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Although there is significant empirical literature on Black male teachers, the literature on Black male special education teachers (BMSETs) is limited. Even recent special issues of peer-reviewed journals entirely focused on Black male teachers have not addressed those who teach special education (for examples see Davis et al., 2018; Goings & Lewis, 2020; Woodson & Bristol, 2020). Thus, much as in the nation's schools, this small population of teachers are like unicorns in the literature.

As a Black man who was a special education teacher, I have been curious about the scarcity of Black men in this space. I had my own path that led me to the field, and, after I entered, I was often the only Black man at the schools where I worked and always the only Black man in the special education department. This was surprising to me given that I attended a Historically Black University where I was enrolled in a traditional teacher education program that had several Black men enrolled in the special education program. Therefore, I undertook this literature review because I was aware of how needed BMSETs were given their low representation in special education programs and the high proportion of Black students in these programs. Thus began my journey of exploring the career pathways of BMSETs. My own research builds on the literature, and this paper provides a

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narrative synthesis of what I discovered through my comprehensive analysis. The guiding research questions for this review were: (a) How have BMSETs described their career trajectories? (b) What are the challenges and obstacles faced by BMSETS in their job trajectories?

This narrative synthesis of the literature proceeds as follows: In the next section I lay out the challenges the nation is facing in recruiting special education teachers, regardless of race, and the significant burden these teachers bare, as well as some solutions to alleviate that burden. Then I describe the dire need for teachers of color generally and Black men specifically. Following the introduction, I provide the conceptual framework. I then lay out the methodology for this narrative synthesis of the literature, and the results of the review follow. The discussion synthesizes the findings, and I conclude by discussing the gaps in the literature and the need for more research on the topics addressed.

Challenges in Diversifying the Special Education Teaching Profession

The recruitment of teacher candidates has nearly always been a challenge in special education, bilingual education, math, and science (Orleans & Finkelstein, 1950). The number of individuals entering teacher education programs in universities across the country has declined steadily for several decades (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2016), and this has been exacerbated as the teaching profession has become less enticing as a result of disruptions due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on schools (Goldberg, 2021). Moreover, high turnover rates are prevalent across the nation (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017) and are significantly higher for teachers of color than White teachers (Edwards, 2017). The field of special education has long been an area of critical shortage (Conley & You, 2017; Mason-Williams, 2015; Rock & Billingsley, 2015; Sutcher et al., 2016), and across the United States, roughly 50% of all public schools and 90% of high-poverty schools report difficulty finding special education teachers (Hale, 2015).

Shortages of teachers in special education have been attributed to a variety of factors, including intense workloads (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019), poor collaboration with general education teachers (Miller et al., 1999), a lack of administrative support (Conley & You, 2017; Edgar & Pair, 2005; Vittek, 2015), and teacher burnout (Brunsting et al., 2014; Martin, 2010). Furthermore, special education teachers are twice as likely to leave the field than their general education colleagues (Boe et al., 2008).

Indeed, teaching special education involves meeting a set of challenges often not seen in other teaching areas. Researchers have highlighted that special education teachers often struggle with role ambiguity (Brunsting et al., 2014) because they are typically required to take on significantly more functions than general education teachers (Fore et al., 2002). A typical special education teacher is required to teach/co-teach one or multiple subjects, supervise classroom paraprofessionals, review referrals for special education, and manage a caseload of students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and testing, which involves scheduling and conducting assessments and meetings for the students whose cases they manage. Furthermore, special education teachers also perform additional non-classroom duties that general education teachers do not have to, such as preparing for IEP meetings (Fore et al., 2002).

Fore et al. (2002) identified some ways that schools might address the burdens on special education teachers, such as delegating some of their tasks to others. They argued that such delegation would not negatively affect student outcomes. For example, some schools have front office administrative staff schedule IEP meetings and then provide the special education teacher the date and time to attend instead of requiring them to do the scheduling. Most schools employ a psychologist who does the bulk of the testing along with the special education teacher but schools could hire an additional person in that capacity so that special education teachers have no obligations with respect to academic testing. However, as Fore and colleagues acknowledged, it is imperative that special education teachers lead the development of IEPs and monitor each student's progress toward the goals listed there.

Benefits of Black Teachers

The underrepresentation of Black teachers in the United States is long-standing and persistent (Haney, 1978; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Madkins, 2011). Researchers have highlighted that this not only reflects persistent structural inequality; it exacerbates it. First, researchers have suggested that teachers of color can benefit students of color. For example, using standardized testing data from Tennessee and North Carolina, Gershenson et al. (2018) found that Black students who had Black teachers in grades K–3 were 13% more likely to graduate from high school and 9% more likely to attend college. Students of color more broadly tend to be more likely to succeed academically when they have a teacher who matches their racial and ethnic background (Gershenson et al., 2021; Redding, 2019). Black teachers also tend to use more culturally relevant teaching practices and may relate better to the struggles their students might face (Bates & Glick, 2013; Foster, 1997). Teachers of color provide different cultural experiences for students in their classrooms than White teachers, offering types of support, scaffolding, and affirmation that benefit students of color (Brown, 2014; Egalite et al., 2015; Maylor, 2009).

Though it need not be said that individual White teachers can and should be able to serve Black students fully, researchers have significantly suggested that as a group they may fall short (Cormier, 2021), reflecting pervasive biases in society (Benson & Fiarman, 2020; Starck et al., 2020). Several studies have suggested White teachers have lower expectations for the achievement of Black students than Black teachers do, and that low expectations among the majority of the teaching force may play a part in disproportionate rates of suspension and expulsion of students of color (Skiba et al., 2011; Wright, 2015). Partee (2014) found evidence that teachers of color tended to be more dedicated to the overall success of students of color than White teachers. Teachers of color have been shown to hold more positive perceptions of the academic performance and behavior of students of color than White teachers (Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Wright, 2015), a pattern that holds in studies comparing Black teachers to non-Black teachers as well (Battey et al., 2018; Fish, 2017; Gershenson et al., 2018). Fish (2017) studied referrals for special education services among a diverse sample of teachers using vignettes of fictional case studies about Black students as well as Latino/a students whose English Learner status was manipulated. White teachers were more likely to refer Black students to special education when they displayed behavior challenges, and they were more likely to refer White students when they displayed academic challenges. Fish's study suggests that unconscious bias may affect special

education referrals, and unconscious bias in special education referrals is of particular concern given the demographics of special education.

Although the rights of special education students have received special attention in the law, if Black teachers support particularly positive outcomes for Black students, then BMSETs' rarity is of particular concern for a variety of reasons. First, Black male students are overrepresented in special education programs nationwide (Cooc, 2018; Harry & Klinger, 2014; Miles, 2016; National Center for Education Statistics, 2016; Zhang et al., 2014). Second, special education teachers play a direct role in evaluating students, designing and managing their IEPs, and determining the extent to which they are given access to general education classrooms (Girvan et al., 2017; Skiba et al., 2011). Third, with evidence that race is associated with teachers' expectations (Battey et al., 2018; Fish, 2017, 2019; Gershenson et al., 2018) and that subjective diagnoses (e.g., learning disabilities; see Sleeter, 2018) are particularly likely to lead to Black boys' assignment to special education (Harry & Klinger, 2014; Skiba & Williams, 2014), recruitment of teachers who reflect the cultural background of their students for special education teaching jobs is highly important. Beyond rectifying Black students' disproportionate identification for special education services, the cultural competence of BMSETs could increase the effectiveness of the types of services and supports given to Black students receiving special education services. Black men also represent an untapped population in a nation that has long faced a shortage of special education teachers (Sutcher et al., 2016).

Method

This narrative examination of the literature (Green et al., 2006) explored the discourse on Black male teachers and BMSETs. I examine the difficulties that Black teachers face that may explain some of the disparities and other challenges in diversifying the special education teaching profession specifically. I also examine the challenges and obstacles faced by BMSETS in their job trajectories. Furthermore, based on what I found in the literature, I also delve into some of the reasons that recruitment of BMSETs must improve, including the need for culturally responsive pedagogy that Black teachers may employ, and how the race of teachers play a role in special education referrals of students of color. The limited empirical research on BMSETs and gaps in the literature are also explored.

The method for gathering the literature was as follows: First, I used the following search terms to assemble research from EBSCO, Google Scholar, and ERIC: *teacher education, special education, diversity in special education, Black male special education teachers,* and *Black male teachers*. I then read, annotated, and created a table of my findings. Reflecting in written form on the patterns I found allowed me to identify broad themes prevalent in the literature. I built narratives around the themes I identified. Through this process, I sought to provide a deep, comprehensive account of the literature I identified, rather than an exhaustive account of all the research that may explore the research questions and population of interest. It may be that my search omitted findings of interest or even relevant articles not available in the databases I used; finding data that related to Black men who teach special education sometimes felt like looking for a needle in a haystack. In addition, I excluded dissertations from this research even if they were about BMSETs specifically (e.g., Berrien, 2020; Cormier, 2019; Fenton, 2017; Gary, 2015); I found no books on the subject. Papers that were not empirical but discussed BMSETs from a

theoretical lens were excluded (e.g., Rice & Goessling, 2005; Scott, 2016). Thus, this review includes seven empirical studies that were published in peer-reviewed journals. Papers were only included if participants were preservice special education teachers or K-12 teachers.

Results

Research examining the racial and gender diversity of the workforce in special education and the reasons minoritized special educators enter or leave the field is limited. The research that does exist provides a significant explanation for the lack of Black men in in the field. In my analysis I was able to reveal four major themes across all of the studies: *Alternative and Flexible Pathways, Cultural Brokering, Cultural Bonding,* and *Black Tax*, which I explore in detail below.

Reasons Black Male Special Education Teachers Are Unicorns

Studies that examined the challenges of recruiting particular demographics to the teaching profession have found gender differences as reasons for entering or not entering the field. For example, evidence suggests that men generally perceived career success as contingent upon salary earned, and this has discouraged them from entering the teaching profession (Lewis, 2006; Ponte, 2012). The idea that some men may have that K-12 teaching is a woman's job may also present a barrier for men choosing to enter the teaching profession, particularly special education (Purdy, 2009). There is also evidence that men who go into education are often reluctant to work with special education students (Pulsford, 2016; Purdy, 2009). Studies have suggested that gendered ideas play a role in this reluctance, as men have suggested that only women are sufficiently caring to teach special education students, and that others might question their sexual orientation if they worked in special education (Purdy, 2009).

Varied societal expectations of men as well as men's own limited personal experiences with men as their teachers in their primary schooling has also been discussed by Rice and Goessling (2005), who attributed low rates of entrance into teaching and special education among men, in general, to the lack of male educators in their own schooling. They posited that Black people do not enter the profession because of a lack of models. They suggested that scarcity begets scarcity, as Black teachers do not choose a profession in which they would be a minority. This scarcity can be traced to mass layoffs of Black teachers in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and *Brown II* (1955), as formerly Black-only schools were closed because they failed to attract White students and thus to desegregate (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). This created a challenge with that of low numbers of Black teachers in U.S. public schools that never reversed itself (Hudson & Holmes, 1994).

One of the most common findings in the research on Black male teachers was that their colleagues and superiors, and even their students' parents call on Black male teachers to serve as disciplinarians to Black students and especially boys (Bristol & Goings, 2019; Bristol & Mentor, 2018; Brown, 2012; Griffin & Tackie, 2016; Pabon, 2016), placing an extra burden on already overloaded professionals. Kelly (2007) noted that the only person of a particular race/gender who teaches in a particular school—what she referred to as diversity hires—"must manage performance pressures, boundary heightening, and role entrapment as the only ones of their kind in their department, classrooms, neighborhoods,

and communities" (p. 250). Rice and Goessling (2005) proposed that the best solution would be to hire a large quantity of Black males simultaneously, but there is no evidence that this has taken place.

Most places of employment are highly racialized (Feagin & Sikes, 1994; McCluney & Cortina, 2017; Mong & Roscigno, 2010), and schools are not exempt from this categorization since indeed, they have been called microcosms of society (Starck et al., 2020). Scholars have noted that, in general, Black workers report that they are not taken seriously in settings that are predominately White (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). Similarly, King (2016) found that minoritized teachers often pay a "tax," in that they do extra work because of role expectations without extra pay. Travis et al. (2016) described this phenomenon as an "emotional tax": which they describe as the "heightened experience of being different from peers at work because of your gender and/or race/ethnicity and the associated detrimental effects on health, wellbeing, and the ability to thrive at work" (p. 2). My review of the literature found that BMSETs are sensitive to what has been called the Black tax— burdens accruing to Black people but not White ones—and that this potentially can affect recruitment and retention.

Narratives of Black Men's Career Trajectories in the United States: Major Patterns

My review of the literature revealed four themes. In talking about their career trajectories Black men who teach special education discuss (a) alternative pathways and flexible pathways, (b) cultural brokering, (c) cultural bonding, and (d) Black tax/additional burdens.

Alternative and Flexible Pathways

Discussions surrounding the recruitment of Black male teachers and the challenges to licensure highlight that our supposedly race-neutral standards, including standardized testing and other licensure assessments (e.g., edTPA), may be deterring Black men from joining the profession (Petchauer et al., 2018). Some scholars have argued that alternative routes to certification are the solution to this problem (Lewis, 2006; Scott, 2016). These programs often allow teachers to bypass traditional teacher education program requirements and sometimes even state licensure requirements in order to receive a license or certification in their state.

Some BMSETs quoted in the literature reference alternative certification in describing their own trajectories. For example, using grounded theory, in Scott and Alexander's (2019) study of experiences surrounding recruitment and retention among 18 BMSETs, 11 were enrolled in a teacher education program that allowed them to obtain their special education teaching license at an accelerated pace. They acknowledged the program had been enticing. For example, Ian, a 36-year-old preservice teacher, said:

My program offered me the ability to get my license in special education and finish my [special education teaching] degree within 12 months. This was major for me, because I knew it was a high-quality program that offered tuition support and it allowed me to not spend 3 years earning a graduate degree. This is what I needed. (p. 7)

In another study, Scott (2019) interviewed 15 BMSETs who had all used alternative routes to licensure. Participants mentioned several reasons for choosing an alternative route to licensure, including cost savings and being able to work around personal responsibilities.

For example, Scott (2019) quoted a participant who enthused, "I could still go to work as a special education teacher, get paid, come home from work and spend time with my family, and then do my coursework on my own time.… I can't imagine a better setup" (p. 344). Participants saw online teaching licensure programs as convenient, inexpensive, and compatible with their personal responsibilities.

Cultural Brokering

Studies of Black men who are teachers have shown that they go into teaching to make a difference, particularly for Black students (Bristol, 2014; Brown, 2012; Lewis, 2006). Indeed, researchers have shown that Black teachers increase the academic performance of these students (Dee 2004, 2005; Egalite et al., 2015). Yet research has also identified a downside of being considered a "savior" for students by White school administrators, teacher colleagues, and parents. Brown (2019), in a study of 29 Black teachers (24 Black women, five Black men) and their experiences with racial microaggressions, found that Black teachers felt expected to maintain the academic success of Black students, a special burden also identified by Griffin and Tackie (2016) in their study of 150 Black teachers in six states and the District of Columbia. Additionally, Griffin and Tackie (2016) noted that Black teachers often feel that administrators and colleagues expect them to teach only Black students and that Black teachers see this as an insult to their abilities as instructors. Bristol and Mentor (2018) and Pabon (2016) reported similar findings. Though Black men who are teachers may often have heightened positive relationships with Black students, the expectation for them to be role models is problematic given that it sets up these teachers to only be seen as such rather than competent educators.

Cultural relations with students was the overarching theme of Cormier's (2020) study with preservice BMSETs. The desire to be an agent of change for Black students receiving special education services was one of two studies that I reviewed where BMSETs discussed their desire to support Black students. Cormier (2020) found that BMSETs enter special education to: (a) impact Black families; (b) mitigate the harm of special education, particularly for Black boys who are overrepresented in special education programs; and (c) increase, by their own presence, Black male representation among professionals in schools. Similarly, BMSETs who had left the field cited the same reasons in describing to Scott (2020) why they had stayed in the field. Scott quotes a participant he called Melvin as follows:

it wasn't easy for me being a Black man and wanting more for my Black kids [meaning his students] and feeling like I don't know how to really, I mean really, help them . . .. [I]t was hard emotionally for me just personally. (p. 9)

Cultural brokering, then, is both a motivator and a burden for BMSETs.

Cultural Bonding

Cultural bonding refers to connections among people who share a culture, for example, Black people generally or Black men specifically. Harris-Lacewell (2010) called this engagement among Black people an opportunity to "all be ourselves . . . within a cocoon of racial safety" (p. xii)—safe, that is, from White people and the woes of institutional racism that is rampant in the United States. In U.S. school systems, where teaching faculty are overwhelmingly homogenously White, Black male teachers seek out such bonding with

each other, and multiple studies described this dynamic. For example, Bristol (2018) highlighted the importance of having more than one Black male teacher at a school as a safety net; in his study, this increased the odds that the Black men would stay at the school.

Bristol et al. (2020) interviewed 20 Black male preservice teachers about an affinity group their educational program had developed. The authors described this affinity group as: "[a] space [that] helped cultivate both a shared understanding of the experiences that are common among male teachers of color and an emerging sense of empowerment in addressing participants' school-based challenges" (p. 491). One of the participants in the study was a preservice BMSET whom the researchers called Jerrett. He commented:

I left the sessions that I attended [with the affinity group] feeling very empowered. And like other men there, I empathize with the situations that they were in as they were similar, so it felt good to hear from them. (p. 491)

Likewise, Cormier's (in press) study found that "[BMSETs] described a bond with their Black colleagues that was genuine, authentic, and important" (p. 23). The five BMSETs that Cormier interviewed described meeting regularly with their Black colleagues outside of work and supporting each other's activities outside of work. For example, a participant, Tariq said:

Even outside of work. I'm, I'm a minister. Also, and some of my [Black] colleagues have come, they hear me [preach]. They came when I was first licensed to preach and they've been there [ever since] . . .. So it's definitely a different relationship [than he has with his White colleagues]. (p. 16)

These shared bonding experiences in both the Bristol et al. (2020) and Cormier (in press) studies show the power and importance of shared bonding and mentoring among BMSETs. Although Rice and Goessling's (2005) proposal that schools hire a large quantity of Black male teachers simultaneously may seem unlikely, these findings suggest how productive it would be in terms of retention and alleviation of unjust burdens on Black male teachers.

Black Tax: Additional Burdens

In line with significant research showing that Black male teachers bare a burden based on the expectation that they serve as disciplinarians, BMSETs across the studies I reviewed referenced this. For example, Scott (2020) described a BMSET he called Kevin, who discussed how students for whom he had no formal responsibility often appeared in his class because his general education colleagues sent them:

They would bring me all the little Black boys that were mouthing off or who were sleeping in their classes, or who weren't listening. Instead of trying to understand and build a relationship, they [colleagues] would rather kick them out their class and send them to me . . .. [T]he only Black special education teacher in the building. I was tired of being the dump. I felt like I was the only one who had the patience to help these boys. But at the same time, a person gets fed up and tired of being the dump. That's not what special education is for. That's not what I'm for. (p. 10)

In a study examining the life histories of two preservice general education teachers and one in-service BMSET, Woodson and Pabon (2016) described what they called *heteropatriarchal assumptions* that Black male teacher face in schools. They described the BMSET in their study as a soft-spoken man they called Jamel who discussed how he

believed there were racialized and gendered expectations from his colleagues regarding his behavior with students. Woodson and Pabon (2016) mentioned that these expectations were rooted in heteropatriarchal assumptions about men generally and Black men specifically. Even his students seemed to have that expectation, according to Jamel's account:

One of my Black male students was talking to me about the behavior of the students in the class. He said, "The reason why we act like that with you, Mr. Franklin, is because you are soft." I never felt like it was my place to try to discipline or even be like really hardcore with the students. That's not what I'm here for. (p. 65)

Jamel resisted the pressure, but it was present.

Cormier et al.'s (in press) qualitative study of 10 BMSETs' racialized socialization also described special burdens, but these went beyond discipline. A participant they called Jackson said:

You know, I teach in special education, but [another department in his school] had some issues with their cheerleaders and it was a Black and White issue so they called me and asked me to meet with all the cheerleaders. (p. 21)

Jackson objected to being treated as the person responsible for addressing racial issues in the school, pointing out that these topics had nothing to do with his expertise as a special education teacher. Cormier et al. (in press) coined the term *glass classroom effect* to describe the impact of such expectations; Black male teachers generally and BMSETs particularly are often only viewed in the performative roles they can do on campus, including discipline and cultural brokering of Black students. They argued that such stereotypes about masculinity and Blackness limit the career trajectories of both BMSETs and Black male teachers.

I also found that many BMSETs across the literature reported an expectation to perform in certain stereotypical "Black" masculine roles (e.g., disciplinarian; c.f., Woodson & Pabon, 2016). Thus, these teachers were often in situations where they were expected to "perform" (Cormier, in press) rather than to be competent educators. For example, Bristol and Mentor (2018) had a participant named Baldwin who, appeared to reject hetero-normative . . . assumptions about the role of Black male teachers. As he stated, "[Based on] my personal life, just because someone else is male does not mean that I am going to have some magical connection with them." Instead, Baldwin credited his ability to get to know this student as follows, "I don't think he was just gonna respond to me better than others because I'm me, or because I'm a male or because I'm Black. I think because I sort of invested time . . . we've built a relationship." Here, Baldwin redefined the requisites needed to manage challenging students beyond race and gender to focus instead on the importance of building relationships with students. (p. 19)

Discussion

Certainly, the collective weight of the burdens that BMSETs face, as documented by the research, suggests the need to specifically recruit a more diverse teaching force to serve the nation's students and improve the lot of Black males currently in the profession. The findings in this literature review surrounding the isolation that Black male special education teachers experience are similar to those found by Lewis (2006) who, as a result

of his study, suggested that school districts have Black male teachers to play a role in recruiting more Black men into the field, particularly at job fairs.

BMSETs across multiple studies reported that their colleagues and administrators expect them to take on additional tasks, believing that they were best suited for roles of cultural brokering with students as a result of their identity (Cormier, in press; Scott, 2020; Woodson & Pabon, 2016). Also, because of the isolation of being one or one of few BMSETs on their campuses, they found ways to bond with each other (Bristol et al., 2020; Cormier, 2020). As other scholars have pointed out, facing stereotypes and microaggressions in the school environment can make it difficult for Black male teachers to interact with parents and others (Brown, 2019).

Gaps in the Literature

The racialization of BMSETs affects their identity and experiences in ways the literature in both special and general education has not yet explored. There is a reason for concern that this problem will persist: Racially minoritized scholars conduct a large proportion of scholarly research on topics of racial inequities across fields in the social sciences (Fenelon, 2003). Thus, the lack of diversity among doctoral students enrolling in doctoral programs in special education (Dieker et al., 2014; Wasburn-Moses, 2008) may contribute to the limited research on racial/ethnic diversity among special education teachers. The Whiteness of the field is also likely to perpetuate this pattern, as racially minoritized faculty may be more likely to recruit, retain, and train racially minoritized graduate students (Rogers & Molina, 2006). Thus, the lack of representation among doctoral students and faculty in special education likely predicts limitations in future scholarship addressing issues of racial equity and diversity in special education (McCray & García, 2002).

Future research should examine the impact of several levels of racism and racialization that affect BMSETs, yielding insights such that they might no longer be unicorns. First, the students that Black male teachers work with and the dynamics between Black male special education teachers and their students are racialized, due to the racialization of teachers and students alike. Second, although interest in the recruitment and retention of Black male teachers across the country remains a continued process, the impact of race on the needs of those teachers once they enter the classroom remains underexplored. With Black teachers being two to three times more likely to work in schools with high poverty and high minority populations, as well as being more likely to leave the field than White teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011), there is a strong need to uncover what supports aid them in sustaining successful careers.

Limited studies have addressed the needs of BMSETs specifically, although some research has examined the experiences of male special education teachers (Purdy, 2009; Van Setten, 2016). Research on the specific recruitment of BMSETs and their experiences with recruitment has been limited (for exceptions see Scott, 2019; Scott & Alexander, 2019). This literature review suggests that BMSETs face distinct expectations and barriers to success, and this should pave the way for additional research on the experiences of BMSETs and how they are likely to differ from teachers who are women, are White, and/or teach general education. Research to inspire strategies to fully diversify the special

education teaching profession would be an enormous service to the nation and its future and make these unicorns that are now rare common.

Author Biography

Dr. Christopher J. Cormier *is a post-doctoral fellow at Stanford University in the Graduate School of Education. He is a former special education teacher in the Greater Los Angeles Metropolitan area. He has taught all grades from first through 12th exclusively in Title 1 schools. His research program is the social and cultural contexts of minoritized learners and teachers in special education. Under this overarching theme he examines two lines of scholarship. The first is surrounding the professional and socio-emotional lives of minoritized teachers. The second is around culturally informed identification of minoritized students in special education. Dr. Cormier brings a comparative lens across national and international contexts to both of his research lines. He is the current President Elect for the Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL) of the Council for Exceptional Children and serves as chair for the Research and Professional Issues Committee.*

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