner-city schools, they will feel accepted, and the perception of students, peers, and parents will positively change towards them and, as a result, foster a better relationship between them.

**Implications on Theory**

Regarding theory, the results of this study have several important implications relating to racism, racial identity, and multicultural teacher education. The literature indicates that racism is still alive and deeply ingrained in everyday life in all institutions, including education (Bell, 1995). Participants in the study stated that they were marginalized, excluded, belittled, scorned, and looked down on as incompetent. They also repeatedly mentioned elements of discrimination against them. According to Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally relevant pedagogy theory, which is closely related to Bell’s (1995) critical race theory, teachers need to be nonjudgmental and inclusive of individuals from all cultural backgrounds. Based on the feedback of the participants, there are no culturally relevant development programs, and immigrant minority teachers are left to figure out coping strategies themselves. Also, other teachers and staff in the majority do not realize the effect of their actions on minority immigrant teachers.
The implication on theory is that culturally relevant pedagogy can be taught utilizing dialogue to show ways race and racism shape outcomes for many minority immigrant teachers. It would also educate the general school population to know how to relate and interact with people from other cultural backgrounds. Collier’s and Thomas’s (1988) cultural identity theory acknowledged the existence of cultural differences and offered ideas of how people can conduct themselves among people of other cultures. The implication of this study to theory is that school communities around the U.S. should adopt policies relating to these theories that should create awareness of the diverse cultural identities of both students and educators. Ladson-Billings (2014) recommended three significant domains of teachers’ work, including academic success, cultural relevance, and sociopolitical consciousness. There are opportunities to transform practice, policy, and theory as it relates to multicultural teacher education as identified in the study by using the culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy. These practices will help minority immigrant teachers to develop skills that will help them work effectively with parents, students, colleagues, and administrators by using the culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy proffered by Ladson-Billings.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The data collected in this study can serve as a groundwork for further research studies. This study was limited to 13 minority immigrant teachers; the scope of future research can be extended to include a larger sample size from a different school setting. Future research can be conducted using a larger number of participants in multiple locations in different geographic zones to get a larger sample size and more multifaceted dataset. In the current study, I focused on the perspective of the participants relating to the challenges of the inner-city school climates. A comparative study of minority immigrant teachers in rural or suburban school districts would be
beneficial to know if their perception differs according to the socioeconomic status of the school setting. Further research to explore the qualities and achievements of minority immigrant teachers in inner-city would add value to the body of literature.

It is essential to diversify further research beyond inquiries on minority immigrant teachers’ perceptions of the inner-city. So, studying alternative social concepts such as religion, gender, and social class could offer new insights and deepen understanding as they affect a given group of people in the racialized educational institutions. Also, considering another research design different from the phenomenological qualitative approach used in this study could offer new insights to participants’ perspectives. Utilizing a different qualitative approach like a case study will help to focus on the lived experience of an individual immigrant teacher or a group of minority immigrant teachers to give a comprehensive description and analysis of their peculiar circumstances. A comparative study utilizing a quantitative approach could be used to examine the performances of students taught by minority immigrant teachers and those taught by native teachers with similar educational backgrounds and experiences to determine if there are differences in the academic achievements of the students.

Conclusion

In this phenomenological study, I explored the perception of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city schools’ climates. I created research tools to collect data: a questionnaire, interviews, and a focus group. I analyzed data using Moustakas’ (2011) approach: (a) identifying common meanings and essences, (b) horizontalization of data, (c) clustering of units of meaning to form themes, (d) textual and structural analysis, and (e) writing findings. The study results indicated that minority immigrant teachers find the inner-city schools’ climates very challenging because of the systemic, educational, and cultural differences and practices between the U.S. and
their home countries. Participants expressed feeling lost, mocked, isolated, marginalized, and disrespected by students, peers, and parents in inner-city schools.

The challenges of the 13 participants of this study indicate a need to improve minority immigrant teachers’ professional training before or after their employment in inner-city schools. These preservice training will give them an insight to the culture and educational system of the U.S. inner-city schools (Borrero et al., 2016; Whipp & Geronime, 2017), the characteristics and needs of the student population and involve all inner-city stakeholders to support minority immigrant teachers. While previous studies have shown that racial challenges can cause minority teachers to be stressed and emotionally drained leading to early attrition from the teaching profession (Choi, 2018; Magaldi et al., 2018), findings of this study imply that the training minority immigrant teachers is not just a matter for personal interest but is deeply rooted in the structural racial oppression prevalent within school settings, as well as society at large (Aujla-Bhullar, 2018). The unique voices of the 13 teachers and their experiences in the inner-city schools are remarkable and may speak for many minority immigrant teachers whose professional experiences are very troubling to read.
References


https://doi-org.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0013161X15607617


Appendix A: Semistructure Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. Please make yourself comfortable. I thought that we could chat before getting down to serious business. Let me introduce myself . . . (doctoral candidate, area of interest, reasons, what I hope to find out, why it is important).

These questions are designed to answer the primary research question:

What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?

1. Please Tell me About Yourself: Interviewee Background
   a. What level of education did you attain in level in your home country?
   b. What was your profession in your home country?
   c. If you were in the teaching profession in your native country, what was teaching experiences like?

2. Teaching Experiences in the United States
   a. What are your teaching experiences in the U.S. school?
   b. What was your first-year teaching in the U.S. like?
   c. What kinds of responsibilities did you have?
   d. How would you describe your relationship with other teachers?
   e. How would you describe your relationship with the students?
   f. How would you describe your relationship with administrators?
   g. As a minority immigrant teacher, what challenges do you experience at your school?
   h. As a minority immigrant teacher, how do you overcome these challenges?”?
i. Are there any programs such as in-service teacher education at graduate school that has helped you deal with the challenges?

j. Do the District offer any professional development that were helpful to you in dealing with the challenges?

3. Strengths and Contributions to U.S. schools

a. Tell me about your positive teaching experiences.

b. Tell me about the moments when you felt competent at school.

c. Tell me about the moments when you felt valued and appreciated at school.

d. Tell me about your strengths as you find yourself in meeting those challenges.

e. What strengths do you have as a teacher?

f. Tell me about the moments that your teaching affected your students positively.

g. Tell me about the moments that your work at school affected other teachers, parents, and school administrators positively.

h. What else would you like to tell me about your teaching experiences in the U.S?
Appendix B: Qualtrics Questionnaire

A Phenomenological Study: How Minority Immigrant Teachers Perceive Inner-City School Climates.

Q1 What is your gender?
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

Q2 What is your ethnicity?
- Black/African
- Asian
- Native American
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Caucasian/White
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other (7)
- Prefer not to answer

Q3 How long have you lived in the U.S?
- 1–3 years
- 4–6 years
- 7–10 years
- 10–15 years
- More than 15 years

Q4 At what age did you migrate to the U.S?
- 10–15 years
- 16–20 years
- 21–25 years
- 26–35 years
- Above 35 years

Q5 What factors helped your transition to the new country?
- Academics
- Community
- Family
- Peers
- Religious Activities
- Sports
Q6 How many years in total have you been teaching?
- 1–3 years
- 4–6 years
- 7–10 years
- 11–5 years
- More than 15 years

Q7 How long have you been teaching at this study site?
- 1–3 years
- 4–6 years
- 7–10 years
- 11–15 years
- More than 15 years

Q8 How many years in total have you taught in the District?
- 1–5 years
- 6–0 years
- 11–15 years
- More than 15 years

Q9 How old are you?
- 25–30 years
- 30–35 years
- 36–40 years
- 41–50 years
- Above 50 years

Q10 What language/s other than English do you speak?
- Spanish
- French
- Italian
- Arabic
- Other Native Language
Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

Before we begin, I would like to thank each of you again for agreeing to participate in this research study. As an icebreaker, I would like to start with each person providing a brief introduction. I will begin. My name is Comfort Ndukwe. I am a doctoral student at Concordia University conducting research on the effect of school climate on minority teachers working in inner-city Schools.

As the primary investigator, I can guarantee privacy/confidentiality (as outlined in the consent form) and while I ask all participants to keep information shared private or confidential, privacy cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of group sharing. Therefore, if any participant wants to share a personal experience that they do not want to link themselves or others to, they should speak about it in general or non-specific terms. I will provide my personal email so that any participants can email me any personal anecdotes, if desired.

These questions are designed to answer the primary research question:

What are the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates?

1. Describe the school climate of the school you teach.

2. Are there significant differences in the education system between your home country and the schools in the U.S?

3. Describe your experience as a minority immigrant teacher in an inner-city school

4. What are the school-based factors that challenge minority immigrant teachers in the inner-city school?

5. How well did your teacher education prepare you for teaching in the school climate you described?
6. What types of problems, do teachers encounter with students in the school?

7. What types of problems, do teachers encounter with peers in the school?

8. What types of problems, do teachers encounter with administrators in the school?

9. What types of problems, do teachers encounter with parents in the school?

10. How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial identity problems in a diverse school setting?

11. How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial microaggressions (derogatory communication)?
Appendix D: Professional Network Recruitment Message

Hello______,

Selection to Participate in a Research Study

You are invited to participate in research study for a doctoral dissertation. The purpose of this study is to gather valuable feedback from minority immigrant teachers on how they perceive inner-city school climates. Your response to this study will allow you to reflect on your experiences and how to improve professional performance and interaction with students, colleagues, administrators, and others.

If you agree to participate in this research project you will be asked to complete a short online questionnaire (required by Concordia University), participate in either a one to one interview or a focus group with five to eight other immigrant teachers (approximately one hour), and provide honest, thoughtful responses to questions such as

a. What is your perception of the inner-city schools’ school climates?

b. What are challenges do minority immigrant teachers face in inner-city school climates?

c. What are the factors that help immigrant minority teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?

d. What are your successes as an immigrant teacher working in an inner-city school?

I thank you in advance for your participation.

Comfort Ndukwe
Appendix E: Participant Recruitment Letter

(To be sent from my personal e-mail to e-mail addresses of high school teachers who are members of [Redacted] Professional Network.)

Dear Teacher,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study titled - A phenomenological study: How minority immigrant teachers perceive inner-city school climates. I am a doctoral candidate from Concordia University, Portland, Oregon. I am looking for immigrant teachers who are interested in volunteering for either a session of interview or a focus group meeting to share their lived experiences as minority immigrant teachers working in inner-city schools. One session would involve a one-on-one interview with me lasting about 90 minutes at a time outside the contractual hours. The other session would be a focus group meeting with about five other teachers to be held at a time outside of regular contract hours. Some questions to be asked will relate to the participants’ own personal history or are related to information and personal experiences which may be unique to them. All the procedures and expectations are outlined in detail in the attached Research Participant Consent Form. Your participation is voluntary and completely confidential, and you can participate in either one or two of the sessions. No personally identifying information will be included in the results.

My study will describe teachers’ experiences with the challenges associated with their work in an inner-city school and identify the factors that help them to overcome the difficulties. It will also highlight the qualities and strengths the teachers bring to the U.S. schools including their positive teaching experiences and their contributions. The Institutional Review Board at Concordia University, Portland will approve the study.
There are several reasons you may want to volunteer to participate in this study. As a participant in this study, you will personally share your experiences and learn more about the effect of school climate on minority teachers. Additionally, participating in this study as a minority teacher will allow you to reflect on your experiences and how to improve professional performance and relationship with students, colleagues, administrators, and others.

If you are interested in participating, please read and sign the attached Research Participant Consent Form. If you have any questions regarding your potential participation or the study, please contact me at [phone redacted]. Please communicate your interest in participating in this study, either as a reply to this e-mail or by calling me at [phone redacted].

Thank you for your consideration,

Comfort Ndukwe

Doctoral Candidate, Concordia University–Portland
Appendix F: Research Participant Informed Consent

Concordia University—Portland Institutional Review Board
Approved: April 30, 2019; will Expire: April 23, 2020

Research Study Title: A Phenomenological Study: How Minority Immigrant Teachers Perceive Inner-city School Climates.

Principal Investigator: Comfort Ndukwe

Research Institution: Concordia University, Portland, Oregon

Faculty Advisor: Christopher Maddox. Ph.D.

Purpose and what you will be doing:
The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study is to explore the perceptions of minority immigrant teachers about inner-city school climates. We expect approximately 13 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on May 12, 2019 and end enrollment on June 14, 2019. To be in the study, you will have to be an immigrant currently working as a teacher in a comprehensive public high school.

If you agree to participate in this research project you will be asked to complete a short online questionnaire (required by Concordia University), participate in either a one to one interview or a focus group with five to eight other immigrant teachers (approximately one hour), provide thoughtful responses to questions such as:

a. What is your perception of the inner-city schools’ school climates?
b. What challenges do minority immigrant teachers face because of school climates?
c. What are the factors that help immigrant minority teachers to succeed in inner-city schools?
d. What are your successes as an immigrant teacher working in an inner-city school?

Finally, you will be asked to review the transcript of your responses to check for accuracy.

Doing these things should take less than two hours of your time.
Risks:
There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information, the discomfort of having your views challenged by others in a focus group, and the stress or discomfort associated with negative opinions. However, we will protect your information. I will record interviews and the focus group. The recording will be transcribed by me, the principal investigator, and the recording will be deleted when the transcription is completed. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption or locked inside the personal file cabinet located in my home office. When we or any of our investigators look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. We will refer to your data with a code that only the principal investigator knows links to you. This way, your identifiable information will not be stored with the data. We will not identify you in any publication or report. The recording will be deleted as soon as possible; all other study documents will kept secure for 3 years and then be destroyed.

Benefits:
Information you provide will help in designing a multi-cultural teacher education curriculum for expanding diversity education. You could also benefit from this by having the satisfaction of helping to provide information on the perception of minority immigrant teacher working in inner-city. Your participating in this study will allow you to reflect on your experiences as a minority immigrant teacher and think on ways to better adapt in a diverse school setting.

Confidentiality:
This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions. You may also contact me at any time if you desire to retract any data.

Contact Information:
You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Comfort Ndukwe at email [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503493-6390).
Your Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

_______________________________                   ___________
Participant Name                                      Date
_______________________________                   ___________
Participant Signature                                 Date
_______________________________                   ___________
Investigator Name                                     Date
_______________________________                   ___________
Investigator Signature                                Date

Investigator: Comfort Ndukwe; email [redacted]
c/o: Professor Christopher Maddox, Ph.D.
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, Oregon 97221
## Appendix G: Interview Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Common Themes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the school climate of the school you teach.</td>
<td>Participants described the inner-city school climate as highly challenging with poor families, lack of parental involvement and support, less value for education, and permissive environment that allows students to get away with a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there significant differences in the education system between your home country and the schools in the U.S?</td>
<td>The participants indicated significant differences in the system of education in their home countries where education is valued even with limited resources and the exorbitant fees paid. Education in their countries were a privilege. However, in the U.S., with the No Child Left Behind law, education is a right, but less valued. Better opportunities with classification of students, Individual educational plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your experience as a minority immigrant teacher in an inner-city school</td>
<td>Positive experience overall, while some have negative experience Participants indicated that they were made fun of because of their accents, and most students become disinterested and disruptive in class. They also experienced Culture shock on the lack of seriousness, disrespect shown to teachers, shifted accountability from students to teachers who bear the brunt of the responsibility, Prejudice, micro aggression. microinsults (“Do you live on a tree?” “Her husband must be a cab driver,” “you don’t look Haitian,” You people are smart).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the school-based factors that challenge minority immigrant teachers in the inner-city school?</td>
<td>The family structure, children raising children, style of teaching, lack of administrative support, lack of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well did your teacher education prepare you for teaching in the school climate you described?</td>
<td>Lack of cultural relevant teacher education programs to prepare them about adaptation and assimilation into the new culture. The professional developments provided by the district and schools were only content based, purely academia with nothing to address acculturation or cultural responsiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of problems, do teachers encounter with students in the school?</td>
<td>Participants identified the problems as disrespect, rejection, lack of motivation, lack of exposure to other culture, lack of trust of people who they don’t know much about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of problems, do teachers encounter with peers in the school?</td>
<td>Participants indicated that were excluded, belittled, scorned, seen as incompetent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>What types of problems, do teachers encounter with administrators in the school?</td>
<td>Some participants described the problems of Lack of support, lack of empathy, using a one-size-fits all approach and not understanding the predicaments of immigrant teachers. Some administrators are biased and intolerant towards immigrant teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of problems, do teachers encounter with parents in the school?</td>
<td>Some participants indicated that they have encountered lack of support, poor communication, parents tend to believe students over the teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial identity problems in a diverse school setting?</td>
<td>Most Participants become apathetic and indifferent to racial profiling and try to rise above it, be flexible, try to adjust and learn about the new culture and the dynamics associated with it. Relating with other teachers with the same background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do minority immigrant teachers cope with racial microaggressions (derogatory communication)?</td>
<td>Participants believed that through professional and social Networking they receive professional and emotional support. Also, through their personal dispositions they can deal with angry parents, disparaging colleagues and the lack of instructional support. Some participants attributed their religion to equipping them with qualities like humility, tenacity, and perseverance to deal with issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths and Contributions to U.S.’ Schools</td>
<td>Most participants attributed their strengths and contributions to their multicultural experiences, international teaching experiences and Professional Traits including professionalism, quest for continuous professional improvement and keeping good relationships with students, peers, and school administrators Others attributed their personal attributes of working above and beyond expectations to make and passion for teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your Positive teaching Experiences?</td>
<td>Participants indicated that their positive experiences include when they are recognized by peers and administrators as competent teachers, when they earn parents’ trust and they acknowledge and appreciate them for the success of their kids. Finally, seeing their students’ growth and progress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does “fraudulent” mean?

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

What is “unauthorized” assistance?

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.
Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.

2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*.

Comfort I. Ndukwe

________________________________________
Name (Typed)

11/14/2019

Date