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The Perceptions and Lived Experiences of African American Male Presidents in California Community Colleges

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THE PERCEPTIONS AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
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THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Dissertation Abstract
The Perceptions and Lived Experiences of African American Male Presidents in
California Community Colleges

Current research has shown racial disparities and inequities among African American men who desire to be community college presidents in California, or already hold the position. This study explored why California has only 7 African American community college presidents on 115 campuses; how to overcome obstacles to attain the presidency position; what life/work experiences assists current presidents in their leadership positions in higher education, as well as each president's trajectory that ultimately led them to the presidency. The study explored factors that have kept African Americans out of higher education leadership roles such as the presidency.

Study participants were 5 of 7 African American male community college presidents. The methodology used in the study was qualitative research, using sampling interviews of each participant to gain an understanding of their experiences in ascending to the community college presidency, as well as how they experienced their journey to attain their goal of president. From the interviews, the researcher identified themes that correlated with participants' personal experiences, observations, and insights. Study findings revealed that racial biases do exist for African American men in the California community college system when working their way up toward the presidency. The study results include suggestions to make community colleges in California more equitable for African American male presidents and those seeking to attain a president position.

This dissertation, which was written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the same members of the committee, has been presented to, and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education, Department of Leadership studies, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represents the work of the candidate alone.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Throughout the United States, African American educators endure disparities in community colleges as they work hard during their academic journeys, with the goal of achieving top administrator positions such as chancellors and presidents. One area in which African American educators experience disparities is in the realm of race. High-achieving educators in higher academia who have reached their goals of becoming administrators have historically been middle-aged and older Caucasian men. According to an American Council on Education (ACE) study released in 2012,

> the typical American college or university president is a married white male who is 61 years old, holds a doctorate in education and has served in his current position for seven years - a profile that has not varied greatly over the previous 25 years. (p. 1)

Recent have showed that women are advancing to the ranks of these same roles. The representation of women in presidency positions has increased from 23% percent in 2006 to 26% in 2011 (ACE, 2012). Presidents who are members of racial and ethnic minorities who hold presidents' positions in higher academe slightly decreased from a 2006 rate of 14% to 2011 when it was 13% (ACE, 2012). African American men in higher academia not only experience racial disparities, but also gender disparities, with many administrator positions being held by women. According to a survey posted by the ACE (2013),

The percentage of women in senior administrative leadership positions increased from 40 to 43 percent overall. Today, women make up 49 percent of chief diversity officers, 41 percent of Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), 72 percent of chiefs of staff, 28 percent of deans of academic colleges and 36 percent of executive vice presidents. (p. 2)

According to Lederman (2012), "The American college president's office overwhelmingly remains a haven for white men … those white men are over 60 too." (para 1). The results of such studies regarding Caucasian middle-aged men as college presidents can be quite sobering and discouraging for African American men who are striving to attain presidency positions.

The average age in 2011 had crept up to 60.7 years from 59.9 years, men filled 73.6 percent of jobs compared to 77 percent, and minority presidents had actually lost a bit of ground, to 12.6 percent of campus CEOs from 13.6 percent in 2006 (even counting historically black colleges. (Lederman, 2012, para 2)

Based on the outcome of the study, with Caucasian men remaining in their presidency positions at a marked rate in comparison to their African American counterparts, racial disparities persist.

President Board (ACE, 2012), suggested that part of the issue regarding older White men retaining their positions as college presidents is the time it takes for those in higher academia to obtain their doctoral degrees, and many of them do not earn tenure until they are older. Board confirmed suspicions that "when hiring for increasingly complex and challenging jobs, many boards are going to have in mind someone who has

sufficient experience in a wide array of areas" (p. 1). Board's response appears to be a suggestion that only Caucasian men fit the criteria; however, African Americans obtain doctoral degrees at various ages, and many are willing to accept and efficiently perform the "increasingly complex and challenging jobs" (p. 1).

The Council of Independent Colleges, a national association that represents 640 small and midsized, liberal arts and nonprofit colleges and universities, published a report in 2012 concluding that

> only 6 percent of the presidents of member colleges were from underrepresented minority groups . . . Furthermore, the percentage of minority presidents at Council of Independent Colleges and universities dropped from 8 percent in 2006 to 6 percent in the latest survey. (http://www.jbhe.com/2012/07/survey-finds-declining-percentage-of-minority-presidents-at-independent-colleges/)

The racial disparities concerning the lack of African American male presidents at community colleges are not only problematic in that area of education; disparities exist at independent private White institutions (PWIs) as well. (http://www.jbhe.com/2012/07/survey-finds-declining-percentage-of-minority-presidents-at-independent-colleges/)

Nationally, the diversity of races and genders of presidents at colleges and universities is improving slowly. Over a period of 10 years (1997–2007), ACE identified an increase in the percentages of racially diverse groups from 8.1% to 13.6% (as cited in Bates, 2007). During this period, women were more likely to hold the position of president at community colleges. "African American women appointed as presidents at the community college level show a number lightly higher than appointments at four-year

institutions" (Bates, 2007, p. 383). This suggests that the racial and gender disparities of Caucasian men in presidential positions for longer periods of time is one of the leading reasons such disparities exist for African American men in higher academia who desire to attain such a position.

African American women offer suggestions to increasing the number of African American female presidents such as professional development, high academic accountability, and academic wisdom. Other suggestions include mentoring other women, sponsorship groups for female administrators, and institutions making more administrative positions available to women in an assortment of career trajectories, to name a few (Bates, 2007, pp. 383–384). In contrast, due to the limited availability of literature with suggestions for how African American men in higher academia can make themselves more marketable in attaining the presidency in community colleges, the researcher relied heavily on sampling interviews and the shared experiences of the limited number of men currently in the position.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study was to discern the voices of those African American men currently serving in presidency positions; their work and life's experiences that contributed to their successes as presidents; the challenges they have endured to attain their positions; and the leadership skills and behaviors necessary for them to attain presidency positions at California community colleges. Due to the great underrepresentation of African American male presidents at community colleges, the testaments of their experiences may be quite instrumental in answering questions regarding the lack of African American male community college presidents. Such results

also will educate the higher education community about racial and gender inequities in the California community college system. Sharing their journeys may also provide hope and encouragement to those aspiring to attain a presidency at community colleges throughout the state.

Background and Need for the study

The ability for an African American man to receive an education traces back to U.S. slavery; a time when it was illegal for Black people (children and adults alike) to learn to read and write. Plantation owners had a great fear that if Blacks became literate, they could plan revolts, escape routes, and the possible overthrowing of their masters (Rogers, 2013). If it became known that a slave knew how to read or was in the process of learning to do so the consequences could be devastating, ranging from brutal beatings to lynching (Rogers, 2013, p. 53). White masters who owned slaves who could read, write, and do secretarial duties were demanded by the law to stop using slaves for such tasks (Burris-Kitchen & Burris, 2011, pp. 3–4). As a result, many Blacks would remain intellectually inferior due to the denial of education (Burris-Kitchen & Burris, 2011, p. 4). The denial of education during that time not only sent a message to Blacks that they were considered inferior and inhumane to Whites, but set in place education systems that would exclude them, thereby denying Blacks access and equity in education (Burris-Kitchen & Burris, 2011, p. 4).

Punitive actions, exclusionary practices, and inequities toward African American male students are not new phenomenon; its roots reach deep into the history of U.S. southern epochs of slavery and post-slavery racism. The year 2014 marked the 60th anniversary of the 1954 *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* decision, in which the

U.S. Supreme Court overturned the previous court case of 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson,* which averred the "separate but equal" policy that legalized segregation in schools and other facets of society. Because the *Brown* case legalized integration of public schools, it would be appropriate for school districts to evaluate whether their schools are currently integrated and equitable, and to question why or why not, enabling them to devise a plan that would ensure their schools are compliant, equitable, and inside the law.

Many education professionals and families believe the *Brown* verdict was issued, yet not enforced; hence, the notion persists that the public education system is still segregated and inequitable. In a speech addressed to the Education Writers Association Annual Conference at Vanderbilt University, the U.S. Secretary of Education stated, "I believe in my heart that education is the civil rights issue of our generation" (U.S. Department of Education 2014, p. 1). The speech addressed the issues of lack of access to quality education and inequities based on race, particularly with the release of the Civil Rights Data Collection and the harsh realities that Black preschool children are being suspended and expelled, placing them in the "prison pipeline." The statistics appear to confirm that the laws of equity and desegregation have continued to be violated since 1954, and particularly the rights of school children. Disproportionate suspensions or expulsions happen to students of color and students with disabilities with disciplinary actions resulting from discriminatory laws and practices that violate students' civil rights (U.S. Department of Education, 2014, p. 2).

Based on the data on punitive actions and zero-tolerance practices inflicted on African American male students, such actions require further research. Researchers must work to ensure assumptions are not made about these issues. Despite research studies that

addressed the issues of racial disparities in equitable access or lack thereof for students of color, as well as punitive action for minute infractions, the lived experiences of those who have been victimized by these inequitable disciplinary policies must be considered as well. Once educators accept responsibility, they can implement plans to ensure equity for all students in public school systems.

<div align="center">Theoretical Framework</div>

This study used critical race theory (CRT) as the theoretical framework, which "is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006, p. 1). This study focused on CRT in the genre of African American educational leaders, and in particular, those who are currently in the position of the presidency at non-historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and those who are working to attain the same position. CRT was initially developed in the area of legal studies (Dixson, 2007). The original contributors to CRT were Bell, Delgado, Matsuda, Crenshaw, Lawrence, Gotanda, Williams, and Harris. CRT was initiated in education in 1995 by Ladson-Billings, and Tate.

Hiraldo (2010) described five tenets of CRT: counter-storytelling, the permanence of racism, Whiteness as property, interest conversion, and critique of liberalism. Counterstorytelling legitimizes the racial and subservient experiences of ostracized groups of people. Counterstories are a powerful source that exposes and criticizes the dominant (White, heterosexual, male) system, maintaining and further spreading racial stereotypes. Counterstories are individual, complex narratives of people of color. The use of counter-stories in higher academe offers an opportunity for people to share personal

narratives with hope that the dominant culture would use the racial experiences of faculty and students as opportunities to make the necessary changes to ensure colleges and universities are able to retain diversity. Counterstories provide training opportunities for students and faculty in cultural diversity, differences, respect, and acceptance.

The permanence of racism implies that racism and prejudice govern the governmental, societal, and financial realms of U.S. society (Hiraldo, 2010). In higher education, racism may be viewed and understood through lenses that assess its organizational and operational impact. When the existence of systemic racism is ignored or people pretend it is nonexistent in higher education, plans to diversify become ineffective and highly unlikely to become a reality; instead, these plans work to continue to reinforce structural and institutional racism. It is of utmost importance to consider and discern how well-intended institutional processes and procedures continue to promote racism instead of working toward improving an institution's plan for diversity and inclusion (Hiraldo, 2010).

Whiteness as property has historically and currently been an issue of privilege and access (Hiraldo, 2010). Being White entitles someone to many societal advantages such as prestigious jobs, the best neighborhoods and homes, and the best schools they and their children can attend. During the days of U.S. slavery, Caucasians owned African American people. This theory suggests that Whiteness affords ownership of whatever is desired, if a person happens to be White (Hiraldo, 2010).

In higher education, the separation between student affairs and academic affairs extends the notion of race as a property right (Hiraldo, 2010). The majority of African Americans who earn a Ph.D. in education earn it in education administration; therefore,

they continue as practitioners and seldom becoming faculty. This trajectory puts them at a disadvantage because they do not have opportunities equal to those of their White counterparts to put their degrees and experience to work as professors, where they are owners of their curriculums and have the experience or ability to design their courses. This lack not only negatively impacts African American practitioners, but students as well, for they may also be subjected to institutional and personal racism from their professors, further confirming the message that being Caucasian has more value than being a person of color. Again diversity and inclusion at institutions of higher education becomes less of a reality (Hiraldo, 2010).

The fourth tenet of CRT is interest convergence, which acknowledges White individuals as being the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation, with affirmative action as an example (Hiraldo, 2010). Although affirmative-action laws were put in place to benefit people of color (and are no longer law), the largest beneficiaries were White women, for the preservation of the White family; although the law benefited White individuals as well. A system that was put into place to provide equal opportunities for people of color mostly benefited White individuals instead of the populations it was meant to serve. In higher education, because White individuals are in positions of power and authority, when recruiting students, they look to international students and students of color who have the financial resources to pay to attend their schools; this is interest convergence, and the school benefits by appearing not to be systemically racist while the school's diversity rankings increase (Hiraldo, 2010).

The fifth tenet of CRT is a critique of liberalism, which makes claims of colorblindness, the neutrality of the law, and equal opportunity for all; colorblindness is a

method that gives people the power to ignore racist policies that perpetuate social inequity (Hiraldo, 2010). In higher education, the lack of inclusivity in the academic curriculum and student-development theory used by student-affairs professionals support the notion of colorblindness that works against dismantling social inequities. No one is racially colorblind; people initially notice obvious facets of the other: race and gender. Dialogue and diversity training needs to take place to overcome racism on college campuses; these institutions must acknowledge the existence of colorblindness and work to dismantle colorblind policies (Hiraldo, 2010, pp. 54–57).

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

The following research questions guided this study.

- What are the views of African American male community college presidents in higher academe with respect to the continuing underrepresentation of African American male presidents in community colleges?

- What work–life experiences have contributed to their success as president of a community college?

- What leadership skills/behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position at a community college?

- What were some of the challenges African American men had to overcome on their journey to reach the position of president in community colleges?

- What recommendations would African American community college presidents make to African American men aspiring to advance to leadership positions in higher education?

Limitations of the Study

Current research confirms a lack of literature on African American men serving as presidents at community colleges in California, as well as 4-year institutions in the state, suggesting that racism is a big problem in higher academia. Due to the lack of available studies in California, many African American men in higher academia may be unaware of the severity of the underrepresentation in the community college system. Also the public lacks knowledge of such underrepresentation and disparities. Interviews took place with the few African American presidents who are dispersed throughout the State of California.

Educational Significance of the Study

Although racial and gender disparities exist in higher academia, to the detriment of African American men working to attain presidency positions in the community college system throughout California, the significance of this study brings awareness to those seeking such positions that it is still possible to reach their ultimate goals. Despite very few African American community college presidents in California, the fact that African American men are serving as presidents can offer a glimmer of hope to African American men who hold high positions in community colleges whose careers plateaued at a certain level. Another goal of this study was to bring awareness to those in higher academia and society at large that disparities persist in African American male community college presidents in California. Exposing the underrepresentation and disparities toward African American male faculty in the California community college system gives those affected the knowledge they need to advocate for themselves, perhaps by requesting assistance from government and legal agencies, to attain more equitable

opportunities for advancement, even to the presidency. Such advocacy may bridge the gap of underrepresentation, racism, and lack of opportunity for African American men in higher academia.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms were operationalized for this study:

Community college: Community college is "any institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree. That definition includes the comprehensive two-year college as well as many technical institutes, both public and private." (Brawer & Cohen, 2008, p. 5).

Community college president:

The president carries out general administrative duties and has periodic meetings with the board and the head of state agencies. To a lesser extent, the president makes decisions on faculty recruitment and selection, conducts public relations activities, and coordinates the college program with programs of other institutions and community groups. (Brawer & Cohen, 2008, pp. 142–143)

Counterstories: "The first tenet of Critical Race Theory (CRT), counter-stories, which are personal, composite stories or narratives of people of color" (Hiraldo, 2010, p. 54).

Critical race theory (CRT) first emerged as a counter legal scholarship to the positivist and liberal legal discourse of civil rights. This scholarly tradition argues against the slow pace of racial reform in the United States. Critical race theory begins with the notion that racism is normal in American society. It departs from

mainstream legal scholarship by sometimes employing storytelling. It critiques liberalism and argues that Whites have been the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation. Since schooling in the USA purports to prepare citizens, CRT looks at how citizenship and race might interact. (Ladson-Billings, 2010, pp. 7–24)

Discrimination: Discrimination is "is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age or sexual orientation" (American Psychological Association, 2015, para 1).

Interest convergence: Interest convergence "is the fourth tenet of CRT. This tenet acknowledges White individuals as being the direct beneficiaries of civil rights legislation" (Hiraldo, 2010, p. 56).

Liberalism: "The fifth tenet of CRT, critique of liberalism, stems from the ideas of colorblindness, the neutrality of the law, and equal opportunity for all" (Hiraldo, 2010, p. 56).

Permanence of racism:

The second tenet of CRT, permanence of racism suggests that racism controls the political, social, and economic realms of U.S. society. In CRT, racism is seen as an inherent part of American civilization, privileging White individuals over people of color in most areas of life, including education. (Hiraldo, 2010, pp. 54–55)

Sampling interviews:

The process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population. … The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable (Roberts, 2010, p. 150).

Whiteness:

Whiteness is a set of normative privileges granted to white-skinned individuals and groups; it is normalized in its production/maintenance for those of that group such that its operations are "invisible" to those privileged by it (but not to those oppressed/disadvantaged by it); it has a long history in European imperialism and epistemologies (for those who are of mixed ancestry and "pass" as white, this normativity, I would assume, would not occur). (Calgary Anti-Racism Education, 2018, para 19).

Whiteness as property:

The third tenet of CRT is Whiteness as property. Due to the embedded racism in American society, Whiteness can be considered a property interest. As a result, this notion operates on different levels. These include the right of possession, the right to use and enjoyment, the right to disposition, and the right of exclusion. (Hiraldo, 2010, p. 55)

Summary

At the time of writing, only seven African American men are community college presidents in California. Because most president positions are held by older White men, opportunities are not obviously available for African American men to attain that rank. Issues such as racial bias and gender bias have been longstanding issues. Women, even African American women, hold more president positions at community colleges in California than do African American men. This study intends to examine the reasons for the great underrepresentation of African American male college presidents; to ascertain the requirements to become a college president; to hear of the journeys of those currently serving as president; to understand the strengths and abilities required to achieve the college presidency; to identify the obstacles they had to overcome; to learn how their own work and life's experiences have contributed to achieving the presidency; and to receive words of wisdom and encouragement for those who would like to attain the presidency themselves. This study relied heavily on interviews, due to the lack of literature of African American male community college presidents. The theoretical framework was CRT.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

The review of literature examined and explained the beginning and growth of the

community college system nationally. Then the focus shifts to California community

colleges: their data concerning the benefits of California having a community college

system and data on race, gender, and age of faculty. This researcher examined the

literature using the theoretical framework of CRT, and also examined leadership styles in

higher education. The main two styles highlighted in this study are servant leadership and

transformational leadership. Other themes in this chapter include the college pipeline,

which ranges from undergraduate to graduate school, then continues for those employed

by institutions of higher education and promotive positions leading to the presidency.

Throughout the literature, it became obvious that underrepresentation and inequity exist

to the detriment of African American men who desire to attain the community college

presidency.

Historical Overview of Community Colleges

U.S. community colleges have a history of educating many to prepare people in

their communities for the workforce needs (vocational) of their communities. According

to the American Association of Community Colleges (2018), the first community college

was founded in 1901 as Joliet Junior College. It was a strategic and necessary

development due to global economic competition, which threatened the financial stability

of the United States. It also benefited those who attended community colleges who did

not want to move far from home. As time progressed, so did the course offerings and the growth of community colleges throughout the country.

Typically, early community college were extremely small, with an approximate count of no more than 150 people. The American Association of Community Colleges (2018) suggested that universities such as Vincennes University in Indiana began to exemplify the community college model of higher education principles such as small class sizes and programs that were inclusive of academic scholarship and extracurricular activities. The American Association of Community Colleges (2018) also gave credence to the new community colleges being accessible to women, who would most often train as teachers there. This was advantageous for women, for they were rarely permitted to attend school during that time. (http://www.aacc.nche.edu)

Growth of Community Colleges

Community colleges began as small liberal-studies schools; however, due to mass unemployment during the Great Depression in the 1930s, they began to offer job-training courses. The GI Bill, implemented after World War II offered veterans educational benefits, and magnified their desire for more higher education course offerings. During the 1960s, more community colleges began to open, with approximately 457 schools nationally to serve the masses. Currently, the United States has 1,166 community colleges including branch campuses. Community colleges educate more than half of the nation's undergraduate population. "Another 5 million took noncredit classes, the majority of which were workforce training courses. Since 1901, at least 100 million people have attended community colleges" (Litz USA Student Service, 2018, para 26).

California Community Colleges General Data

Many people found positive reasons to attend community colleges throughout California. According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2015), more than 2.1 million students study on 113 campuses, making the California community colleges the largest higher education system in the United States. "One in every five community college students in the nation attends a California community college" (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2013, para 24). Out of every 10 California natives between the ages of 18 and 24, three are presently enrolled in a community college. More than 67% of California's community colleges have an extremely diverse ethnic-background student body, and a female population of approximately 53%. Many young students begin their higher education journeys in the California Community Colleges (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2013).

Potential Returns on Community College Education

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2015) provides statistical data of outcomes of those who have enrolled, matriculated, and graduated through either a certification program or traditional degree program. Listed below are some of the potential benefits of earning a degree at a community college:

- By earning a college degree, one has the possibility of earning $400,000 more in their lifetime than peers who have only a high school diploma.

- Those who earn degrees or certificates from a California community college campus have the potential to double their earnings within 3 years.

- Those who take courses or graduate from a community college double their possibilities of finding a job in comparison to those who did not complete high school.

- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics anticipated an 18% growth in occupations that will require associate's degrees through the year 2020 (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2015).

Certificates and degrees completed at one of the California community colleges provides the alumni with a competitive advantage to obtain jobs with lucrative earning potential, as well as longevity and opportunities for growth and advancement.

Benefits to California

The California Community College Chancellor's Office (2015) provides some information that Many people in California are direct recipients of benefits from students who have been educated in California community colleges (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2015). Of California's nurses, 70% matriculated and graduated from community colleges throughout the state. People entrust their health and that of their families to these alums: more than half of nurses working in hospitals, emergency rooms, physicians' offices, laboratories, and other areas of health care graduated from a community college. Not only did a high percentage of nurses become educated through California's community colleges; 80% of firefighters, law-enforcement officers, and emergency medical technicians also received their training in these schools. Graduates of California's community colleges benefit the residents of California by providing well-educated and trained people who provide life-saving and life-changing services.

California's community colleges also provide educational foundations for students to complete general-education requirements at a lower cost, prior to transferring to 4-year colleges and universities. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2015) reported that 29% of University of California (UC) students are graduates of community colleges, and 51% of California State University graduates began their postsecondary education at California's community colleges. Beginning one's education in a community college is also beneficial to students who may be uncertain as to which field of study they wish to pursue; however, they can receive UC, California State University, and other college and university training before transferring. Those who transfer from community colleges to the UC system presently account for 48% of bachelor's degrees in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Those who began at community colleges transferred into UC schools highly prepared in the ever-enlarging field of STEM.

Veterans who desire to return to school for higher education or training can take advantage of veterans' benefits. Of those who receive educational benefits through the Veteran's Administration, approximately 42% attend a California community college to learn a marketable skill for the workplace, earn an associate's degree, or fulfill the prerequisites prior to transferring to a 4-year college or university. For those seeking to advance educationally, earn a certificate or degree, or transfer to a 4-year university, California community colleges offers degrees and certificates in more than 175 fields and serve more than 100,000 individuals per year (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2015). Many have earned certificates or associate's degrees and have transferred to 4-year colleges and universities, or have gone into the workforce well

equipped. Despite such accomplishments, much work is needed to improve the environments of these California schools.

Educational Administrator Report

Age Report

Throughout the 115 California community colleges are administrators and faculty of varying ages. Many faculty members are striving to be administrators, particularly chancellors and presidents; however, some areas do not have equal opportunity for certain populations of people. According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2016), educational administrators ranged in age from 18 to more than 70 (see Table 1). Educational administrators in the age range of 45 to 49 form the median age range for educational administrators. As ages increase from younger to older, there is greater representation with a slight decline among those who are approaching retirement age. Those in the age groups of 50 to 54 and 55 to 59 are the most represented in educational administrators.

Table 1

Age Ranges of Educational Administrators

Age range	Number	Percent
18–34	74	3.65
45–49	309	15.24
50–54	374	18.45
55–59	377	18.60
60–64	322	15.89
70 or older	43	2.12

Race Report

The race report of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2016) implies racial disparities exist among the educational administrators. The White non-Hispanic race is dominant. Caucasian educational administrators are dominant in California Community Colleges, whereas, African Americans are much less represented, along with Asians, American Indian/Alaskan Natives, Pacific Islanders, and those of multiple ethnicities. Racial disparities are the dominant theme.

Table 2

Racial Composition of Educational Administrators

Race	Number	Percent
Caucasian non-Hispanic	1,075	53.03
Hispanic	366	18.06
African American	225	11.10
Asian	179	8.83
Other	288	8.98

Gender Specifics

In the education field, including community colleges, women are the dominant gender, oftentimes in the educational-administrator position. According to California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (2016), men slightly trail behind women in educational administrator positions in California community colleges (see Table 3). The figures for race and gender suggest that African American men in the educational administrator, chancellor, or president position in California community colleges are marginalized and less represented, making the present study all the more important.

Where are the African American male presidents in community colleges in the State of California?

Table 3

Gender Composition of Educational Administrators

Gender	Number	Percent
Men	932	45.98
Women	1,095	54.02

First African American Men to Earn Doctorate Degrees

African American men as students and recipients of degrees in higher academia in the United States and abroad can be traced back to the year 1799 (Key Events, 2017). The first African American man to receive a doctorate degree from a U.S. institution was Edward Alexander Bouchet, who earned a Ph.D. in physics from Yale University in 1876 (Key Events, 2017). Although he had earned his terminal degree from a prestigious university, due to the racism of that time, he could not obtain a position in a university, as his White counterparts would have. Instead, he taught at the Institute for Colored Youth for 26 years until his retirement (American Physical Society, 2017).

African American men had received other degrees prior to Edward Alexander Bouchet. According to Bridgewater State University–Virtual Commons (2011), in 1869 George Lewis Ruffin was the first African American man to earn a law degree from Harvard Law School. According to the Massachusetts Historical Society, George Ruffin was the first African American man appointed Municipal Court Judge (Participation & the Massachusetts Courts, 2018).

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (W. E. B. Du Bois) was the first African American man to receive a Ph.D. in history from Harvard in 1895, according to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (2018), of which he was a founding member in 1909. Du Bois was a professor, prolific writer and published author, racial activist, Pan-Africanist, leader of several movements, and very influential in politics for equality for African Americans.

<div align="center">Critical Race Theory and Education</div>

One area in which racism was most impactful is urban education; however, inequities persist there as well in class and gender. Lynn, Benigno, Williams, Park, and Mitchell (2006) came to the following conclusion:

> That theory was rarely engaged in any significant way. In particular, theories that address the relationship between urban schools and the larger social structure have been noticeably absent. Critical theory provides a lens for interpreting what happens in classrooms and provides conceptual and epistemological grounding for changing the direction of research in urban education. (p. 17)

CRT is defined as

> Seeking to understand the origins and operation of repressive social structures. Critical theory is the critique of domination. It seeks to focus on a world becoming less free, to cast doubt on claims of technological scientific rationality, and then to imply that present configurations do not have to be as they are. (Lynn et al., 2006, p. 18)

Critical theorists not only focused on oppressive systems but also investigated how society can transform in more equitable and powerful ways, not merely focusing on the problems of oppression, but seeking solutions as well. Instead of focusing strictly on power systems, critical theorists ask "What constitutes power?" "Who holds it?" and "In what ways it is used to benefit those already in power?" Examination of class and gender, combined with race and culture are inclusive of the structure of critical theory (Lynn et al., 2006, p. 18). CRT focuses on race and racism and also includes the correlation of class and gender.

Introduced to the field of education by Ladson-Billings (1998), CRT is a framework to assist in understanding the purposes, procedures, and effects of teacher-education programs. Educational scholars and researchers followed Ladson-Billings's lead, using CRT's new and more methical approaches to enhance their understanding of why racism persists in schools and society. CRT implores the law, society at-large, and education to structure an inquiry that "Sheds light on the racial dimensions on schooling and schooling practices" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 19). The following questions should be asked of CRT practitioners:

- How do urban schools—most of which are deeply embedded in poor communities of color—promote a racial caste system in the United States that is determined by race and class?

- In what ways are current policy and practice in urban schools governed by a racial code of ethics that frames urban schools as culturally dysfunctional in ways that are commonly associated with communities of color? (Ladson-Billings, 1998, pp. 19–20)

When studying urban education, it is vital to include discussions of class, race, and gender inequities in schools and society; failing to do so will not adequately meet the needs of those in these groups (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Places that tend to lack educational success are usually urban public schools that are highly populated by poor African American students (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In contrast, students may achieve more academic success outside of public schools. Although decades have passed since the landmark decision of *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education,* segregation continues for students of color. Although African Americans represent 12% of the national population, they are the majority in 21 of the 22 largest urban school districts. Instead of providing more and better educational opportunities, school desegregation has meant increased White flight and the loss of Black teaching and administrative positions (Ladson Billings & Tate, 1995, pp. 55–56).

Milner (2017) stated:

Critical race theorists are concerned with exposing, disrupting, challenging, and changing racist policies (and consequently practices) that work to subordinate and disenfranchise people of color. In its simplest charge, critical race theorists examine policy to expose and challenge inequity as well as the status quo.

(p. 296)

Whiteness equates with power; even though White people may agree with issues of social justice and equity, they may refuse to get involved if it affects their White privilege. According to Bell (1980), "white people may support social justice and equity-oriented policies and practices yet still believe that injustice can be 'remedied effectively without altering the status of whites'" (p. 297). One CRT tenet, interest convergence, is

effective in identifying, understanding, and explaining race and its correlation with education, in hopes of changing educational policies that can make the educational system more equitable (Bell, 1980, pp. 299–300). Whiteness is not an inactive trait of a single person or a collaborative set of people; rather,

> these characteristics makes the work of social justice and change all the more challenging; however, there are many who have showed that the key to creating a more equitable education system is to create a more just and equitable society. (Milner (2017) believes p. 300)

A great underrepresentation of African American men in the professorate, as well as at every level of education, accompanies the prevalence of racism throughout U.S. society. Black men represent 4.4% of all higher education faculty (The Profession, 2011). A desperate need exists for more Black male educators, especially because they only represent 2% of K–12 teachers (Gordy, 2011). Verbalizing the problem as to why African American men are underrepresented in higher education, R. L. Jackson and Crawley (2003) stated, "institutions of higher learning are faced with tremendous challenges in regard to issues related to pedagogy, personal and professional wellness, and the recruitment/retention of Black male faculty" (p. 38).

The voices of Black male faculty members are rarely heard in academic conversations concerning their lived experiences on traditionally White campuses, and the narratives mostly spoken for Black men are from the perspectives of White administrators; hence, the need for counterstorytelling (Griffin, Ward, & Phillips, 2014). Counterstorytelling is grounded in lived experiences rather than supposed or invented versions of events (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 36). It is important that composite

counterstorytelling serve as a vital outlet of communication, representing the identities of underrepresented groups and the oppression they encounter in higher academia. Not only does counterstorytelling speak from the lived experiences of African American male faculty members, it also exposes areas of inequities. When using counterstorytelling is used, healing can take place (Griffin et al., 2014, p. 1370).

Leadership in Higher Education

Types of Leadership

Different types of leadership for academic administrators are very important for success or failure. Four categories of leadership styles are authoritarian, administratively-based authoritative, faculty-based authoritative, and laissez-faire (Sternberg, 2013). Academic administrators may prefer one method of leadership over the other three types; however, based on potential problems, leaders have some flexibility in which type of leadership they use (Sternberg, 2013; see Table 4).

Table 4

Types of Leadership

Problem Formulation → Problem Solving ↓	Top-Down	Bottom-Up
Top-Down	I. Authoritarian	III. Faculty-based Authoritative
Bottom-Up	II. Administratively-based Authoritative	IV. Laissez-faire

Sternberg (2013) cited, "This model assumes that there are two distinct aspects of problems that leaders need to address: problem formulation and problem solving" (p. 24).

Elements of quality leadership are existent within every functional activity with representatives serving in any capacity that can influence change. Quality

leadership is demonstrated if effective results are recognized and realized. Traits

that define effective leadership are included in either a category of group or

individual. Group traits include collaboration, shared purpose, disagreement with

respect, division of labor, and a learning environment. Individual traits include

self-knowledge, authenticity/integrity, commitment, empathy/understanding of

others, and competence. (Astin & Astin, 2000, pp. 11-13)

Examples appear in Table 5.

Table 5

What is Effective Leadership?

Group qualities	Individual qualities
Shared purpose-reflects the shared aims and values of the group's members; can take time to achieve.	Commitment-the passion, intensity, and persistence that supplies energy, motivates individuals, and drives group effort.
Collaboration-an approach that empowers individuals, engenders trust, and capitalizes on diverse talents.	Empathy-the capacity to put oneself in another's place; requires the cultivation and use of listening skills.
Division of labor-requires each member of the group to make a significant contribution to the overall effort.	Competence-the knowledge, skill, and technical expertise required for successful completion of the transformation effort.
Disagreement with respect-recognizes that disagreements are inevitable and should be handled in an atmosphere of mutual trust.	Authenticity-consistency between one's actions and one's most deeply felt values and beliefs.
A learning environment-allows members to see the group as a place where they can learn and acquire skills.	Self-knowledge-awareness of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to seek change.

Source: *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change,* by A. W. Astin & H. S. Astin, 2000, Battle Creek, MI: W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Copyright 2000 by W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Four Styles of Leadership

Authoritarian Leadership

Authoritarian leaders assume chief responsibility for identifying and solving

issues (Sternberg, 2013). This type of leadership is most likely used by educational

leaders who possess strong visionary skills and a clear understanding of how to implement the vision. Three potential advantages of this type of leadership are (a) things get done quickly, (b) it assists in assuring execution aligns with the original form, and (c) it powerfully makes clear that the administrative leader is in control. This style of leadership also has disadvantages. First, faculty members may believe they have no decision-making power, and as a result, become angry with administrative leaders. Following anger is a reluctance to follow their leaders, as well as distrust of the leaders; once leaders lose trust, it is very difficult or impossible to regain (Sternberg, 2013).

Administratively Based Authoritative Leadership

Sternberg (2013) stated, "the administrative leader who exercises administratively based authoritative leadership takes primary responsibility for identifying the problems that most need to be addressed but delegates much of the responsibility for solving them to faculty, ideally working in collaboration with administration" (p. 25). This type of administrative leader actively listens to the concerns of the faculty on institutional issues. This leadership type gives the administratively based authoritative leader the main responsibility for choosing which problems to address, when to address them, and what course of action to take in solving them (Sternberg, 2013).

The administrative-leader style has three possible advantages: (a) it requires the administrative leader take the main responsibility for implementing the institution's academic program, (b) through shared governance, faculty members are authorized to solve problems that may affect them, and (c) the faculty is more likely to have a more trusting relationship with and willingness to participate in the processes the administrative leader suggests (Sternberg, 2013). This type of leadership is one of the

more preferable models because it allows for a collaborative effort between leaders and faculty members, such that faculty members are empowered to make decisions and accept responsibility for their decisions, which can produce effective outcomes. Processes with this type of leadership can be lengthy and challenging if faculty members are unwilling to make difficult decisions required for transformational change. Patience and constant communication are necessary when using this type of leadership with no guarantee of the desired outcome (Sternberg, 2013).

Faculty-Based Authoritative Leadership

Administrative leaders who use the faculty-based authoritative leadership style do so through a council or committee to establish a course of action for effective change (Sternberg, 2013). Then, they assume responsibility for planning and establishing how the change should happen. An examples of this type of leadership addresses issues of faculty members and tenure: if they believe the procedures are unclear for awarding tenure, they take their issues to the dean. It then becomes the responsibility to clarify procedures, present them to the faculty, and, possibly through a democratic-voting process, implement them (Sternberg, 2013).

This type of leadership has three potential advantages: (a) faculty members are permitted to address the issues that affect them, (b) faculty feels their concerns are important and relevant, and (c) things get accomplished at a rate with which the administrative leader is content and at the rate the leader has set (Sternberg, 2013). Disadvantages of this type of leadership are that administrative leaders relinquish authority to address institutional needs with the faculty; faculty members may not have a full understanding of the issues affecting the institution or the proper connections with

stakeholders involved in decision-making processes. Some issues of importance to faculty may be less valued by stakeholders, particularly boards of directors and philanthropists. Also issues and problems that are of concern to administrative leader may never get addressed (Sternberg, 2013).

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership allows the faculty to take responsibility for formulation of problems and provide potential solutions; the administrative leader serves as a guide and allocates resources (Sternberg, 2013). This style of leadership gives faculty members a great amount of power in guiding the institution; faculty members are essentially "given control of their own destiny" (Sternberg, 2013, p. 27). Disadvantages include that because faculty are in control, the administrative leader has less decision-making power; leaders may believe they are not doing the jobs they were hired to do. The abilities of the faculty to execute administrative-leadership skills are in question. With limited knowledge of leading an institution, faculty now becomes responsible to do so (Sternberg, 2013).

It is important that leaders know their leadership style. Sternberg (2013) stated, "There is no one style of leadership that will always produce (a) an optimal outcome (b) with the great possible speed and (c) to the satisfaction of all relevant stakeholders" (p. 27). The best choice of leadership style depends on the issues and problems currently being faced. No right or wrong way is optimal in exercising leadership; however, an effective leader must be honest about their leadership style and be open to changing style when situations occur that demand change (Sternberg, 2013).

Many other leadership types exist. The types examined here are servant leadership and transformational leadership.

Servant Leadership

"Servant leadership is a philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world" (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016, p. 1). In a 1970 essay, Greenleaf, founder of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, dubbed a practice that had been taking place many years prior as "servant leadership." According to Greenleaf's (2016) definition,

> The servant-leader is servant first. … It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. … The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. (para 2).

Servant leaders first ensure other people's highest priority needs are being served. An effective test, difficult to administer, is whether those served grow as people. For example, do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants, and, will the least privileged in society benefit or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016).

A servant leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. Although traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one in a senior position, the servant leader shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016). Greenleaf realized that organizations and institutions, along with individuals, could be servant leaders. Greenleaf believed servant-leader-based organizations could change the world for the good. Greenleaf verbalized what is often called the "credo":

> This is my thesis: caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built. Whereas, until recently, caring was largely person to person, now most of it is mediated through institutions—often large, complex, powerful, impersonal; not always competent; sometimes corrupt. If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as servant of existing major institutions by new regenerative forces operating within them (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016, para 7).

Spears (2010), under the tutelage of Greenleaf, served as executive director of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership and founded and spearheads an organization called the Larry C. Spears Center for Servant-Leadership. Spears expounded on the 10 characteristics required for a servant-leader:

Listening

Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. Although these are also important skills for the servant leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses hearing one's own inner voice. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, is essential to the growth and well-being of the servant leader (Spears, p. 27).

Empathy

The servant leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance. The most successful servant leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners (Spears, p. 27).

Healing

The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant leadership is the potential for healing one's self and one's relationship to others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come in contact. In his essay, The Servant as

Leader, R. K. Greenleaf (1977/2002) writes, "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share." (p. 50)

Awareness

General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values. Awareness lends to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As R. K. Greenleaf (1977/2002) observed,

> Awareness is not a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity. (p. 41)

Persuasion

Another characteristic of servant leaders is reliance on persuasion, rather than on one's positional authority, in making decisions in an organization. The servant leader seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. This element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant leadership. The servant leader is effective at building consensus in groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion finds its roots in the beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the denominational body to which Robert Greenleaf belonged. (Spears, p. 28)

Conceptualization

Servant leaders seek to nurture their abilities to dream great dreams. The ability to look at a problem or an organization from a conceptualizing perspective means one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many leaders, this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional leader is consumed by the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The leader who wishes to also be a servant leader must practice broader-based conceptual thinking. In organizations, conceptualization is, by its nature, a key role of boards of trustees or directors. However, boards of directors can sometimes become involved in the day-to-day operations, which should be discouraged. Thus, they fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be mostly operational in their perspective, and the most effective executive leaders probably need to develop both perspectives. Servant leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day operational approach. (Spears, p. 28)

Foresight

Closely related to conceptualization, foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant leader to understand lessons from the past, realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted in the intuitive mind. Foresight remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies. (Spears, p. 28)

Stewardship

Block (1993) defined stewardship as "holding something in trust for another" (p. xx). Greenleaf's view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staffs, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of

society. Servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes a commitment to serve the needs of others and emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control. (Spears, p. 29)

Commitment to the Growth of People

Servant leaders believe people have intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. The servant leader is deeply committed to the growth of each individual in the organization. The servant leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to nurture the personal and professional growth of employees and colleagues. In practice, this can include concrete actions such as making funds available for personal and professional development, taking a personal interest in the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging worker involvement in decision making, and actively assisting laid-off employees to find other positions. (Spears, p. 29)

Building Community

The servant leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work in a given institution. Servant leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. R. K. Greenleaf (1977/2002) said,

> All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group. (p. 53)

One genre in which servant leadership can be used is higher education. President of Livingstone College Freeman (2004), a historically Black institution, defined leadership as "the ability to organize and to move the leader and his or her followers toward a shared common goal or desired outcome" (p. 7). Freeman continued:

> It is my belief that each student enrolling at Livingstone College has the potential to lead in some domain of society related to the young man's or young woman's character content, spiritual fortitude, emotional empathy, intellectual astuteness, and philanthropic responsiveness. Livingstone College is well suited to prepare students to develop their unique qualities as whole individuals called to improve humanity. This mission is what we at Livingstone call 'servant leadership' (Freeman, 2004, p. 7).

Livingstone has a history of creating servant leaders. Rooted in the First African American Episcopal Zion Church, many servant leaders have emerged from that Christian denomination: Frederick Douglas, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Mary McLeod Bethune, and W.E.B. Du Bois. Servant leadership is important today because of the social, political, and economic climates in the United States and abroad. Servant leadership is not as popular as other leadership styles because its focus is on meeting the human needs of people and improving the bleak situations of the poor, oppressed, and needy (Freeman, 2004).

Page (2003), stated "The most powerful theory of leadership that is supportive of a diverse culture is servant leadership" (p. 79). In institutions of higher academia that embrace a community of diversity, the leadership group must commit to the five key features of the community:

1. "A commitment to understanding other cultures and the value of diversity in

leadership positions.

2. The understanding and commitment to basic values that flow through the

organization.

3. The creation of a culture of trust where the diverse organization has a high level

of respect for all cultures represented.

4. The conscious development of strategies to recruit or provide mobility for

women and ethnic minorities within the organization.

5. A willingness to be accountable for the success or failure of promoting

diversity within academic leadership-accountable for monitoring and mentoring

the leader" (Page, 2003, pp. 79–80).

Commitment to Understanding Other Cultures

Higher education institutions should have a successful leadership team that

commits to understanding other cultures and the value of diversity in leadership. Covey

(1999) cited research conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership that exhibited that

"respect for the differences in people is one of the more important qualities of a

successful leader (p. 162). A successful leader in higher education will comprehend,

appreciate, and encourage contemporaries in different cultures and demonstrate the value

of them all (Covey, 1999). It is of great value for academic leaders to enmesh themselves

with students of an assortment of cultures by participating in activities of those besides

their own as a sign they are attempting to understand the cultures. "The first building

block on which an institution can promote diversity within the academic leadership is to

employ leaders who recognize that they must serve all constituents to secure followers

from any constituency" (Page, 2003, p. 80). Such diversity is almost always mentioned in

the mission of the school and is important in the lives of the students (Page, 2003).

Understanding and Commitment to Basic Values

The second principle to encouraging diversity in the academic-leadership team is

committing to basic values. Those values must include a clear understanding of the

multicultural scopes and an authentic respect for the values of different cultures. Page

(2003) wrote,

> The cultural roots of servant leadership are grounded in the values inherent in a
>
> community and the necessity for leadership to reflect these values. If an academic
>
> leader is to be successful, he or she must believe in the values that are evident in
>
> the multicultural population of the college or university. (p. 81)

When the necessary characteristics of respect, service, and equity are incorporated into

the decision-making process of the administrator, this fosters a culture of trust (Page,

2003).

Culture of Trust

A culture of trust is essential for leaders to be successful. The values of respect,

service, and equity assist in establishing this culture. Respecting oneself, others, and

cultural differences is essential. The needs of various cultures must be met. By

committing to understanding other cultures and the basic values reflected in the various

cultures is a critical step in establishing a culture of trust (Page, 2003, p. 81). Servant

leaders have an opportunity to effectively serve in a culture of trust if they build to

implement a vision for the institution that permeates into the community culture. While

academic leaders are developing curriculums and recruiting faculty to fulfill the college's

mission, the leader can begin to build a solid foundation for a greater level of diversity in the faculty and administration (Page, 2003). With leaders who are committed to accomplishing the principles of servant leadership, the faculty will realize leaders' dedication to promoting positive values that do not serve themselves but focus on others, the result will be a culture of trust (Page, 2003).

Conscious Development of Strategies

To promote a diverse environment in higher academic leadership is the conscious creation of strategies to achieve diversity. Colleges have made many efforts to promote diversity throughout the history of higher education (Page, 2003). In one 1980s study, many college and university boards created a "grow your own" program, encouraging minorities to pursue doctoral degrees in social and humanitarian areas that had the greatest needs. Although the results varied, many university administrators were mindful in identifying minority staff and faculty members, providing them with a college education; upon their graduation, they would be hired at one of the institutions in the system (Page, 2003, pp. 82–83).

Another method of diversifying colleges and universities is to identify young minority faculty and provide them with limited administrative duties to assist them, while encouraging them to remain committed to academic excellence. This format will ultimately create stronger contenders for higher responsibilities and greater opportunities for advancement. This goal of diversity can only be successful if faculty are willing to take risks in the form of mentorship through increased responsibility, which can lead to diversity in promotion in higher academia faculty (Page, 2003).

Willingness to Be Accountable

Promoting diversity must also incorporate accountability in academic-leadership programs. Schools must assess the cultural populations being served and develop standards to monitor students and faculty successes and developmental needs. Accountability that is inclusive of mentoring and focuses on proper results is just as important to understanding the culture and values, and establishing a culture of trust to produce diversity in educational leadership (Page, 2003).

Transformational Leadership

Another type of leadership important to any organization and institution is transformational leadership. Caldwell et al. (2012) defined transformative leadership as "an ethically based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interests of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owed by organizations to their stakeholders" (p. 176).

Northouse (2016) stated,

As its name implies, transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals. It includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings. Transformational leadership involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. (p. 161)

The term transformational leadership emerged as an important method by political sociologist Burns in 1978 (Northouse, 2016). Burns's work attempted to connect the roles of leadership and followership (Northouse, 2016, p. 162). Transformational leadership

has four elements: idealized influence, inspirational influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Kendrick, 2011).

• Idealized influence is founded on trust. An individual must exhibit high moral and ethical standards. These are the foundations that begin the bond between leaders and followers.

• Inspirational motivation is the ability to help followers see clearly what is the right thing to do. It creates the drive for shared goals and visions. There may be frequent challenges to the status quo and development of clear mind maps of what the future state looks like.

• Intellectual stimulation also challenges the follower to question basic assumptions and to generate a more creative solution to problems.

• Individual consideration treats each follower as a unique contributor and provides coaching, mentoring, feedback and growth opportunities. Once given individual attention and allowed to grow, many followers far exceed what was generally recognized as outstanding performance. (Kendrick, 2011, p. 14)

Transformational leaders appear to have the characteristics of being able to learn across their areas of expertise (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Transactional leaders are mostly at the top of their field of expertise, and oftentimes have a limited vision and perspective to discern that change is required for success to continue. The consequences for continuing to operate in the same fashion jeopardizes success (Bass et al., 2003, pp. 207–208). In contrast,

> Transformational leaders who develop and communicate a vision and a sense of
> strategy are those who find clear and workable ways to overcome obstacles, are
> concerned about the qualities of the services their organization provide, and
> inspire other members to do likewise. (Swail, 2003, p. 14)

Such leaders foster and encourage development and change in their own organizations and in others. Transformational leadership is greatly needed in the genre of higher education due to the constantly changing economic (consistent funding sources oftentimes withdraw their funds) and academic setting. However, educational leaders who support the shared power of transformational leadership are open to learning from others, and are aware and understanding of each team member's needs for accomplishment and maturity (Gous, 2003).

Leadership in the Higher Education Pipeline

The Undergraduate College Pipeline

The undergraduate-college pipeline begins before a student ever enters a college campus. A collaborative effort is needed between schools and community colleges to prepare students for what they will encounter in college, and to assist them in transitioning to college (Watson, 2000, p. 53). Building transitional partnerships to with high school students transitioning into community college should begin in early elementary school, and should not only be a collaboration between schools, but among the entire community (Becherer & Becherer, 1998). By enlarging traditional limits to be more inclusive of secondary schools, large and small business, and the community at-large, the transitional needs of students can be better understood by student-services professionals (Terrell & Watson, 1996; Weidman, 1989).

Numerous types of collaborative transition assistance help student-service professionals. Student services professionals must attempt to reduce the usage of duplicate resources (Watson, 2000, p. 54). Transition assistance includes addressing academic readiness such that student-services professional offer sophomores college-placement tests to have sufficient time to academically focus on areas that need further development. This step could mitigate the need for students to take remedial courses upon arrival at college (Watson, 2000).

Orientation is a time when student-services professionals and faculty members must have a clear understanding and explanation of what they expect of students and their behavior on the college campus. New student orientation is important.

> Orientation, one of the most important services for students at any college, provides students an opportunity to ask questions and solve problems before they begin their studies. It also helps students make connections with other people and units within the college. An orientation program that includes faculty, counselors, and administrators from the community college and surrounding high schools is especially helpful, allowing both groups to educate the students and each other about the expectations of college life. This interinstitutional approach differs from standard orientation practices in which the college alone provides assessment, advising, and registration. (Watson, 2000, pp. 55–56)

Counselors or academic advisors are also extremely important in the process of students transitioning from high school to college. They assist students to clarify their personal and academic goals and direct them to beneficial resources to help ensure their college success. Prior to students entering college, counseling staff members may

conduct regularly scheduled meetings with their high school counterparts to collaboratively share information and resources, and develop a professional rapport as a method of working together to ensure the best possible transition for students (Watson, 2000, p. 56).

It is quite important for K–12 schools and colleges to address out-of-class concerns of students, helping students understand the relationship between what is learned in class and their personal lives. It is the responsibilities of faculty members and student-services personnel to effectively interact with students from different backgrounds at the community college level (Watson, 2000, p. 57).

Also, it is necessary to provide support to faculty members at community colleges and on K–12 campuses.

> Providing additional professional development training and support ensures the availability of qualified professionals who can intelligently discuss the transition process with students and diagnose their specific problems. Many community colleges have teaching and learning centers, technology and learning centers, or staff development centers for this purpose. (Watson, 2000, p. 57)

Educational researchers who are African American men themselves have observed and provided evidence that the educational pipeline for African American young men to attend, matriculate, and graduate from college is not generally a reality (Heilig & Reddick, 2008). Academically, numbers of African American young men in high school honors and advanced-placement courses is diminishing; graduation and progress to and through college, and graduate school is often an unmet goal. Educational systems throughout the United States are poorly serving these young men. Data collected

from the 2007 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey showed high school graduation rates by race: the national percentage of men between the ages of 18 and 24 who possesses a high school diploma or higher is 77%. When categorized by race, the disparities and biases become obvious. Asian American men in that age group obtain a high school diploma or greater at 85%; for Caucasian men, 81%; for African American men, 73%. College-degree attainment also presents national race disparities among African American men and their Caucasian male counterparts.

> In 2003, Black males comprised 4 percent of associate degrees, 3 percent of bachelor's degrees, and about 2 percent of master's degrees, and 29 percent of doctoral degrees. As a result, in 2005, researcher Shaun Harper found on average, at all levels, White males earn 10 times the number of degrees than Black males. (Heilig & Reddick, 2008, para 8)

The data collected and presented regarding the educational outcomes of African American men indicates disparities and inequities in the education system.

African American young men in California are at great risk of being unprepared to attend college. Only 67% of Black men are graduating from high school (Favot, 2017). A report released by The Education Trust-West entitled *Hear My Voice: Strengthening the College Pipeline for Young Men of Color in California* stated that "Each year, close to 40,000 young men don't graduate with their high school class. … And 3 out of 4 black boys do not meet state reading standards" (p. 2).

The report found many barriers that are preventing African American young men from being prepared for college, including institutional racism and adverse stereotypes. Also, African American men are more likely to give in to peer pressure. The schools they

attend are more likely not to be conducive to ensure a successful education due to lack of current materials and technologies, laboratory equipment, advanced-placement/college-preparatory courses, and far greater rates of suspension/expulsion than their Caucasian counterparts. Favor (2017) showed a lack of support by educational leaders for African American boys. Educational leaders did not capitalize on African American boys' positive attributes such as leadership skills, determination, strong relationship-building skills, and connections and commitments to their families and communities. The report also stated the following:

> In addition to ensuring all students have access to the core elements that make a school great for all students, practitioners and policymakers must develop more specific programs, services, and supports that meet the unique needs and speak to the dynamic and countless assets of young men of color (Favot, 2017, p. 2).

The report further recommended for K–12 educators the following:

• Fostering a welcoming environment with high expectations

• Connect families to financial aid

• Analyze data

• Confront implicit and explicit biases

• Improve staff diversity

• Make college prep coursework the default curriculum

• Build a college-going culture. (Favot, 2017, p. 3)

According to University of California Los Angeles' (UCLA) enrollment statistics, the African American student population was 3.8% of the student body (Robinson, 2014).

A group of students at UCLA produced a video entitled "UCLA has more championships than Black male freshman," in which they talked about the lack of diversity at UCLA. The video stated that the African American male-student population was 3.3%, and 65% of those are undergraduate athletes. Of the incoming freshmen class in 2014, only 1.9% were African American men. African American women have experienced an increase in attending and graduating from 4-year colleges and universities; however, "African American men account for 4.3% of the total enrollment at 4-year postsecondary institutions in the United States, which is the same percentage enrolled in 1976" (Robinson, 2014, p. 1).

> Concerns exist about retention, matriculation, and graduation:
>
> The consequence of low African American enrollment in college has decreased economic, political, social, and cultural capacity to improve the lives of all of the world's citizens. … It is time to change the narrative as it relates to African American males in higher education today. … A sustained and collaborative effort aimed at empowering the African American male is needed." (Robinson, 2014, p. 1)

Robinson (2014) offered suggestions to ensure the success of African American male students:

> The success of any student involves having parents and a supportive family system that has education as an essential component of life success. Place these students in an academic environment with dedicated teachers and counselors with high expectations for African American males and you are well on your way to

creating a foundation for a successful outcome. Add in some pre-college and

transitional programming, give them some financial assistance to unburden them

financially, provide college mentoring and create a supportive on-campus

environment that speaks to their cultural heritage and you have all the ingredients

for the blueprint for success. (p. 1)

Success means more than getting young African American men to graduate high

school and enter college; they have the potential to fail if they are not smoothly

transitioned from high school to college (Robinson, 2014). Once they reach college they

can learn more, develop, use and benefit from college resources, and eventually graduate.

The reality is that many of the social, community, educational, environmental, and

familial problems African American boys experience in K–12 schools will likely follow

them to college. Much more work is necessary to ensure the educational success of

African American boys and men; one way to accomplish that is to encourage and assist

teachers to believe in the academic potential of these young men; by identifying their

strengths and providing enriching learning options, those strengths surface and are

leading to higher levels of academic successes (Robinson, 2014).

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, located in

Greensboro, North Carolina, is a public HBCU that believes academic advising is

necessary for the success of its students (Fernandez, Davis, & Jenkins, 2017). HBCUs

and PWIs, have similar issues: low retention and graduation rates for African American

male students. North Carolina A&T University has implemented a program that focuses

on African American male retention and graduation called Project MARCH (Male

Aggies Resolved to Change History). This program focuses on ensuring academic

progress of freshmen minority male students, particularly African Americans. Various aspects of this program assists students to overcome their academic and life obstacles so they can progress forward as sophomores and further up the ranks until they graduate (Fernandez et al., 2017).

At North Carolina A&T University, core requirements must be properly advised academically and socially. Project MARCH students must attend a weekly seminar course during their first year, taught by their academic coaches. The students also meet with their department advisor to ensure they are following their academic and career goals. These meetings with advisors and coaches offer an opportunity to build trusting relationships. Students in Project MARCH must also participate in student development and learning through two bimonthly programs: "Let's Talk About It" is an informal chat session that addresses handling emotions of college life, how to deal with stress, and how to balance school and their personal lives; "Third Tuesday Engagement" consists of formal workshops such as conflict resolution, goal setting, critical thinking, and learning styles. The coaches and students of Project MARCH travel to the Dominican Republic for a global learning experience (Fernandez et al., 2017, p. 30).

Thus far, the collaborative effort of departmental advising and participating in Project MARCH has been successful. "The number of students placed on academic warning and academic probation has decreased 36.4 percent from the 2015-16 academic year to the 2016–17 academic year" (Fernandez et al., 2017, p. 30). This collaboration had further positive results in that the school has a 4% decrease in the number of participants placed on academic warning or academic probation. This program offers African American male students and faculty hope that this collaborative model of

advising will continue to grow and be adopted by other colleges and universities, thereby ultimately increasing the retention and graduation rates of African American men in college (Fernandez et al., 2017).

A demographic of African American men between the ages of 28 to 62 self-identifies as nontraditional students (Goings, 2017). "Institutions of higher education have witnessed an influx of nontraditional Black college students generally, and males specifically. However, there is limited research that investigates the academic and social experiences of nontraditional Black males" (Goings, 2017, p. 121). Some of these men had families and went to work, then decided to return to college to set an example for their children. Another man in the Goings (2017) study had dropped out of high school and earned his General Education Diploma. Some had criminal backgrounds, and returned to college after their release from incarceration.

> According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2013), there was a 35% increase in college students aged 25 and older from 2000 to 2012. In addition, the National Urban League (NUL; 2014) found approximately 65% of Black college undergraduate students are nontraditional. (p. 122)

Nontraditional students' experiences have been stereotyped as negative; hence, they may instigate a late beginning or return to school (Goings, 2017). Researchers must start highlighting the men who have overcome previous challenges and have been successful in the workplace and academically later in life. Further, researchers should investigate African American male adult undergraduate narratives from a variety of perspectives: HBCUs, PWIs, community colleges, online universities, and other institutions that serve people of color. "Exploring their experiences in these various

institution types will provide valuable information for institutions to enhance the experiences of their adult Black male students" (Goings, 2017, p. 123). When additional research supplies an understanding of the culture, environment, societal views, historical inequities, and structural and institutional racism that influence the educational experiences of African American male students, society will gain a more comprehensive understanding (Goings, 2017).

The Graduate School Pipeline

The National Science Foundation reported, in a 2015 survey of earned doctorates, that the highest number of doctorate degrees conferred by U.S. colleges and universities was 54,070, between the years 1957 to 2014. In this time period, the number of doctorate degrees awarded increased, and in particular, the number of doctorates conferred on African Americans increased by 70% between 1994 and 2014. In the years preceding the 1970s, African Americans were mostly able to pursue and earn doctorate degrees at HBCUs. "These institutions are resourceful in addressing the psychological effects of racism, discrimination, and inequity in our society that have served to exclude students from doctoral education at predominately White institutions" (Felder & Freeman, 2016, p. 77).

First-generation doctoral students often have a different set of challenges from their non-first-generation peers. Oftentimes, first-generation doctoral students come from underrepresented populations and are likely to be students of color (Gardner, 2013, p. 43). Gardner (2013) defined first-generation students as coming from families where neither parent has completed any college degree (pp. 43-44). Undergraduate-level first-generation students will

(a) [be] low-income, (b) be older, (c) be female, (d) have a disability, (e) come

from minority backgrounds, (f) have dependent children, and (g) be financially

independent from their parents. First-generation students are also less likely than

their non-first-generation peers to aspire to, enroll in, and complete graduation.

(Engle & Tinto, 2008, p. 8)

Despite a significant increase in students of color pursuing doctoral degrees, they

are still underrepresented and have lower rates of completion in comparison to their non-

first-generation peers. Oftentimes, these issues entail a lack of understanding of the

system of graduate education, lack of financial support, and feeling like the "other" and

an "imposter," as if they have no sense of belonging, particularly at PWIs (Gardner,

2013, pp. 45–46).

The Council of Graduate Schools stated, "Only 44 percent of black and latino

Ph.D. students in STEM (with STEM defined to include behavioral and social sciences)

earned a doctoral degree within seven years" (as cited in Jaschik, 2014, p. 1). The

council's study observed the progress of more than 7,000 Black and Latino Ph.D.

students enrolled in research universities between the years 1992 and 2012. The study

was based on a 7-year completion rate of only Black and Latino students. The data

suggested 7-year completion rates of 48% for Latinos and 40% for Blacks (Jaschik,

2014).

In overall program support and experiences, the data also suggested mixed

feedback from Black and Latino students. Approximately 95% reported they felt

comfortably supported by their network of colleagues. However, 62% reported they were

extremely anxious about their mental or physical health while in their Ph.D. programs. Of

the studied population, 53% reported a loss of interest in their fields and 40% had feelings of heavy financial burdens. When minority students were asked questions regarding what would help them complete their programs, the most common responses were that the faculty needed to be extremely clear about their expectations, and regularly review students' progress (Jaschik, 2014).

Programs are in place to increase enrollment in graduate programs (Miranda, 2011). Dr. Shaun Harper, professor of higher education in Africana and gender studies at the University of Pennsylvania created a program called Grad Prep Academy in 2009 to create a Black-male pipeline for graduate programs in education. The program enrolls eight to 10 Black men annually, and prepares them to enter graduate programs in education by funding a graduate-record-examination preparation class, offering mentorship and guidance through the admissions process. Dr. Harper stated,

> I don't just want to be a researcher who researches Black male access and equity. I want to actually contribute to increasing access and moving us closer to equitable outcomes, equitable participation rates and so on. Black male enrollment in doctoral programs is alarmingly low. … Just 2.1 percent of doctorates were awarded to Black men in 2007. (as cited in Miranda, 2011, p. 1)

The University of Maryland also adopted the Grad Prep Academy model. The university markets for the Academy through social media and e-mail, and has received more than 350 applications; however, Harper has 18 available places to fill annually. Dr. Harper has high hopes to use the Academy as a vehicle to create a brotherly network consisting of Black education researchers with the desire that each class will mentor the class to follow, in turn (Miranda, 2011, pp. 1–2).

African Americans as College Faculty

African American males are among the least represented as faculty members of the 1.6 million faculty members in all U.S. colleges and universities. According to the Department of Education,

In 2003 there were 33,137 African-Americans serving in full-time faculty positions at colleges and universities in the United States. They made up 5.3 percent of all full-time faculty in American higher education. Thus, while blacks are 12 percent of the total enrollments in higher education, the black presence in faculty ranks is less than half the black student enrollment figure. (The Snail-Like Progress, 2007, p. 1).

Despite growth in the hiring of African American faculty, progress has remained steadily slow. One reason institutions offer as to why growth is slow is that very few African Americans are on the pipeline, instead of accepting the responsibility that their institution is not equitable in the hiring, maintaining, and treatment of African American faculty. Snail-Like Progress (2007) stated,

Over the past 20 years, more than 20,000 African-Americans have earned a Ph.D. Yet during this period the percentage of black faculty at American colleges and universities has risen only insignificantly. … In many cases, the "no blacks in the academic pipeline" defense is simply a lame excuse used by universities across the nation to deflect criticism of a deeply entrenched unwillingness to seek out black faculty. There is a significant, though not large, untapped supply of black scholars qualified and willing to teach at America's great universities. But often

the university environment is unsupportive of black faculty, and as a result, those

in the pipeline seek employment in government or industry rather than pursue an

academic career. It is up to the academic institutions to make their working

environments more hospitable to blacks and to provide incentives for African

Americans to pursue a career in academia. (pp. 2–3)

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), as of the fall of

2015, of full-time faculty members at colleges throughout the United States: "42 percent

were White males, 35 percent were White females, 6 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander

males, 4 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander females, 3 percent each were Black females

and Black males" (para 2). The reality of the lack of African American faculty members

is due to the "widespread view held by large numbers of American academics that blacks

as a race simply lack the ability and qualifications to hold important positions in

academia, particularly positions where they are entrusted with the teaching of white

students." (Snail-Like Progress, 2007, p. 3).

The Underrepresentation of African American Male Presidents

Despite a steady, yet slow increase in African American college presidents since

the unstable civil rights era of the 1960s, racial disparities continue between African

Americans and their Caucasian counterparts in higher education (Holmes, 2004). As of

late 1997, "African-Americans represented only 8.9% of the full-time administrators in

higher education, while their White counterparts comprised 85.9%." (Harvey, 2001, p. 2).

J. F. L. Jackson (2003) concluded that for the academic pipeline of African

American male college administrators,

A serious breakdown occurs for this group at the higher education level, such as their level of participation places them in jeopardy in the remaining phases of the pipeline. In other words, because African American males have difficulty persisting through graduation in various phases of the educational pipeline, the likelihood of their completing graduate degrees, which ultimately qualifies them to participate in executive-level administrative positions, is at risk, (pp. 54-55).

A study conducted by ACE, the fifth report in the American College President Study series, which was cited in The Journal of Negro Education (2004),

The proportion of minority presidents showed a small increase from 8% in 1986 to 13% in 2001. Further, ACE reports that as of 2001, African Americans represented 6.3% of the total 2,366 presidents who answered questions related to race/ethnicity in their latest study, which represents only a 1.3% increase from those who responded in 1986. This data represents a dismal picture in African American advancement to college and university presidencies, and indicates that institutions of higher education still have not fully embraced the necessity of minority representation at all levels of the academic community. (Holmes, p. 22)

Racial inequities persist without the full acceptance of responsibility and acknowledgement of social institutions:

However, it is ironic that a country that represents the leader of the free world has leaders in most of its social institutions that are unable to guarantee all of its citizens the opportunity to participate in activities characteristic of a free and

democratic society – namely educational and employment opportunities free of sex and racial discrimination. (Holmes, p. 25)

One of the areas in higher education with the greatest underrepresentation of African American administrators is clearly the presidency:

According to the 2002 ACE report, African Americans (non-Hispanic) represented 6.3% (149) of the total 2,366 presidents represented in the study by race/ethnicity as of 2001, compared to the 87.2% (2,064) for White Americans. This reflects an increase of 1.3% (27) for African Americans in 2001 when compared to their 5.0% (122) representation in 1986. In actuality, the total number of White presidents (2,064) in 2001 represented a 4.7% decrease (199) from 1986 figures (2,263), while the total number of African American presidents increased slightly from 1986. Because White presidents outnumber all other groups so significantly, their decline still did not represent a noticeable difference in the relative movement of other groups who now hold the chief executive office. (Holmes, p. 28)

The outcome of studies suggested,

The participants in this study support the assumption that issues of race and class are the salient factors perpetuating the underrepresentation of African American presidents in higher education. These factors determine the types of positions African American administrators are permitted to obtain as well as the types of institutions they are allowed to serve. The research revealed that there is a sufficient pool of qualified administrators currently employed by historically

Black colleges and universities that could fill chief executive roles. However, many may never have the opportunity because hiring officials, especially at traditionally White institutions, do not consider them as being in the same presidential pool as Whites, and the few African Americans who have had careers primarily in White institutions. (Roach & Brown, 2001, pp. 2-3)

According to Holmes (2004),

Thus, the majority of the current pool of African American administrators may never realize their full potential because they are not perceived as qualified by their White counterparts; even though their educational training and professional experiences are comparable. … This finding suggests that governing board officials must become more open to administrators of color in diverse institutional settings when making hiring decisions in order to expand the pool of qualified applicants. This means hiring officials and their representatives who are generally responsible for hiring administrators at the chief executive level will need to work closely with presidents of historical Black colleges and universities and two-year community colleges to identify persons who could be candidates for future employment opportunities. Overall, the primary finding of this study is that African Americans are characteristically similar to their White counterparts on factors that distinguish individuals as viable candidates for presidential positions. This means that the continued underrepresentation of African American college and university presidents must be viewed as the choice of governing board officials who would rather maintain homogeneous cultures as opposed to communities of difference. (pp. 34–35)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to hear the voices of those African American men currently serving in presidency positions in California community colleges; their work and life's experiences that contributed to their successes as presidents, and the challenges they have endured to attain their positions. Furthermore, this study identified the leadership skills and behaviors necessary for African American men to attain presidency positions at California community colleges. Due to the great underrepresentation of African American male presidents at community colleges, the testaments of their experiences may be instrumental in answering questions regarding the lack of African American male community college presidents, as well as explaining why racial and gender inequities persist in the California community college system. Sharing their journeys may also provide hope and encouragement to those aspiring to attain a presidency at community colleges throughout the state.

Research Design

The methodology used in this study was qualitative research. According to Roberts (2010),

The qualitative approach is based on the philosophical orientation phenomenology, which focuses on people's experience from their perspective. Inquiry begins with broad, general questions about the area under investigation. Researchers seek a holistic picture-a comprehensive and complete understanding of the phenomena they are studying. They go into the field to collect data. They

may make observations; conduct in-depth, open-ended interviews; or look at written documents. (p. 143)

Sampling interviews were conducted with five of the seven African American male presidents/chancellors of community colleges in California. Roberts (2010) defined sampling as

> The process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population. … The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable. (p. 150)

The procedures used to select the sample should be described in detail because they are the determining factor in the generalizability of the researcher's findings (Roberts, 2010). The following should be included in the description:

> 1. The specific type of sampling used, such as probability sampling (random, systematic, stratified, cluster) or nonprobability sampling (purposive, expert).
>
> 2. The number of individuals included and where they are located.
>
> 3. Why you selected this particular number and the unit of analysis.
>
> 4. The criteria you used for inclusion in the sample.
>
> 5. A step-by-step account of exactly how you went about selecting your sample.

> Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected.

The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population. … The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable (Roberts, 2010, p. 150).

Sampling interviews with the population of African American male presidents of community colleges in California was the process used to gather information in this study.

Research Setting

According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office (2015), the State of California has 115 community college campuses; the campuses range markedly in size. Some campuses are urban whereas others are situated in rural and scenic areas of the state. All community colleges in California offer associate's degree programs as well as vocational-certification programs. The research methodology of sampling interviews took place with five African American community college presidents in California at their respective campuses.

Population and Sample

The sampling consisted of five African American male presidents at California community colleges. After much research, the researcher contacted the California Community College Chancellor's Office, and received a list of names of presidents/chancellors by e-mail along with the community colleges they serve. The researcher conducted sampling interviews with five African American male presidents/chancellors of the California Community College System.

Instrumentation

Standard interview questions were designed for each community college president that provided insight to the racial and gender biases that currently exists in California community colleges, along with the experiences that led them to their presidency positions, as well as advice and encouragement on the processes and experiences African American men in higher academia should undertake and complete to assist in attaining the desired positions of presidency. A validity panel of three people who are well established in the genre of higher education reviewed the interview questions to ensure the researcher's research and interview questions are valid and were likely to acquire the responses that would answer the research questions. In a pilot study, the researcher interviewed a former community college president using the formulated interview question. The interview questions follow:

- What strengths and abilities do African American males need in order to attain the position of community college president?

- What is it like being an African American male community college president?

- How can African American males who are working towards becoming community college presidents acquire these strengths and abilities?

- What are some obstacles and challenges that African American males need to overcome in order to attain a community college president's position?

- Why do you believe there are immense and continual disparities towards African American male community college presidents?

- What can African American males who are currently serving as presidents of community colleges in California do to address the issue of racial and gender disparities these men encounter, if anything?

- What obstacles and challenges did you encounter as you attempted and successfully secured a president's position?

- What can other African American male leaders in higher education and working towards the community college presidency do to overcome such obstacles and challenges?

- Will you please describe your familial background and how you were raised?

- Will you please describe your educational background, the positions you've held in higher education, and how they have influenced you to become a community college president?

- What type of leader do you consider yourself to be?

- How do your previous work experiences assist you in fulfilling your leadership duties and responsibilities as president?

- What previous life's experiences have impacted you in your leadership role?

- Do you have any final words of insight, encouragement, wisdom, or recommendations you would like to share at this time?

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's interests are in the genre of Restorative Justice Policies and Practices and other alternatives contrasting with disciplinary actions of exclusion such as unwarranted suspensions and expulsions among young male students of color (Grades P–12), college preparedness for urban youth, and the insufficient numbers of African

American male college presidents. The researcher is currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Education, Leadership Studies Department, Organization and Leadership program at the University of San Francisco. His passions and "callings" are servicing and providing for those in need; he does this through cooking and serving meals to homeless guests at his church, visiting the sick and shut-in, as well as teaching Sunday School and Bible Study to the youth in the church. The researcher has been actively employed full-time for almost 17 years with the City and County of San Francisco as a Senior Administrative Research Analyst with the San Francisco Police Department.

The researcher has volunteered much of his time with a nonprofit organization: Inner-City Adolescent Network, which is a detention program for juvenile detainees in San Francisco's Juvenile Justice Center, where he has taught a weekly course on conflict resolution, anger management, effective communication skills, and life skills to help decrease the rates of recidivism. He is also a case manager for the Inner-City Adolescent Network, collaboratively working with judges, attorneys, probation officers, and families to help create and implement courses of action that will ensure the successes of the youth he serves.

An advocate at heart, the researcher will question, investigate, report, and openly speak out against the racial disparities and inequities that are obvious in the Juvenile Justice System. His own experiences as a young African American student who matriculated through the inner-city schools of San Francisco has encouraged him to research the issues he has personally experienced, with hopes of changing U.S. public school systems to become equitable institutions of learning for all.

Data Collection

The researcher sent letters to five African American male community college presidents in California, asking if they would participate in an interview. Included in the letters were the study questions and the reason for the study. Upon receiving their approval to participate, times and locations were scheduled to meet. Interview questions were created for each community college president to answer, included in the initial letter.

Data Analysis

Each interviewee received specific instructions to answer each applicable question in detail and with honesty, without fear of criticism or retribution based on their replies. Each answered research and interview question was categorized to evaluate congruence or dissimilarities to the literature and the research itself regarding the lack of African American male community college presidents. The researcher analyzed why gender and racial disparities exist and what can be done to assist in increasing the opportunities for African American men to become presidents. Combined with the related literature, a more national perspective on the aforementioned issues was also incorporated into the analysis of data. Listed below are the research questions with interview questions categorized under each research question. Each interview question was pilot tested to ensure they appropriately correlate with the research questions.

The participant in the pilot-study is a retired African American male community college president. The participant was warm and friendly, yet very professional and knowledgeable of the issues of African American males in community college leadership. The interview took approximately 1 hour to complete, which was longer than anticipated;

however, the participant took time to think prior to answering the questions posed to him, so he was able to provide direct and precise answers. The process was a source of encouragement, leading to hope that the dissertation process would be completed, published, and presented at conferences and other speaking arenas to bring awareness of the disparities that plague the African American male in community college leadership. The pilot-study interview was very helpful in that, as the researcher asked questions, the interviewee noticed two questions were similar, which served as a reminder of the necessity to pay careful attention to the details of the interview questions.

1. What are the views of African American male community college presidents in higher academe with respect to the continuing underrepresentation of African American male presidents in community colleges?

   - What strengths and abilities do African American males need in order to attain the position of community college president?

   - What is it like being an African American male community college president?

   - Will you please describe your familial background and how you were raised?

   - How can African American males who are working towards becoming community college presidents acquire these strengths and abilities?

   - What are some obstacles and challenges that African American males need to overcome in order to attain a community college president's position?

2. What work–life experiences have contributed to their success as president of a community college?

- Why do you believe there are immense and continual disparities towards African American male community college presidents?

- What can African American males who are currently serving as presidents of community colleges in California do to address the issue of racial and gender disparities these men encounter, if anything?

3. What leadership skills/behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position at a community college?

- What type of leader do you consider yourself to be?

- What previous life's experiences have impacted you in your leadership role?

- Will you please describe your educational background, the positions you have held in higher education leadership, and how they have influenced you to become a community college president?

- How do your previous work experiences assist you in fulfilling your leadership duties and responsibilities as president?

4. What were some of the challenges African American men had to overcome on their journey to reach the position of president in community colleges?

- What obstacles and challenges did you encounter as you attempted and successfully secured a president's position?

- What can other African American male leaders in higher education and working towards the community college presidency do to overcome such obstacles and challenges?

5. What recommendations would African American male community college presidents make to African American men aspiring to advancing to leadership positions in higher education?

- Do you have any final words of insight, encouragement, wisdom, or recommendations you would like to share at this time?

<div align="center">Protection of Human Subjects</div>

The researcher obtained approval to conduct research using human subjects from the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. This process informs and offers anonymity and confidentiality to participants. Pseudonyms were used for participants and for community college campus names to ensure confidentiality.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This study examined the perceptions and lived experiences of African American male presidents of California community colleges regarding the underrepresentation of African American male community college presidents in California; strengths and abilities required; the challenges and obstacles that potential African American males endure and overcome; and how their work and life experiences have contributed to them becoming community college presidents. The data accrued from five current African American community college presidents, and was analyzed using the methodology described in Chapter 3.

Participants Profiles and Descriptions

Five participants were interviewed, sharing their perceptions and lived experiences in this qualitative study. All of them are African American male community college presidents in California, leading campuses ranging from the urban inner-city with a racial and cultural mix of student bodies and faculty members, to suburban campuses with predominately Caucasian students and faculty. All participants liberally shared their experiences and perceptions to adequately answer the research questions. Here, each of the five presidents are introduced, followed by the study findings. Participants are referenced in the order they were interviewed for identification purposes; for example, President 1 was the first to be interviewed by the researcher.

President 1

President 1 leads an urban multicultural community college campus in California. He was born into a two-parent household; both of his parents were educators. His father was a teacher and football coach for many years, then became an assistant principal at a middle school and high school. His mother was a substitute teacher; she eventually stopped working to care for her husband and four children. President 1 is the youngest of four children and the only one born in California. With both parents being educators, President 1 was encouraged to seek higher education from a young age. President 1 described his experience as an African American community college president as

> Extremely complex, because we know that race is, especially as an African American male, it's a dynamic that I'm consciously aware of every day and I think those around me are conscious of it, even though they may never articulate it. … But for me, I have the added responsibility and belief that not only am I being judged, but an entire group of people are being judged based on my performance. (President 1)

President 2

President 2 leads a predominately Caucasian community college camped located in the mountainous region of California. He was born to a teenaged single mother in Illinois. She married his step-father when President 1 was 3 years old. Both his parents were of the working class; his step-father worked at the post office and his mother worked for the county office of the Welfare Department as a case worker. Both his parents were high school graduates and had attended college. His grandmother played an essential role in raising him. She worked as an owner of her own beauty shop, selling

Avon products, and working as an instructional aide for the Illinois Public School System. He was a student of the Illinois Public School System and decided at a young age that he wanted to attend college. President 2 described some of his experiences as an African American community college president stating,

> As a president, depending on the size of the institution, you have an influence on way more individuals than you would if you were coaching and teaching them in the classroom. So that's another joy of mine. Also, being a former California community college student, I felt that this was a way for me to give back to the system what the system gave to me. (President 2)

President 3

President 3 leads an urban, multicultural community college in California. He was raised in a poor, working class family by his mother. His father, a Vietnam War veteran, had mental health issues. His grandparents on both sides of his family were enlisted in the military and one of his grandfathers served in World War II. He was encouraged by his family and expected to obtain an education rather than go into the military. President 3 stated about his experience as community college president,

> I have worked at a large, expensive private university. I've worked at a large, highly selected public institution, and various other places. And I found the community college, you know, not by accident because they really share my values in terms of social justice, you know, how are people going to have an opportunity to lift themselves out of a cycle of poverty, and to position themselves where they can experience economic mobility like others. (President 3)

President 4

President 4 also leads an urban multicultural community college in a major metropolis in California. His father worked as a teacher in California, whereas his mother worked for Boeing. One grandfather owned a dry-cleaning business and the other grandfather worked as a trash-pickup person. When asked, "What is it like for you personally being an African American male community college president?" President 4 responded,

> You know, I don't really think about that a lot. For me, it's being the president of a college from the community I grew up in; to me is the highlight, first and foremost. Second, is being an African American CEO, it's encouraging because I see other African Americans who are in the system (education) who would like to be CEO and they seek advice from me. (President 4)

President 5

President 5 leads a community college in a suburban town in California. He was born in Mississippi to a single teenaged mother and was the oldest of five children. He was raised by his grandmother, who was a school teacher in Mississippi. In addition to teaching in schools, she taught her then young grandson, instilling in him the characteristics of the importance of hard work, education, and family values. At the age of 8, he rejoined his mother, who had moved to another state. Due to being much older than his four siblings, he took on the role of surrogate father. President 5 stated,

> I've been a community college president since 1991, and I served in both single-campus chancellor as well, here in California and out of state. And there are a lot

of similarities in roles and responsibilities, and some of that has to do with who

you work with, and ensuring that you're fair to everybody. I've learned that with

any particular race, or gender, or sexual orientation, you've got to be conscious

about being fair and equitable. (President 5)

All five participants shared a passion, dedication, and respect for their positions as

African American community college presidents in California, as well as their leadership

responsibilities at their respective campuses. The five research questions correlated with

the interview questions asked of each participant.

Findings

Findings for Research Question 1

What are the views of African American male community college presidents in

higher academe with respect to the continuing underrepresentation of African American

male presidents in community colleges?

In Answering Research Question 1, a consistent theme among the presidents was

the lack of African American men on the administrative pipeline leading toward the

presidency. President 1 stated the following:

There's just not a whole lot of Black males that's coming through the

administrative pipeline. So if you don't have a lot of Black male faculty members,

then you're not going to have a lot of Black men who are department chairs.

They're going to have even less that are deans; they're going to have less as vice

presidents, then less than that as presidents. So it's a pipeline issue. (President 1)

President 2 viewed the underrepresentation of African American male presidents in community colleges as issues of qualifications and connectedness. A theme for him was preparation and collaboration. He stated during his interview,

Well Number 1, there isn't a lot of us out there who qualify; that's one thing. You've got to look at the market. You've got to get into the academy. There's a lot of us in a lot of doctorate programs, yet a lot of brothers in the academy that were in higher administrative jobs are not passing the torch to other brothers, so they could have the opportunities to move up in educational leadership. You've got to get into these administrative positions and you've just got to get out there. If you want this job, then you've got to be prepared for this job. And I think that's the main thing, is a lot of us potentially get lost in the shuffle at the high school, and the beginning college level. Some of us that do, they don't want to do it because of the stress and things like that. But it's probably one of the best jobs you can have in America, being a community college president. (President 2)

President 2 also shared the importance of being connected "in the right circles." Two organizations he mentioned are the National Council on Black American Affairs a member of the Association of Community College Administrators [ACCA] and the African American Men Educational Network and Development.

President 3 had a slightly different view concerning African American men in the administrative pipeline. He believed they are well represented on the pipeline, yet are not given equitable opportunities to be interviewed and selected for presidency positions due to racism. His theme was racism:

Well, you know, there are a lot of us when you look at the pipeline of

administrators, you know, coming through the pipeline that want to be president.

… You have to take into consideration is there data that shows that there are a

number of African American males that interviewed and just didn't get the job. …

Is the issue that there are not enough people that are just not interested in the job

because they don't want to deal with this big perceived stress of doing it, or do we

have an issue of there being a gate, a hurdle, or a wall that many African

American males who want to be in the system as a president are not getting

picked? (President 3)

President 4 was concerned about creating administrative pipelines that are more

conducive to exploring how faculty members move up the ranks of leadership, affording

more student-service faculty members opportunities to become candidates for the

presidency. His theme was equitable opportunities. In response to Research Question 1,

he stated the following:

One is that we've got to look at the pipeline and how we're developing

community college administrators and start looking at how faculty staff are

moving through the ranks into leadership positions. You have a lot of—when I

look at African Americans, you look at the student service rank, you have a lot of

individuals who are coming through the student services rank, and are trying to

move through that; however, not that many positions are available. So we need to

make sure that we have African Americans in administrative services, also

administrative student affairs, and human resources, who can move through those

ranks as well. So for me, it's just all about creating a pipeline to CEO that's not

just from student services. (President 4)

President 5 gave advice on how he believes the issue of underrepresentation can

be combated; his theme was mentorship:

I think that we [all seven African-American male community college presidents in

California] that you're talking to, need to reach back and mentor men and women

of color. … We are in need of future leaders in our system (educational) and other

systems too, because we have a responsibility to help mentor and send them to the

think tanks and the programs that develop leaders in their skill set. I have a young

man now who is attending a program as we speak; a program designed to develop

future presidents, and he's an African American male. I encourage them to apply

to that program and supported them financially. I think those are the kinds of

things that we have to do to not only make folk aware, but also to support them,

and then direct them to the places that will help them grow, develop, and get hired

in these kinds of positions. (President 5)

<div align="center">Findings Research Question 2</div>

What work–life experiences have contributed to their success as president of a

community college?

In addressing Question 2, all five participants had different experiences that have

contributed to their successes as community college presidents. The theme for this

question was different experiences that have led to success. President 1 received his

bachelor's degree in political science; his master's degree in public administration, and

his Ph.D. in urban educational leadership, all from California universities. In regard to his work at the community college, he stated,

So in the community college system I started off as a noninstructional faculty member, and so that was basically overseeing all of the student life and student activities at the college, and I did that seven years. Then my first administrative position was, as I transitioned from that job, I went into a Dean of Student Services position and I did that for 2.5 years. My dean position was particularly helpful and advantageous in the sense that it was at, we'll call it a center before it transitioned into a college. It was part of a multicollege, multicampus district city college, but there was only the president and two deans; one in instruction and one in student services, so I oversaw a lot of different departments. So that prepared me to really move quickly to a vice president position. So after 2.5 years of being Dean of Student Services, I transitioned to being a Vice President of Student Services. While serving as vice president, I was able to delve into other areas of running the college and institution, and sort of gained experience and did some things that connected to student services, but had these tentacles in other aspects of instruction, and of course was able to use those experiences to be prepared to do the work of a president. (President 1)

When asked how his previous work experiences assists him in fulfilling his leadership duties and responsibilities, he replied,

These positions helped me really learn what I was good at, and what my weaknesses were, so I had a sense of what I needed to work on, and then also how

I would add value to an organization based on me having a sense of strength. …

When I was vice president and dean, being focused on programs really meant to

address student success. … Gaining that experience and working those programs

now with people looking to hire leaders that have an understanding of how to

create programs that lead to better outcomes of students; I had that experience

because of the work that I did as dean and as vice president. I also learned how to

be innovative, as I am always looking for ways of assessing, evaluating, and

making improvements; I'm not a real believer in just trying to maintain the status

quo. So then I was able to learn how to lead in a changing environment, because I

needed to convince people that we needed to do something different, you know,

how to get people outside of their comfort zone to better do something they're not

used to doing. (President 1)

President 2 began his career as a K–12 teacher, which he asserted "was a great

experience." He was also the president of the Academic Senate at the school he taught at.

While still teaching K–12, he "was afforded the opportunity to do some summer school

administration, and that was okay, but that was a good way to get in, I thought." In 2005,

he accepted a position at a community college in California as Associate Dean of

Educational Services/Evening College. President 2 recalled the following:

So basically I started Monday through Thursday at noon, and my shift ended

maybe about 9 or 10 at night. So basically after 5 o'clock I was the only

administrator on the campus, and we had a large evening program. So I had a staff

in the front lobby that I was in charge of. The library was open until about 8 at

night, and I had staff there. I had a security person, a custodial staff, and I had

various classes all over the place that I had to be in. Basically, I learned a lot about where I needed to go, what I needed to do; how I needed to do that, and that was probably the best experience to me to become a president, other than V.P. of Student Services, and that kind of put me in a different area. (President 2)

President 2 was also an instructional dean, where he learned about scheduling program reviews and student learning outcomes. He also served as an athletic director. When asked about work experiences that assisted him fulfilling his leadership responsibilities and duties as president, he responded saying,

The biggest thing was they put me in charge of areas that I didn't have teaching experience in, such as the nursing program, which at that time was in the process of becoming a program at the campus. I learned a lot, and that was one of the best things, to experience best practices, such as hiring a competent director to lead the [licensed vocational nurse] program. Also, the other thing, being a V.P. of Student Services, where under my watch was Admissions and Records, Counseling, International Students, [Extended Opportunity Programs and Services], Financial Aid, Dormitories, Athletics, Library, and Categorical Programs. (President 2)

President 3 brought a wealth of experience and education to the community college presidency. He stated that it never was his intention to become a community college president. Like many undergraduate students, he began as a computer science major, and changed his major a couple of times. He eventually decided to major in economics, with a plan to go into business. His passion for people led him to become a

resident assistant. He learned more about the African diaspora, as well as communities and families of Blacks. He recollected that past experience, and stated the following:

> I was a resident assistant for about a 1.5 to 2 years, and I discovered that I can actually save money by continuing to do things I really loved, which was working with diverse folks; helping 1st-year students get acclimated to college. (President 3)

Throughout his educational career he learned the importance of mentorship. He attended graduate school in southern California, where his master's studies focused on "Children of alcoholics, college students who were in a residential setting." He made the decision to be a psychologist; to work more one-on-one rather than in group settings. He recalled the following:

> There was an advisor there who, you know, I really clicked with her, even though she was not African American. She was a lesbian, White; nothing like me in appearance and also in experience in life. But what I found was that she actually had a lot in common with me, and taught me a lot. And I said, you know, there's a lot of folks who could teach me who don't look like me, and I began to have mentors who were from across the spectrum: Asian, Native American, White, and of course, African American brothers. After obtaining my doctoral degree, I got a position at a university in California, working in their Student Life Office. And I ended up doing student conduct and free speech for the college and also for the medical campus. And I did that for 3 years, and then along the way I met some folks in Santa Ana, who were doing some good work with Spanish-speaking

families, and then I got interested in where they were going to school. They were

students at a community college. I asked myself, what do community colleges do?

Oh, they happen to be places where most people of color get their start in higher

education, but I was never told about community college.

I think that the experience of Santa Ana really opened my eyes to, you know,

there were folks who were undocumented, you know, language issues, working

multiple jobs, had families, responsibilities where they were the older brother or

sister, or they had kids of their own, you know, veterans. I mean, they were all

going to this college, and that was the door opening for me to be in community

college. So I went to another community college in California, where I was Dean

of Students and the Dean of Career Technical Education, Associate V.P. and a

Provost, and then I got an opportunity at an early age to be college president,

where I am now. (President 3)

When President 3 was asked how his previous work experiences assisted him in

fulfilling his responsibilities and leadership duties as president, he responded by stating

the following:

You know, I've had a lot of different jobs along the way, since I've worked since

I was 15. I've been a janitor; I've worked at Kentucky Fried Chicken; I've

worked at Sizzler; I've built fences in the summer at the Roof Works; I've done

some office duty; I've worked as a camp director; I've taught eight grade English,

and I've taught graduate education leadership. So I think having a well-rounded

portfolio of experiences on the job has been very important to me. It's given me a

chance to work in different settings where I'm cleaning a toilet or I'm on the

phone and working in an office with air-conditioning, and a computer with two

monitors. And there's a difference in how you feel about your contribution to

work, whether you have pride in cleaning that floor after somebody has just

callously made a mess, or you have pride in how you answer the phone or write a

message to someone in terms of, you know, you did it, and it was your work. And

I think those experiences and being a college president, it's like basically you do

what you have to do in order to get the job done; that's what makes you

successful. (President 3)

President 4 spoke of his work from his initial experiences. His theme was

foundation. He stated the following:

I started my career doing access. And so being a part of access has an experience,

so now I tell my staff this all the time, that you've got to have a foundation. So

when you get the position of the CEO, my foundation is student services. So when

I have a conversation, I understand student services. So what I think is also

important, is that once you get in this position and you have that foundation, you

can be able, when you're having difficult conversations, you're tying it back into

what you did at student services. A lot of time people don't have that foundation

in certain areas and they're just trying to move up, and they never get that

foundation. And when they don't do that foundation, they get fired. (President 4)

Findings Research Question 3

What leadership skills/behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position at a community college?

A plethora of skills and behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position in a community college. The themes that surfaced regarding Question 3 during the interview are to be intentional, take advantage of opportunities, flexibility, excellence, and doing your best. President 1 had great insight regarding these themes when asked this question. The first advice he offered was on intentions in one's career:

> But being intentional about at least what your next two steps are in your profession, including if you know you have a sense that you want to have the option of being a college president; be very intentional regardless of the current position you hold. And the reason why that intentionality is important, is because you have a sense of what opportunities you want to take advantage of that which would give you your experience to be able to go to the next position that would eventually lead, at some point, to the presidency. (President 1)

President 1 used an example of being asked to serve on a committee that had nothing to do with one's job. The initial thought of the person being asked may be to graciously decline the offer; however, President 1 stated "But if you're thinking, at some point you're going to want to be a dean; if you're a Dean of Student Services, you're going to have enrollment and outreach." The opportunities of enrollment and outreach are many. President 1 continued:

You're like okay, I might want to be on that committee because even though it's not relevant to the job I'm doing now, it may be relevant to the job I'll be doing next, or that it may give me additional knowledge base or experience in an area that I know that I know I'm going to need in order to become president. So your gauge and decision making is not based on your current situation or condition, but based on what it is that you want to do in the future. So it allows you to continue to position yourself to do that. (President 1)

President 1 explained excellence, networking, and doing your best, which can result in promotion, as interconnected:

Then also is being excellent at whatever job that you currently have. So often we try to position ourselves by knowing the right people, by networking, by increasing our education, which all of those things are important, but unless you are excellent in the job you're doing, you're not going to move up in the organization, and if you do move up, at some point you're going to be exposed because you don't have the skill sets to be successful; that you used other means to get promoted. And so I think first and foremost, understanding that your job is the job that you have, and not the one you're trying to get, because there's just a shortage of good people, and if you're really good, people are going to present opportunities for you to get promoted. So along with that; if you've got that down and solid, then adding pieces like networking and meeting new people, or going to professional development activities will only add additional value. They'll make you more well-rounded. (President 1)

President 2 talked about the qualifications necessary for becoming a community college president in meeting minimum qualifications and being connected with the right organizations. The themes for his answers are qualifications, experience, and connections. He stated the following in his interview:

Basically Number 1, you need a doctorate, because even though the minimum qualifications says a master's degree, a doctorate degree is always a desirable qualification, so make sure you reach desirable qualifications. Make sure you have experience as a dean and as a vice president. The other thing is this, there are several leadership institutes that African American males can take advantage of. One is called the Thomas Lincoln Institute, which is put on by the President's Roundtable of the National Association of Black American Affairs [AACA], and that's a group of African-American community college presidents that work together. The AACA has what called the Executive Leadership Institute, and in California, the ACCA has a mentoring program called the ACCA Mentoring Program, in which you can choose your own mentor. So those are some of the ways that you can get into the groove and make sure you're in the right place at the right time, so you can become a community college president. And they show you everything from resume-building to connecting you to the right places and people who do a lot of these searches for these positions.

The other thing is is that you can't be afraid. You have to apply anywhere. I mean, people say "about a fit." Well you won't know what your fit is until you get in and get an interview. But once you get an interview that means that they're

weeding people out to see who they want to hire. And once you get an interview, that when you show who you are. (President 2)

President 3 had a list of strengths he believed are necessary for those African American males who are working toward community college presidency. He stated,

I think that given the way and images that African American males are viewed, there's a lot of room for folks to take a look and say, you know, there's strengths that we have developed over time that I believe is in us to be able to persist in different environments. And I would say that I think those strengths are resiliency, having a sense of identity, a connection to a broader community, and that understanding. I think when you're marginalized, sometimes there's a way to feel like you need to—and maybe for me—I can't speak for everybody, but you need to shine because there are folks who put you in a box of stereotype. There are a lot of brothers in the middle that have developed a sense of identity and self to want to belong, fit in, and be successful. (President 3)

President 4 gave quick, yet important responses during his interview. He stated,

African American male leaders who are working towards becoming community college presidents, 1, they get mentored; 2, they have doctorate degrees, and 3, they're open-minded regarding the CEO position. And what I mean by being open-minded is don't expect it to be what you think it's going to be, because it's not. Every campus is different. (President 4)

President 5 talked about the different areas of the community college that must be known well to successfully fulfill leadership duties and responsibilities as community college president:

> You have to know enough about the instructional side, student services, and the business side of the community college operation. Wherever your strength is, it can be further developed. If you're coming out of business, or you're coming out of the service, or instruction; that's fine, but you need to have a good grip on all three aspects of the house. But knowing that you can't know everything, you have people who are experts in their field and you surround yourself with those people who are good in those areas and let them do their jobs. You can't replicate yourself in all three areas, for it's a big system. If you micromanage everything, you'll go crazy. So hire good talent, let them do their jobs, and you hold them accountable. (President 5)

Findings Research Question 4

What were some of the challenges African American men had to overcome on their journey to reach the position of president in community colleges?

African American men must endure and overcome numerous challenges to reach their goals of achieving the presidency position at community colleges. The theme that applies to President 1 is institutionalized racism. He struggled with this during his application processes for leadership positions in community colleges. He stated the following:

Institutionalized racism is real; the stereotype threat is not something that's made

up. It's something that we have to navigate our way through; there's a different

level or set of expectations for Black men in the community college system that

doesn't exist for other people. I know one of the things that I felt like when I was

just starting interviewing for president positions—now I don't know if this is true;

this is what I felt—that when I'd get interviewed by chancellors or the board, it's

almost like this idea of are they willing to take the risk of hiring a Black male, that

it always felt like this is a risky proposition. (President 1)

President 1 went on to share his experiences and feelings regarding hiring

practices and race. He commented that interviewers question risk very little when

considering a White male for the presidency position. If they are hired for the job and

their resume appears to be "presidential," then it's assumed that chancellor or board of

directors made a good choice. In contrast, if an African American man is hired, he is

immediately subjected to scrutiny, questioning his resume and background more than his

Caucasian counterpart; hence, this scrutinizing behavior would not indicate they had

made a "safe choice." President 1 stated,

The secret conversation that Black administrators have when they're applying for

presidencies or even vice presidencies, is that we'll look at the website of colleges

we're thinking about applying for to see how many other Black people are in the

vice president or president positions within that district. If there's no other, your

chances go up. So you're like oh, there's no other Black person as vice president;

that means that they could hire me because the belief is that they're not going to

allow more than one or two to hold certain positions, so it's like you have met that secret quota. (President 1)

President 2 was asked the same question, and talked about ensuring one has what they need in being prepared for the positions. His themes were being prepared and being confident. He talked about his own experiences and shared the following:

So I think that lack of experience as a V.P. hurt me because I was still an associate dean; my resume was associate dean. I was doing just about everything, you know, at a small college. So being at a small college, you can gain a lot of experience in areas that you couldn't at a larger institution, because at a larger institution you have large layers of people who can work on different things. Yet at a small college, here it's you and maybe three other people. So those are some of the obstacles I felt. (President 2)

Another challenge or obstacle he shared was having confidence when others doubted his abilities. He shared an experience of working with a president who felt as if he was not ready to be a "full dean" yet:

He gave me all these reasons [why he was not ready to be full dean], but I showed him where he was incorrect or wrong. I just told him; I said, 'Let's quit the arguing. I tell you what. You're the president; you make the decisions. I'm a big boy. I mean, I'm devastated that you didn't do this, but I have to show you what I can do." And I did, and I knew that was coming, and then actually, he was the one who recommended me for the vice presidency. So that was great, but those are the types of obstacles that you have to deal with. There's going to be someone who

doubts what you can do. You have to have that confidence. And the other thing which I didn't tell you, and you had mentioned this, you have to pray every day, and I keep a prayer journal every day; I think that's very important. (President 2)

President 3 also shared some advice on obstacles and challenges that need to be overcome to attain a community college presidency. His themes were self-identity and like President 1, institutionalized racism. He offered words of encouragement by stating the following:

But I would say the average thing they have to overcome is a sense of identity, perceptions that others have that are limiting or either excessive. Because you are one of a few, there must be something different about you, and then expectations are elevated beyond the ability to actually achieve that. (President 3)

Along the similar thoughts of President 1, President 3 felt very strongly that institutionalized racism means people make assumptions about a person who happens to be non-White, regardless of their educational background and experiences. President 3 briefly stated,

You do have to overcome institutionalized racism, where people are making decisions based on name and appearance. You know, I think before a lot of brothers open their mouths, people make assumptions about what they're going to say, being low-value, or if there's a mistake made, it tends to stick to the African American male a lot more than it does to—what I've seen—to my White male counterparts. (President 3)

President 4 said the following in his interview: "But the biggest issue I've had was just trying to prove to people that I could do the job. But my thing is that you've got to out-work the next person, and that goes back to my history" (President 4). President 5 talked about the importance of screening for the community college presidency, which was his theme. He talked about the racial congruence of screening committees:

> Usually screening committees, whether they're trustees or background staff, they look for people like themselves. It's oftentimes perpetuating the same look. You don't see as many folks of color, Hispanic or African American in certain positions because trustees and screening committees look like the folks that they hire, and they're more comfortable with folks that they hire. It's changing somewhat today, but not as much as it can. I would say that the difficulty is people tend to be more comfortable with folks who look like themselves. So if that's the case of a screening committee, then oftentimes you get the same results. And here at the school where I serve as president, I think it's unusual for this school to just come out and have someone different than themselves. I'm the second person of color they've had in 136 years. (President 5)

Findings Research Question 5

What recommendations would African American community college presidents make to African American men aspiring to advance to leadership positions in higher education?

Each participant interviewed had valuable advice and recommendations to offer African American men who are aspiring to advance to positions of leadership, including the presidency in higher education. President 1 offered these words of recommendation:

Just know that it is possible; this is something that's doable for those who have that aspiration. There's nothing so special or unique about who I am that would suggest that someone who desires to be a president couldn't be one. So I think just that level of encouragement, to see that someone who was able to navigate that path, shows that you can navigate that path and still be authentic; true to who you are. (President 1)

President 2 offered these words of recommendation:

You have to get out there. If you want to do this, decide now that you want to do it. Decide now to start working your way through this process, and start contacting people, no matter what their ethnic background is, inquiring about their journey to becoming president. Then you need to look into some small situations, positions that are humble, yet has the potential to leading you to the presidency, because that could happen for you. (President 2)

President 3 offered encouragement with many themes: hard work, mentorship, and self-care:

I would say to brothers, keep working hard; believe in yourself; always reach out and tap into your network, whether it be elders or peers. Don't look at each other as competition because there seems to be so few seats, and it's not that the next brother is taking it from you; you can both get to where you want and need to be. Understand that what you have achieved, if you're already there, is special; not that you feel pressure, but you've felt pressure before. Handle it and make a difference so that you can open the door for other people. I'd also say to brothers

that are presidents, don't get complacent. You have to do more work than others

because you now have a position where you can influence the pipeline in different

ways, whether it be a mentor inspiring presidents, or whether it be to open a door

to a brother who didn't feel like he was college material and he's looking up to

you. It's a heavy lift, and I would say to take care of yourself. You know, there's

family priorities, there's personal health issues, and you're no good unless you

can take care of yourself and keep a clear mind, and always manage the stress.

(President 3)

President 4 also offered some brief yet important recommendations by stating,

I think the best advice I can give is to be patient, understand that this is a

marathon; not a race. Take advantage of all opportunities. If someone asks you to

do something, and you might not think it's a good idea, you still do it because

you're going to learn something from that. Once you get in this position

(presidency), you learn. (President 4)

President 5 offered very helpful advice regarding serving in administrative

leadership and presidency roles at community colleges:

These jobs are not for the faint of heart. If you have a thin skin, or you're not

willing to put the work in; you're not willing to have a work–life balance, or you

don't like people, then you're in it for the wrong reasons, they're [positions] are

not for you. These jobs can be like a roller coaster. Sometimes they're very high;

sometimes very low, and you've got to be able to be flexible and roll with the

punches, but also be aware that you don't know what you don't know, and you

keep learning. One of the things I try to do is read the Chronicle or some books on leadership, or teaching leadership programs, or working with mentors. Or just the fact that people like yourself (referring to interviewer), who are working on doctorates, looking at what you're doing, for everything that you're doing can be added to the knowledge base for other folks who are coming behind you. (President 5)

Summary

Participants in this study shared their experiences as African American male community college presidents in California, and offered advice for those who desire to become community college presidents, as well as encouragement for those who are currently serving in the position. Their answers were heartfelt and passionate regarding their experiences as they strived for and eventually attained the positions of community college presidents. Some issues and themes of these interviews included race consciousness, self-consciousness, and flexibility, being intentional, taking advantage of opportunities, leadership, mentorship, qualifications, administrative pipeline, self-care, and courage.

Although each participant had different experiences, they all appeared to have some commonalities such as the hard work they had to do to attain the positions of community college presidents in California. They also talked about the importance of dealing with rejection, as well as personal insecurities. Seven African American men are community college presidents of 115 campuses in the state of California, yet a common theme is that African American men should not be in competition with one another, due to the scarcity of presidency positions.

Being prepared and knowing one's value were also poignant points addressed. If one lacks preparedness, eventually it will become obvious. Knowing one's self-worth is important because African American men seeking community college president positions in California are scrutinized and stereotyped based on their appearance and society's views of who they are and what they can and cannot accomplish. Chapter 5 includes further discussion, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for this research study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The intent of this qualitative study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions and lived experiences of African American male presidents of California community colleges; their underrepresentation in community college presidency; the strengths and skills required; how life/work experiences have contributed to assisting African American men to attain their goals of presidents, as well as the challenges and barriers they encounter and must overcome. Study findings showed the significance of a need for further research regarding the underrepresentation and disparities of African American male applicants, candidates, and current sitting presidents.

Chapter 4 introduced the personal and professional lives and experiences of five African American male community college presidents in California. This chapter explains the findings and offers a conclusion. This chapter also includes recommendations for future research and practices in the profession in regard to African American men and access to the community college presidency. Because little literature described why African American men are underrepresented as presidents of community colleges in California, interviews with participants were extremely helpful in answering the research questions, discussed next.

Discussion

The findings presented in Chapter 4 in response to the five research questions that guided this study will be discussed in relation to how the questions were answered by the five participants during their interviews, as well as related literature.

Research Question 1:

What are the views of African American male community college presidents in higher academe with respect to the continuing underrepresentation of African American male presidents in community colleges?

Educators agree that diversity of ethnicity, gender, and race among presidents is important. A common concern is the underrepresentation of minority leaders in community colleges (Phelps, Taber, & Smith, 1997). However, the concern appears to be among those who are affected by it most as the State of California has only seven African American male community college presidents of the 115 community college campuses. That reality proves that racial biases exist, and little is being done to correct the deficiency as a collective body to remedy the disparities. The five African American male community college presidents who participated in the study are all aware of the the great underrepresentation of African American presidents in California; however, they had different perceptions as to why the underrepresentation exists.

One main idea was that several reasons explain the lack of African American men on the administrative pipeline to become community college presidents. One reason is the lack of preparedness by not having a doctorate degree (although a doctorate is not required for the community college presidency). One president disagreed and believed many African American men in higher academia are on the administrative pipeline, yet too few president positions are available at California community colleges.

Another major issue mentioned by each president as to why African American men are underrepresented in the community college presidency is institutionalized racism. According to Randall (2008), "institutional racism involves polices, practices,

and procedures of institutions that have a disproportionately negative effect on racial minorities' access to and quality of goods, services, and opportunities." (para 3). Institutional racism is not a new phenomenon; it has long been an unethical and illegal method of exclusion. Institutional racism occurs in many social, political, and educational institutions. Many policies and practices of exclusion of minorities have been written in a manner that excludes minorities, based on their areas of perceived lack and weakness.

An example of institutional racism in the genre of education could be the following: A Caucasian man and an African American man are vying for the same administrative position at an urban community college in a major city that serves a predominately Black and Brown student population, with a mostly Caucasian administration. Most faculty positions are held by African Americans and other minorities. Both men have the same level of education and experience; however, the Caucasian man is chosen. When asked for feedback, the African American man is told "You just aren't a good fit for the position," and nothing further. Because both men were equally qualified for the position (of course the African American man would not know that), from a CRT perspective, the African American man did not get the position due to institutional racism. Historically, administrative positions are reserved for Caucasians.

Institutional racism should be examined from the perspective of CRT. As quoted in the review of literature, Milner (2017) stated,

> Critical race theorists are concerned with exposing, disrupting, challenging, and changing racist policies (and consequently practices) that work to subordinate and disenfranchise people of color. In its simplest charge, critical race theorists

examine policy to expose and challenge inequity as well as the status quo. (p. 296)

Research Question 2:

What work–life experiences have contributed to their success as president of a community college?

All participants talked about their educational background; some were similar and others contrasted markedly from other participants. One participant did not know what a community college was until, by happenstance, he came in contact with some community college students. Another participant began his educational career as a community college student; however, most participants attended 4-year colleges and universities. Interestingly, none of the participants initially desired or worked toward becoming a community college president until they became faculty members at other colleges and universities. Some were offered the positions by being in positions such as dean and vice president. Being well versed in various areas of higher education—student services, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, financial aid, admissions and records, or residential life—was paramount in obtaining the presidency.

One participant spoke of being assigned to direct a college department of which he had no prior knowledge or experience. His point was not to decline opportunities for learning and growth, but to accept them and enlist the necessary expertise from others who do have experience in the area, and learn from them. Other aspects that contributed to participants' successes as community college presidents were being fathers and husbands, siblings, caregivers, athletes and coaches, psychologists, military officers, corporate executives, janitors, pastors, activists, and fast-food workers. The makings of a

great president includes respecting humble beginnings but being open and willing to learn different skill sets and jobs, and being part of a team.

Research Question 3:

What leadership skills/behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position at a community college?

This question, when asked of the participants, received mixed results. Each talked about their leadership style. The main two styles discussed regarding leadership skills and behaviors that assist with presidency attainment are servant leadership and transformational leadership. In higher academia leadership, servant leaders lead in a manner that is more humble, as a leader who considers himself part of a team instead of strictly the team leader. A servant leader is open minded and not intimidated by learning from others. As stated in the review of literature, Greenleaf suggested,

A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the "top of the pyramid," servant leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible. (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016, p. 1)

As mentioned above, academic leaders oftentimes are experts in one area; however, they are often offered opportunities to go into different areas of education with which they are unfamiliar. They must be open and willing to learn from others who are considered subordinates. A servant leader is willing and often does the exact same work as those he or she leads. Some participants expressed that servant leaders help others to

see their greatness and potential to be successful at whatever they choose to do. Servant

leaders offer assistance in making the dreams and goals of others a reality.

Transformational leadership in higher academia leadership focuses on effecting change

for the institution; hopefully, for the good. In the literature, Bass et al. (2003) suggested,

> Transformational leaders appear to have the characteristics of being able to learn
>
> across their areas of expertise. Transformational leaders are mostly at the top of
>
> their field of expertise, and oftentimes have a limited vision and perspective to
>
> discern that change is required in order for success to continue, or the
>
> consequences for continuing to operate in the same fashion jeopardizes that
>
> success. (pp. 207–208)

Participants used words such as "courageous" and "competitive" to describe how

to attain the presidency. Numerous times they talked about being in a competition against

others to attain the presidency, not in the sense of making fellow colleagues appear to be

inferior or "stepping on their heads," but having an awareness that few positions are

available and many people want them. When speaking of being courageous, a participant

referenced that the process to reach the presidency—applying and interviewing—may be

a fearful and intimidating process to many; however, he said fear is common, but one

should continue to remain in the process and not give up.

Research Question 4:

What were some of the challenges African American men had to overcome on

their journey to reach the position of president in community colleges?

Some of the challenges participants had to overcome to attain presidency at

community colleges varied, yet they were quite transparent about their own journeys to

the presidency. There was consensus among participants' answers. One consistent idea was knowing who he is and being secure with his own self-identity. African American men seeking to elevate in higher academia must understand that they are marginalized and underrepresented. In an attempt to be considered for a position, some may allow others to "put them in a box" where they can remain content and shine, perhaps by giving them a dean's position and letting them remain there without promotion during their careers; hence, never attaining the presidency. African American men in higher academia must know themselves and have a clear understanding of their skills and experiences; they must be authentically realistic with themselves.

Holmes (2004) stated,

Thus the majority of the current pool of African American administrators may never realize their full potential because they are not perceived as qualified by their White counterparts; even though their educational training and professional experiences are comparable. … This finding suggests that governing board officials must become more open to administrators of color in diverse institutional settings when making hiring decisions in order to expand the pool of qualified applicants. This means hiring officials and their representatives who are generally responsible for hiring administrators at the chief executive level will need to work closely with presidents of historically Black colleges and universities and two-year community colleges to identify persons who could be candidates for future employment opportunities. (pp. 34–35)

Another idea discussed was applying, interviewing, and being offered the job of president at a community college as a "token Black man," so the institution can appear to

be a diversity-friendly environment that embraces African American men. A few participants felt they were that "token Black man;" some took the position, and others felt they were not a good match for that particular campus. Some participants were well aware of such institutions and believed their presidency could affect positive change, whereas others found themselves emotionally wounded when they faced their reality of being an African American man attempting to attain a community college presidency. Some declined offers and continued their searches.

Another issue discussed was disparities in the quality of contracts offered African American male presidents and their Caucasian counterparts. Some participants explained being offered presidency positions with certain terms and conditions in their contracts, and, when compared to Caucasian men serving in the same positions in other locations, their packages were lower in pay, benefits, and other perquisites. One president said "Every job you apply for isn't for you; you just won't be a match. However, don't allow yourself to feel defeated to the point where you refuse to apply for any more positions." Rejection is a part of the process, and one may be rejected several times before a community college is willing to accept a person into the presidency; it is important during those times not to give up.

It is also dangerous to be so desperate to get a presidency position that an African American man will take an offered position in any situation. Accepting a presidency is an important decision to ponder, seek wise counsel about, discuss with family and close loved ones, and consult others who have worked and are currently working in the position. If one accepts a presidency at an institution that is operating poorly without

knowledge of it, or a plan and level of expertise to revitalize it, the results could be devastating.

<div align="center">Research Question 5:</div>

What recommendations would African American community college presidents make to African American men aspiring to advance to leadership positions in higher education?

The participants all offered the same recommendations, saying "It is possible" and "You can achieve the presidency." Other recommendations are to be patient with oneself and the process, for this journey is not a race or a competition, but a marathon. Aspirants should take advantage of all opportunities, for they are opportunities to learn. It is important to have mentors to guide them through the process and journey of attaining the presidency. It is necessary to have a doctorate degree (even if the employment description says otherwise) as the higher degree makes one more competitive.

Participants advocated one keeps learning, staying abreast of the most current changes in the education field, continuing to read books, attending trainings and workshops to hone one's skills. One should stay properly connected with networks and organizations that assist in the process of attaining the presidency. Aspiring presidents should seek speaking and presenting opportunities at national conferences and symposiums, augmenting the credence of their experiences. Work–life balance is important, particularly for husbands and fathers; if obligations outside of work are being neglected, one should reevaluate priorities.

Self-care is also important: proper diet, exercise, rest, and emotional/mental health are important as well. Spiritual health is important as well: prayer, meditation, and

journaling. Of uttermost importance is to ponder and decide if the presidency is what one truly desires. An aspiring president should not wait after they realize that position is not what they want. Those with persistence will eventually reach their goals so one should not give up.

Conclusions

African American male community college presidents in California are underrepresented. The ratio of seven African American community college presidents to 115 community colleges in the state is inequitable and racially motivated. This issue has been ignored for too long, and must be addressed. Policies, practices, and procedures are in place to ensure that African American men remain out of presidency positions, and lacking interventions, the likelihood of African American men becoming presidents will be small.

African American male presidency candidates, and those who are currently serving as presidents in California, have extensive backgrounds; some were more privileged and others had humble beginnings. The impressions perceived during the interviews were that those with humble beginnings talked from a perspective of gratitude, for they knew what it meant to work in positions where respect and value for them were minimal, such as fast-food workers and sanitation workers. Those who began working as student workers at their respective institutions during their undergraduate years and worked their way up through the ranks to the presidency were quite humble. Those who were afforded more opportunities such as scholarships to cover the full costs of their undergraduate education, or who had lucrative careers as corporate executors or military

officers after graduation from 4-year colleges and universities had more of an air of entitlement.

Some challenges African American men had to overcome on their journeys toward their community college presidencies were having attitudes of humility, grace, courage, and self-value, which are some of the skills required to attain a presidency position. African American men must also know themselves well enough to know what a good opportunity is, and what opportunities they may need to pass over. It is important to know their self-worth, for this will provide them with strength to remain in the pipeline to the presidency and not give up due to rejection. Patience must be exercised during the process.

Some recommendations for African American men aspiring to advance to leadership positions in higher academia, particularly the presidency, are to remain consistent in the academic pipeline, keep applying despite rejection, and understand that racism does exist in education. Candidates are likely to experience racism on their journey to the presidency. It is important for aspirants to remember that the journey to the presidency is not a competition with African American colleagues; there is room for everyone somewhere.

Implications

This study revealed a disproportionate number of Caucasian male community college presidents in comparison to their African American male counterparts; African American male presidents in community colleges in California are greatly underrepresented. Study results also agreed with the literature that if the disparities that affect African American men in the administrative pipeline toward the presidency are to

become more balanced and fair, much work will need to be done. Colleges need to transparently address such disparities by acknowledging the truth and incorporating programs to be more inclusive of African American men. Results showed that participants were well qualified to be community college presidents in education level, experiences, and skills. African American men are equally qualified as their Caucasian male counterparts to successfully execute their passions of being community college presidents.

Recommendations to the Profession

1. African American men whose aims is to attain the community college presidency should first self-reflect and evaluate whether they are sure they desire to be a president; it is of utmost importance to be clear about one's aspiration upfront. If one is clear, willing, and able to perform the responsibilities and endure the challenges that accompany the role, then these men should take opportunities to enhance skill sets and strengths to attain the presidency and be successful.

2. Community college boards of directors need to acknowledge the lack of African American male presidents and how the lack of diversity can potentially harm those who are of diverse backgrounds who attend and work at these schools. Board should encourage more African American men in the administrative pipeline to gain equitable opportunities and access to leadership positions, including the presidency.

3. The work–life aspects of the lives of potential candidates for the presidency must be strong. Participants highly recommended they seek mentors to guide

them through the journey to the presidency, as well as accept opportunities

outside of their scope of expertise in other areas of higher education that will

assist them in personal and professional growth. Networking with

organizations and groups that support and address issues that those in the

pipeline are enduring and overcoming is a source of encouragement and

strength.

4. Current African American male presidents must find and coach other African

American men who exemplify promise as future college leaders, including

presidents. Although this is a great sacrifice for the president, doing this has

the potential to expand the population of future presidents that will include

more African American men.

Recommendations for Future Research

Little literature and research data exists on African American male community

college presidents in California. As a result, a study is needed on the presidency

requirements for each California community college campus to ensure that the

requirements are the same. A study of applications by race, and an overview of each

current president's application package could compare items ranging from education and

experience, to skills and pay and benefits. Such a study may show where African

American male presidents and candidates have been the target of racial discrimination.

Previous studies showed that African American men have the education, skills, and

experiences to be successful community college presidents in California, similar to their

non-African-American male counterparts; yet African American men do not seem to

experience vertical movement into presidency positions.

Another recommendation for future research is a study that compares the experiences of African American male community college presidents from different states to evaluate similarities and differences throughout the United States and examine how the prerequisites for presidency positions can be made more congruent. A study of African American male and female community college presidents is of importance, to evaluate the commonalities and differences of men and women presidents.

Future Practice

The first recommendation for future practice is that politicians, community college administrators, and boards of directors acknowledge that racism in higher academia toward African American men who attain presidency is a pervasive problem in California. I also recommend changing policies, practices, and procedures to make them more inclusive of African American men and establish a time frame as to when visible change should accrue, such as performing more promotions to community college presidencies. Investigations are necessary because many who now sit in the presidency position attained it through knowing someone or through "the good ole boy network." Such behaviors should have harsh consequences, particularly if the condition, morale, and work ethics of those who work and attend school at these campuses are not positive.

Concluding Thoughts

The goal of this study was to obtain the perceptions and lived experiences of African American male community college presidents in California. Very early in this study it was obvious that racial underrepresentation existed at these colleges in California, negatively affecting the African American man by not providing equitable opportunities for advancement to the presidency. The African American male presidents

who participated in interviews offered their experiences and journeys to the presidency and offered recommendations to those aspiring to be community college presidents. They all acknowledged and rued the great underrepresentation of African American male presidents.

Participants were glad to have their positions; however, they were saddened and angered because only seven African American men are presidents in California community colleges. They also feel isolated and find community with each other and other colleagues at HBCUs and other institutions. These men worked tirelessly and with integrity to attain these positions and encouraged those in the pipeline to stay the course and persist. Their passion for higher education far outweighed the challenges and struggles they endured once they reached the presidency. These men's transparency in sharing their lived experiences to the presidency spoke much of their characters as African American men who happen to be presidents in California's community colleges.

As an African American man with higher education, and with the hopes of transitioning into professorships and advancing through promotions, the researcher was quite nervous and a bit discouraged by the outcomes of this study. Dreams of being accepted into higher academia seemed to slip and might not happen as hoped. Yet, a glimmer of hope came from participants' encouraging words and sharing of experiences. This study was not performed by happenstance; however, informed of the underrepresentation of the African American male presidents in California's community colleges, and perhaps the trajectory of this researcher, information was presented to make known to the public, local and state political figures, and the media. Whether or not accepted into higher academia, the researcher feels empowered and responsible for

helping other African American men who are attempting to enter in or promote through the ranks of community college leadership to make their dreams a reality. The fear of rejection is real; however, giving up is not an option and the researcher feels confident that eventually someone will offer the opportunities sought in higher academia.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO THE PRESIDENTS

September 28, 2017

Dear President Doe,

I am a doctoral candidate pursuing a degree in education in the Leadership Studies department at the University of San Francisco. I am in the process of writing my dissertation proposal, and my area of study is the lack of African-American male presidents at California community colleges. As an African-American male pursuing higher education with the hopes of one-day becoming an instructor, and holding a leadership position within a community college in the future, this study is very personal for me, and I believe relevant for the times in which we live today.

As you are well aware, the California Community Colleges Presidents and Chancellors Office (2017) reports that out of the 115 community college campuses, there are only seven African-American male presidents within the California community college system. There is not much research on the underrepresentation of African-American males; however, it is obvious that racial and gender biases are prevalent. I am excited to progress forward with my research and writing, to gain a better understanding of why things are the way that they are, and hopefully add my findings to the records within higher academia.

The methodology that I will be using during this study is a qualitative analysis of African-American male presidents within California community colleges regarding their underrepresentation in president positions, different types of leadership within higher education, and leadership in the higher education pipeline, utilizing Critical Race Theory as part of my methodology. From reading your biographical information from your

school's website, I was made aware of how important cultural diversity in the student body and faculty is to you. I am in great hopes that you agree that your participation within this study will provide great insight, understanding, and wisdom to African-American males in higher academia who aspire to seek a presidency position at a community college one day.

I will be conducting sampling interviews of the seven African-American male community college presidents in California to gather supportive informational data for my study; the names of participants will be confidential. I plan to conduct interviews within the month of October, and interview questions will be provided in advance. Please feel free to contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Patricia Mitchell at mitchell@usfca.edu

I know that your schedule is busy, yet I am asking you for some time to allow me to conduct an interview with you? I would greatly appreciate it if you are able to do so. I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Tyree L. Robinson, MA

tlrobinson2@dons.usfca.edu

Cellular phone: 415-490-7399

August 15, 2017

APPENDIX B: VALIDATION PANEL LETTER

Dear Dr. Doe,

It is my sincere desire that this letter finds you well and prosperous. The reason for my letter is that that it would be my distinct honor for you to serve on my Validation Panel for the interview questions that I have generated for my dissertation research.

You will find included within this correspondence the questions that I plan to ask African American male presidents of California community colleges, as well as the Interview Validation Rubric, in which you can use in evaluating the questions I have created.

Written below is the purpose of my research study, coupled with the research questions that I will be researching. Should you be able to help, I would ask that you would return the attached Interview Validation Rubric to me by Monday, August 28, 2017.

Thank you for taking the time and energy to assist me with validating my research questions. Your tenure in higher education is of great value to me, and I look forward to your feedback and suggestions.

Best Regards,

Tyree Robinson, MA

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discern the voices of those currently serving in presidency positions; their work and life's experiences that has contributed to their successes as presidents; the challenges they have endured to attain their positions; and to identify the leadership skills and behaviors necessary for African-American men to attain

presidency positions at California community colleges. Due to the great underrepresentation of African American male presidents at community colleges, the testaments of their experiences may be very instrumental in answering the questions regarding the lack of African American men community college presidents, as well as educate the higher education community of the racial and gender inequities within the California community college system. Sharing their journeys may also provide hope and encouragement to those aspiring to attain a presidency at community colleges throughout the state.

Research and Interview Questions

1. What are the views of African American male community college presidents in higher academe with respect to the continuing underrepresentation of African American male presidents in community colleges?

   • What strengths and abilities do African American males need in order to attain the position of community college president?

   • What is it like being an African American male community college president?

   • Will you please describe your familial background and how you were raised?

   • How can African American males who are working towards becoming community college presidents acquire these strengths and abilities?

   • What are some obstacles and challenges that African American males need to overcome in order to attain a community college president's position?

2. What work–life experiences have contributed to their success as president of a community college?

- Why do you believe there are immense and continual disparities towards African American male community college presidents?

- What can African American males who are currently serving as presidents of community colleges in California do to address the issue of racial and gender disparities these men encounter, if anything?

3. What leadership skills/behaviors are necessary for African American men to attain a presidency position at a community college?

- What type of leader do you consider yourself to be?

- What previous life's experiences have impacted you in your leadership role?

- Will you please describe your educational background, the positions you have held in higher education leadership, and how they have influenced you to become a community college president?

- How do your previous work experiences assist you in fulfilling your leadership duties and responsibilities as president?

4. What were some of the challenges African American men had to overcome on their journey to reach the position of president in community colleges?

- What obstacles and challenges did you encounter as you attempted and successfully secured a president's position?

- What can other African American male leaders in higher education and working towards the community college presidency do to overcome such obstacles and challenges?

5. What recommendations would African American male community college presidents make to African American men aspiring to advancing to leadership positions in higher education?

- Do you have any final words of insight, encouragement, wisdom, or recommendations you would like to share at this time?

Appendix C: Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Approval
Notification

To: Tyree Robinson

From: Terence Patterson, IRB Chair

Subject: Protocol #903

Date: 09/13/2017

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the

University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects

approval regarding your study.

Your research (IRB Protocol **#903**) with the project title **THE PERCEPTIONS AND LIVED**

EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY

COLLEGES has been approved by the IRB Chair under the rules for expedited review

on **09/13/2017**.

Any modifications, adverse reactions or complications must be reported using a

modification application to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS via email at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

Please include the Protocol number assigned to your application in your correspondence.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP

Professor & Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

University of San Francisco

irbphs@usfca.edu USF IRBPHS Website