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A Mixed Methods Exploration of Black Presidents Appointed to Predominantly White Institutions: Assessing their Exposure to the Glass Cliff and Experiences as Administrators of Color

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PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS: ASSESSING THEIR
EXPOSURE TO THE GLASS CLIFF AND EXPERIENCES AS
ADMINISTRATORS OF COLOR

by

Melandie Katrice McGee

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December 2017

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ABSTRACT

A MIXED METHODS EXPLORATION OF BLACK PRESIDENTS APPOINTED TO PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS: ASSESSING THEIR EXPOSURE TO THE GLASS CLIFF AND EXPERIENCES AS ADMINISTRATORS OF COLOR

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Leadership studies have infrequently addressed the diversity of leaders. Moreover, little is known about the experiences of Black presidents serving at predominantly White institutions (PWIs). The present study was conceptualized using the glass cliff framework which posits that women and racial minorities are more often promoted to precarious leadership positions than are White males. Examined through a lens of race and leadership, the goals of this study were to: (1) assess whether there were observable differences in the prevalence and magnitude of adverse conditions surrounding the appointments of Black and White presidents at PWIs; and (2) gain an understanding of the leadership experiences of racial minorities heading PWIs. Essentially, this study aimed to examine the extent to which subtle forms of inequity are present among Black presidents who break through the pervasive glass ceiling. A two-phase explanatory sequential mixed methods design was employed.

Overall findings from the quantitative phase revealed that there were differences in the prevalence and magnitude of adverse conditions experienced between groups. However, these differences were relatively small. Although small, the differences found indicated that institutions appointing Black presidents experienced more instances of

adverse conditions that were less favorable than did institutions appointing White presidents. In the qualitative phase, six African American presidents participated in semi-structured interviews. Data analysis revealed four major thematic categories pertaining to participants' (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; (3) experiences with race and gender; and (4) perspectives on racial minority leadership. Key implications for higher education research and practice are presented.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wonderful family. You all have been a constant source of love, encouragement, support, and inspiration. First and foremost, I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Charles and Elaine McGee. Thank you for providing me with a strong foundation. I am forever grateful to you for all of the sacrifices you've made to help me realize my goals. You both have been my biggest supporters. My hope is that I have made you proud. I would also like to dedicate this work to my sisters, Rachel and Rebecca. Thank you both for being models of strength and perseverance and for always reassuring me that I was "smart" enough to pursue a doctoral degree. I want to also dedicate this dissertation to my nieces and nephews. I hope that my life's work inspires you all to reach for the stars and accomplish your goals despite how difficult or unattainable they may seem.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ACE</i>	American Council on Education
<i>CCIHE</i>	Carnegie Classification of Institutions in Higher Education
<i>CRT</i>	Critical Race Theory
<i>HBCU</i>	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
<i>IPEDS</i>	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
<i>MSI</i>	Minority-serving Institution
<i>Non-MSI</i>	Non- Minority-serving Institution
<i>PWI</i>	Predominantly White Institution
<i>SLT</i>	Situational Leadership Theory

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

“After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb” (Mandela, 2013 p. 544).

Leadership in the Literature

The origins of the scientific study of leadership, according to Chemers (1997), date back to the early 1900s. Scholarship relating to the diversity of organizational leaders, however, has been infrequently addressed in the literature. Consequently, this exclusion has, as noted by Eagly and Chin (2010), “weakened the ability of research and theory to address some of the most provocative aspects of contemporary leadership” (p. 216). Historically, positions of organizational leadership were typically reserved for and occupied by White men. Thus, providing a rationale as to why early research attempts to understand and conceptualize leadership excluded non-dominant groups (Kezar, 2000).

Although society and the workplace has evolved and, over time, become more pluralistic (Lucas & Baxter, 2012), studies examining leadership and challenges related to achieving diversity among all social groups have lagged behind. Much of the contemporary leadership literature examining inequities among groups largely focus on gender differences between men and women leaders—paying little attention to the influence of other demographic characteristics such as race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, persons with disabilities, or the intersectionality of these distinct identities (Chemers, 1997; Eagly & Chin, 2010; Hoyt & Chemers, 2008; Key, Popkin, Munchus, Wech, Hill, & Tanner, 2012; Kezar, 2000; Northouse, 2013; Parker, 2006).

Several scholars have called for innovative and creative research that explores the process by which inequities continue to persist among minority groups who seek, as well

as, gain access to positions of authority and leadership in today's workforce (Eagly & Chin, 2010; Huffman, 2012; Northouse, 2013). A relatively new line of research, centering on what has been coined the glass cliff phenomenon, examines the age-old topic of leadership from a unique perspective (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). It aims to investigate what occurs after minorities overcome the invisible barriers to elite positions of leadership known as the glass ceiling. Specifically, the glass cliff line of inquiry explores the subtle organizational and contextual challenges faced by the small number of women and racial minority leaders who eventually shatter the oft-times impenetrable glass ceiling.

Since scholarship related to organizational glass cliffs is still in its infancy, aspects of race and higher education leadership have not been fully explored—particularly in terms of the highest-ranking administrator of an institution of higher learning, the president. The lack of racial diversity permeating the office of the college and university presidency provides a rationale as to why post-secondary settings are a fruitful ground for research inquiry exploring the persistent nature of organizational inequities.

Background

As the United States population continues to change racially and ethnically, so does the diversity of our workforce. The make-up of individuals working within today's organizations are more diverse than they have ever been. It has been projected that the labor force will become even more diverse and by the year 2045, White people will be a minority in the U.S. workforce (Carnevale & Smith, 2013). Following legislative mandates such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited employment

discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, both African American men and women “comprise a gradually growing share of the U.S. labor force” (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012, p. 1) and therefore, have contributed to the increasingly diverse workforce that exists present-day.

Black Leaders in Organizations

While White males remain the dominant group leading America’s workforce, women and racial minorities now occupy significantly more leadership roles than they did in the past (Zweigenhaft & Domhoff, 2006). Despite the gains that have been made in leadership diversification, Black leaders, in particular, remain disproportionately underrepresented in key leadership roles associated with higher status, authority, and pay when compared to White male leaders (Hoyt & Chemers, 2008; Lucas, & Baxter, 2012; Rivera, 2012). Such employment challenges are considered, in part, to be a lingering vestige of past segregated practices within the U.S. (Harris & Lieberman, 2013; Hero, Levy, & Radcliff, 2013; Lindsay, 1999).

Black Leaders in Higher Education

Similar inequity patterns hold true for Black leaders working within faculty and administrative ranks in higher education. Relevant data and research portraying these disparities is relatively scant, eclectic, and even outdated (Jackson & O’Callaghan, 2009); further demonstrating a lack of commitment in research efforts to address challenges related to leadership diversity. Nonetheless, the existing literature reveals, although not surprisingly, that race and gender are still factors that continue to serve as significant impediments to attaining key positions of authority (Smith, 2002). Lee (1997) noted that White individuals were more likely to serve in faculty or administrative roles while Black

individuals were more likely to be employed in clerical or secretarial positions. Furthermore, individuals of color who secure faculty appointments are typically concentrated in lower level positions such as, assistant professors and non-tenure-track faculty positions (Lindsay, 1999; Valverde, 2003).

Senior level administrator positions in higher education, that is, those positions which serve as a pathway to the college or university presidency (e.g. chief academic officer; dean of an academic unit), also disproportionately lack diversity. According to Valverde (2003), few people of color have managed to successfully transition into executive roles within institutions of higher education. Likewise, the racial and ethnic composition of U.S. college and university presidents is equally discouraging. Trend data indicate that racial minorities tend to be significantly underrepresented in the upper echelons of higher education administration. The American Council on Education's (ACE) most recent publication, detailing the varied characteristics of the nation's college and university presidents, reveals an inconsistent and slow progression of the number of racial minorities that attain a presidency (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Among all offices of administration in higher education, the underrepresentation of African Americans is most likely illustrated in the office of the president (Holmes, 2004).

Black Leaders, Glass Cliffs, and Higher Education

For the small number of Black leaders who are able to successfully reach the pinnacle of the higher education labor hierarchy, of particular interest, is gaining an understanding of the organizational conditions that surround their appointment to the presidency. A number of researchers have found evidence that women and racial minorities are promoted to precarious or adverse leadership positions more often than

their White male counterpart—a phenomenon coined as the glass cliff (Cook & Glass, 2013; Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Ryan, Haslam, Wilson-Kovacs, Hersby, & Kulich, 2007). Conversely, a small number of studies have yielded contradicting results (Adams, Gupta, & Leeth, 2009; Cook & Glass, 2014c; Hennessey, MacDonald, & Carroll, 2014). Conceptually, the glass cliff thesis focuses on identifying the situational variables or the organizational circumstances surrounding the appointments of non-traditional leaders (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Further studies are needed to substantiate or challenge Ryan and Haslam's (2005) initial findings. Here, the glass cliff concept is used as a framework to explore issues related to race, higher education leadership, and subtle forms of organizational inequities.

At present, there are no known studies that investigate the glass cliff concept as it relates to racial minorities who are appointed presidents of institutions of American higher education. Two studies, however, have been conducted within the higher education context—both finding evidence of glass cliffs (Cook & Glass, 2013; Peterson, 2016). Furthermore, a majority of glass cliff research has been spearheaded outside of the U.S., with a large number of studies conducted in the United Kingdom (Ashby, Ryan, & Haslam, 2007; Haslam & Ryan, 2008; Kulich, Ryan, & Haslam, 2014; Ryan & Haslam, 2005). More research is needed to ascertain the prevalence of glass cliffs in American organizations. Lastly, these investigations have been largely quantitative in nature and rarely incorporate the voices of participants (Ryan, Haslam, & Postmes, 2007; Peterson, 2016). Quantitative methods alone are insufficient (Creswell & Clark, 2011) in constructing the essence of leaders' experiences; hence, the need to incorporate qualitative research designs in this study.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The primary goal was to determine whether organizational conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed at PWIs were different than those experienced by White presidents. More specifically, this study aimed to investigate the prevalence of adverse conditions surrounding the appointment of Black college and university presidents at PWIs in comparison to White presidents. The glass cliff framework was used to situate the study. A second purpose was to gain a better understanding of Black presidents' unique experience serving as a racial minority leader in predominantly White contexts. Additionally, leadership styles employed by Black presidents working within these settings was of interest to the study's objectives.

Through a lens of race and leadership theory, the glass cliff phenomenon provides a basis by which to critically examine and better understand subtle structural workplace inequities experienced by racial minorities. To this end, critical race and situational leadership theories were used to guide this work. The study was conducted utilizing a two-phase explanatory sequential mixed methods design. Quantitative data were collected to assess the prevalence and magnitude of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White leaders appointed at PWIs. Qualitative data were obtained to further explore the unique experiences of racial minority leaders serving at PWIs and characterized by adverse conditions. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Are there observed differences in the prevalence and magnitude of adverse conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed to lead at PWIs when compared to White presidents?

2. What are the unique leadership experiences of African American presidents heading predominantly White institutions characterized by adverse conditions?

Definition of Terms

1. *Glass Ceiling*: The “invisible barriers preventing women (and racial minorities) from ascending into elite leadership positions” (Northouse, 2013, p. 353).
2. *Glass Cliff*: Referred to in this study as, the preferential placement of racial minorities in leadership roles that are precarious and associated with an increased risk of negative consequences or failure (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, p. 83).
3. *Leadership*: “The nature of the influencing process—and its resultant outcomes—that occurs between a leader and followers and how this influencing process is explained by the leader’s dispositional characteristics and behaviors, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and *the context* in which the influencing process occurs” (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004, p. 5). “The leader is seen as the person most responsible and accountable for the organization’s actions” (Bass, 2008, p. 15).
4. *Situational Leadership Theory (SLT)*: Illustrates that “different situations demand different kinds of leadership . . . [and] to be an effective leader requires that a person adapt his or her style to the demands of different situations” (Northouse, 2013, p. 99).
5. *Critical Race Theory (CRT)*: “Focuses directly on the effects of race and racism, while simultaneously addressing the hegemonic system of White supremacy on the “meritocratic” system . . . for which the end goal is to bring change that will implement social justice” (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 27).

6. *Predominantly White Institutions or PWIs*: “An institution of higher learning in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment. However, the majority of these institutions may also be understood as historically White institutions in recognition of the exclusion supported by the United States prior to 1964. It is in a historical context of segregated education that predominantly White colleges and universities are defined and contrasted from other colleges and universities that serve students with different racial, ethnic, and/or cultural backgrounds” (Brown & Dancy, 2010a, p. 523).
7. *Historically Black Colleges and Universities or HBCUs*: Higher education institutions that were founded with the primary purpose of “educating the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans prior to 1964” (Brown & Dancy, 2010b, p. 520). Unlike PWIs, HBCUs were not founded with the intent to exclude or segregate based on race/ethnicity but were rather founded as a result of exclusionary practices of the time (Rivers, 2009).

Delimitations

Delimitations of the study included the following:

1. The participants in this study were limited to Black college and university presidents. Therefore, results may not be reflective of the experiences of other racial minority leaders.
2. The participants in this study were limited to presidents appointed at PWIs. As such, this study did not capture the experiences of Black presidents serving at other institutional types.

Limitations

Limitations of the study included the following:

1. The population pool from which to assemble a sample was restricted due to a lack of Black presidents currently serving at PWIs.
2. The purposive sampling procedures decreased generalizability.
3. There were time constraints associated with collecting data.

Assumptions

It was assumed that:

1. The experiences of interviewed participants were somewhat similar based on the criteria imposed when selecting participants for this study.
2. The participants answered interview questions honestly and truthfully.

Significance of Study

As promising, but not ideal, advances in the achievement of senior leadership positions have been made among Black people (Zweigenhaft & Domhoff, 2006), research efforts should begin examining the organizational contexts in which these minority leaders find themselves in, how they make meaning of their experiences within such contexts, and ultimately navigate these environments as leaders. The glass cliff framework provides an avenue in which to situate this study and explore the various veins of inquiry described above. Scholars have called for research along these lines thus, highlighting the need for scholarship examining the intersections of race, gender, and higher order positions of leadership (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Cook & Glass, 2014a; Ryan & Haslam, 2005).

This line of research is noteworthy, in that, it has the potential to yield important implications for racial minority leaders; contribute to an evolving conceptual body of scholarship, inform organizational practice; add to the scant literature on racial minorities serving in senior level leadership roles; and spur future research similar in nature. The hope is that this study serves to increase consciousness, create change in institutional practices, and produce strategies for preparedness among racial minority groups, the educational community, and organizations at large.

Chapter II provides a review of the literature on the history of Black education and Black higher education professional employment in the U.S. Chapter III follows with a discussion of the study's conceptual framework. Chapter IV details the research design and methodology used in carrying out this study.

CHAPTER II - LITERATURE REVIEW, HISTORIOGRAPHY

“The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions . . . have been born of earnest struggle” (Douglass, 1950, p. 437).

Much of the higher education literature examining the leadership outcomes of Black college and university presidents is clear in acknowledging their underrepresentation in these roles. This disparity is further exacerbated when solely examining majority serving institutions such as predominantly White institutions (PWIs) (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Historical references of restrictions to equal opportunity and access based on skin hue create a pathway to understanding the present-day marginalization that Black people experience in executive leadership roles within systems of higher education. The present chapter situates the study within its appropriate context with an examination of the schooling and employment history of Black individuals in America, broadly conceived. Particular attention will be given to historical forces that have shaped the employment experiences of Black workers. Finally, a historical and current perspective exploring the nature of Black higher education professional employment (i.e. faculty and administrators) will be provided.

To help conceptualize information presented in this chapter, the following chapter will propose a novel concept, the glass cliff thesis, by which to investigate the existence of present-day disparities faced by Black presidents at PWIs. Lastly, an overview of the theoretical frameworks guiding this study will be summarized in Chapter III. The terms Negroes, Blacks, and African Americans are used interchangeably to denote people of the African diaspora.

The Social Construction of Race in America

One cannot begin to wholly understand the experiences of African Americans in today's workforce without first examining their history in the United States. It is from these historical references that we make sense of how the concept of race has been socially constructed to privilege (benefit) some while oppressing (disadvantaging) others. In his study, aptly titled, *The Invention of the White Race*, Allen (2012) surmised that, "When the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619; there were no 'White' people there; nor, according to colonial records, would there be for another sixty years" (p. x). A similar supposition was echoed by novelist James Baldwin (2010) stating that, "No one was White before he/she came to America. It took generations, and a vast amount of coercion, before this became a White country" (p. 136).

The phenomenon understood presently in the United States as race traces back to the seventeenth century. During the latter stages of Bacon's Rebellion (1676-77), an estimated four hundred White and Negro laborers fought to gain freedom from bondage in Virginia. To maintain social control in response to labor solidarity and insurrection among Black and White workers, the "*White race*" and its corresponding system of racial privileges was established by the ruling elite (Allen, 2012). For Black individuals, the defeat of Bacon's Rebellion was both catastrophic and significant as it hastened the establishment of lifetime hereditary chattel servitude and fixed their "*place*" in society. As ideas of race solidified within American culture, one's whiteness eventually became synonymous with superiority and an entitlement to the "full rights of the free citizen" (Allen, 2012, p. 45) while those of African descent were assumed to be inherently

inferior, placed at the lowest levels of the racial hierarchy (Watkins, 2001), and thus, generally devoid of citizenship (for reference see *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, 1857).

It is through this lens of White supremacy one can visualize how racial ranking and categorization has resulted in inequitable and unjust treatment (whether intended or unintended) among people of color. That is to say, that, irrespective of individual merit or ability, the “*other*” races can never be on an equal footing with the dominant race while functioning within systems (i.e., labor systems; educational systems) that have historically recognized and rewarded differences in skin color. So then, the misfortune surrounding difference is that it can be (and has been) used as a vehicle to “include or exclude, reward or punish . . . [and] elevate or oppress” (Johnson, 2006, p. 16). Valverde (2003) posited that “without having these historical and conceptual constructs in mind, the reader will find it difficult to understand, let alone accept as reality, perspectives and beliefs shared by men and women of color” (p. 18). The present-day challenges faced by racial minority leaders within institutions of higher learning are not arbitrary but rather a partial result of centuries of systematic ways of thinking and doing which have served to retard the progression of minority groups.

Situating the Context

For Black people, the struggle to obtain equal access to civil rights prescribed in the U.S. constitution has been an unending point of contention and upward battle (for reference see Harding, 1981; Hill & Jones, 1993; Fleming, 1976; Kluger, 1975; Sitkoff, 1993; Woodward, 2002). Their evolution from indentured servants to that of lifetime hereditary human chattel is one well-known example of the harsh challenges Black people have faced since their arrival in seventeenth-century colonial America (Allen,

2012). Specifically, fair opportunities for education and employment were, and, some may argue, continue to be, among the significant issues of concern within the African American community's quest for civil rights and equitable treatment. The mere fact that pioneering court cases and legislation such as *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were necessary speak to the existence of rampant inequalities that demanded recourse within the United States' educational and labor systems.

At the center of the above-mentioned federal laws was the institution of segregation. Segregation based on racial differences was the way of life in the U.S. This model pervaded relatively every aspect of routine living such as, public accommodations (i.e. eating at restaurants, drinking from water fountains, using restrooms, transportation, and housing), religion, politics, cemeteries, hospitals, the military, and in the workplace. Although, no area seems to have been more conspicuous than in educational systems. Woodward noted that, following Southern Reconstruction (1865-1877), the "segregation of schools nevertheless took place promptly and prevailed continuously" (Woodward, 1974, p. 24).

Thus, it is logical to situate the beginnings of this work in a historical examination of the schooling of Black people within the U.S. The telling of such an account does well in depicting the plight of their yearning to learn but it also lays the foundation for conceptualizing and understanding the interconnectedness of how the struggle for fair education is markedly related to the condition of Black individuals in the labor force. Though racial segregation in education, and abroad, has since been outlawed, its residual impact remains palpable despite the crafting of anti-discriminatory policies. These

lingering vestiges become apparent when examining the marginalization experienced presently by Black people in the workforce; for instance, income and occupational inequality, lack of parity in occupational mobility, occupational segregation; underrepresentation in elite positions of leadership, and as this study aims to investigate, disparities in the types of leadership positions awarded to individuals in higher education based on race (Cook & Glass, 2013; Hero, Levy & Radcliff, 2013; Kulis & Shaw, 1996; Lucas & Baxter, 2012; Peterson, 2016; Tolnay & Eichenlaub, 2007; Warren, 2013; Wilson & Roscigno, 2016; Wilson & Roscigno, 2015; Wilson & Roscigno, 2010).

The rationale, then, is that Whites continue to benefit from privileges traditionally bequeathed to them as a direct result of their racial status and inequities among Black individuals persist, in part, because they emanate from a lengthy and oppressive history of unfair treatment. Effects of oppressive systems shaped by the past and imposed on present-day racial minorities (or privileged systems inherited by the dominant race) shed light on the challenges and barriers (or successes and advantages) experienced by these social groups. As Woodson (2011, p. 13) eloquently reasoned, “The conditions of today have been determined by what has taken place in the past. . .,” and so it is here that the narrative begins.

The Negro Problem: “Schooling the Freed People” (Butchart, 2010).

W.E.B. Dubois cautioned, in his work *The Souls of Black Folk*, that the twentieth century would be overwhelmingly concerned with matters of race— “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line” (1994, p. 9). Dubois’ audacious assertion, and its veracity, became clearly visible in the configuration of a system of education solely for Black individuals following the end of the Civil War. Often regarded

as a race that was second-class, subservient, and less capable to that of White individuals, and thus, in need of civilizing (Dubois, 1994; Watkins, 2001; Woodson, 2011), it was of great concern among White people to address the question of what would be done with millions of newly freed Black individuals in the new social and educational system. This was simply coined the “Negro Problem” (Watkins, 2001).

Census data reveals that in 1860, there were approximately 4.4 million Black people in the U.S., with the majority of these individuals living in the agricultural South as slaves (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1979). Preceding the eradication of slavery, most Black individuals were prohibited from obtaining traditional forms of schooling (Fleming, 1976). Anderson (1988) noted that between 1800 and 1835, teaching enslaved children to read or write was a crime in most southern states. By 1860, only 5% of slaves could read and write and only 1.7% of Black children attended school in the North (Bond, 1934). Prior to the Civil War, the majority of states made no effort to educate slaves (Watkins, 2001). As such, slave education was often reduced to self-help efforts, knowledge received as a result of their enslavement, or any assistance that was provided from abolitionists or missionary societies (Anderson, 1988; Watkins, 2001; Williams, 2005a). Free Black people in the North did not fare considerably better as they were either excluded completely or provided a separate education and offered limited opportunities for post-secondary education (e.g. Oberlin College, Berea College, Lincoln University) (Baumann, 2010, Fleming, 1976).

As a largely illiterate (Bond, 1934; Anderson, 1988) and poverty-stricken group (Watkins, 2001; Woodson, 2011), Black people had an “immense urge for progress” (Bond, 1934, p. 21) and were eager to receive formalized schooling post-Civil War (see

Holmes, 1970). This zeal—likely arising from years of restrictive laws prohibiting and punishing the instruction of slaves—accompanied with influential pieces of legislation, (e.g. 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments), sparked the mass mobilization of Black education. Horace Mann Bond (1934, p. 23) wrote that, “No mass movement has been more in the American tradition than the urge which drove Negroes toward education soon after the Civil War.” Similarly, as Booker T. Washington wrote, it was, for the first time, “a whole race trying to go to school” (Washington, 1901, p. 12). Though likely viewed among most Black individuals as a panacea, the notion of educating Black people posed a threat to the existing social order for White individuals. As such, control and oversight overshadowed how Black people would be educated for decades to come.

The formal education of the Negro commenced with his liberation (Bond, 1934). During Reconstruction, much attention was given to education and Black people were included in the discussion (Watkins, 2001). The Freedman’s Bureau was instituted by the U. S. government in 1865 and it, along with philanthropic agencies such as, the YMCA and various missionary societies, did much to aid in the education of Negroes by establishing some 4,000 schools in the South. These schools provided “rudimentary education” (Watkins, 2001, p. 14), teaching Black people the “simple duties of life” (Woodson, 2011, p. 13). Former slaves, along with uneducated poor White people, were also instrumental in establishing the South’s first free, publicly supported school system (Anderson, 1988).

Normal schools and colleges were also founded for newly freed Blacks with the purpose of training teachers to instruct in the public schools (Dubois, 1994) and educating leaders (Frazier, 1949). Additionally, with an amendment to the Morrill Act in

1890, land grant colleges were established in seventeen southern states solely for the education of Negroes. The first Morrill Act (1862) made no provisions for Black higher education, except three states who used a portion of their funds to erect what is now Alcorn University (MS), Hampton Institute (VA), and Claflin University (SC). Unfortunately, due to a shortage of state supported high schools for Black people (Fleming, 1976), these pseudo Negro colleges focused mainly on administering secondary education (Frazier, 1949). In his evaluation of the Negro college, Holmes (1970) noted that, prior to 1916, not a single Black-land grant institution established as a result of the Second Morrill Act offered college level work.

Deemed free and emancipated citizens by law, the schooling of Black individuals emerged within a “context of political and economic oppression” and further characterized by the denial of their “citizenship, right to vote, and the voluntary control of their labor power” (Anderson, 1988, p. 2). Wielding little political influence and scarce economic resources, the responsibility of educating the Negro was primarily held by those who had enslaved them and who would soon segregate them (Woodson, 2011). Serving the interests of White industrialists, industrial, or practical education, as opposed to classical or liberal education, arose as the favored form of instruction for Black people after the Civil War (Woodson, 2011). The Washington-Dubois debates and the persuasive tracking of Black individuals into these dual educational camps would remain a central topic of discussion within Black schools and churches well into the next, post-slavery generation (Woodson, 2011). From the end of Reconstruction until the late 1960s, freed Blacks functioned within a system that oppressed, disenfranchised, and stripped them of their civil rights in education and almost every other facet of society (Anderson,

1988). The suppression of Black civil rights within education, however, becomes most salient when examining the subject within the context of segregation.

One great concern affecting the educational uplift of Black people, was whether both races should be educated together (Bond, 1934). A mixing of the races in school systems was, in practice, the right thing to do as “only in this manner could equal opportunity be afforded for all children” (Bond, 1934, p. 56). However, inherently embedded in the logic of establishing two distinct educational systems was the practical notion that “separate schools meant inferior schools . . . and discrimination against Negroes” (Bond, 1934, p. 57). Jim Crow segregation laws were passed in the Southern states in the 1890s and were designed to disenfranchise Black individuals by keeping them, by law (e.g. Black codes) or extra-legally (e.g. Ku Klux Klan), separated from and subservient to White people (Bond, 1934; Fleming, 1976; Woodward, 1974). Racial separation was not novel to the post-Civil War era or Southern region. Having originated in the North during the early nineteenth century as a way to mediate race relations between free Negroes and White people, the Union states provided the model by which the South would imitate (Woodward, 1974). De jure segregation became federally mandated in 1896 as a result of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The separate but equal doctrine definitively relegated the social standing of Black individuals to that of second class citizens and served as a large impediment to their racial uplift post-slavery.

Although applicable to daily living, Jim Crow laws, within the educational arena, were manifested via decreased state appropriations for Black schools and an assumption that industrial training was the form of education fitting for Black people (Fleming, 1976). Equipment, supplies, and structural space were also not equally appropriated to

Black students. Teachers working at Black schools received salaries “considerably lower than . . . Whites; had fewer qualifications . . . worked in leaky, poorly constructed schools; there were often no desks—just backless benches and a few tattered books—and the school year could begin only when the crops had been harvested” (Fleming, 1976, p. 71, 86). Undeniably, the separate but equal doctrine produced negative outcomes, socially and psychologically, for Black individuals navigating educational systems. Despite this, Black people remained relentless in their struggle to oppose systematic and institutionalized racism. It was not until 1954 that a major victory was won.

The Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) overturned legalized school segregation. The Court held the separate but equal doctrine as applied to public schools to be inherently unequal and thus, unconstitutional (Morris, 1993). It was quite conceivably one of the most notable feats that the Black community experienced following their emancipation (Williams, 2005b). Moore (2001) noted that the *Brown* decision significantly altered the landscape of higher education. Though the 1954 ruling was monumental, it was met with numerous challenges. Specific guidance was not provided by the Court detailing how or when states had to desegregate. Thus, the desired effects of the ruling were neither immediate nor prompt. Many defiant Southern states took great measures to thwart desegregation efforts (e.g. withdrawal of state funds if schools integrated; closing of schools; rise of White flight from public schools to private majority White schools; violence and intimidation tactics; massive resistance) (Fleming, 1976; Williams 2005b). Consequently, it took at least a decade before improvements were realized. Both federal threats of potential cuts in funding if non-compliant with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and school busing mandates during the late 1960s forced

Southern public schools to commence with large-scale integration (Williams, 2005b).

Yet, some sixty years after *Brown*, public schools remained heavily segregated (Orfield & Lee, 2004) and the hopes for equal educational access envisioned by civil rights advocates remain a goal in the twenty-first century (Byrne, 2005).

The aforementioned historical backdrop is relevant to the central focus of this work as it serves as a basis for understanding the condition of Black people in the United States, both past and present, within and outside the scope of education. *Brown*'s success served as an impetus to wage war against discrimination in other sectors besides education. Questions of constitutional equality and fairness brought to the public's attention by *Brown* compelled society and the legal justice system to critically examine the confluence of race and the civil rights which were, by law, afforded to all U.S. citizens (Williams, 2005b). For Black people, the *Brown* ruling was indeed a catalyst. According to Fleming (1976), "After the *Brown* decision, Blacks were encouraged to seek redress of their grievances in other areas. The break in the separate but equal doctrine spurred Black leaders to continue the assault" (p. 110). One such area was employment. Following 1954, a series of powerful legislation, policy, and key social movements emerged to counter both overt and subtle racial inequalities within employment; reorient the position of Black individuals within the American labor force; and increase organizational diversity, taking into account institutions of higher education.

The Black Worker

Throughout American history, Black people have regularly "served as a convenient reservoir of labor" (Fleming, 1976, p. 86; Honey, 1999). Quite similar to their schooling experience, the Black labor labyrinth has been riddled with a myriad of unique

obstacles and hardships rooted in a history of slavery and race oppression. The sole purpose of the seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century Atlantic slave trade, which transported millions of Black people from Africa to North America, was to exploit and fulfill a capitalistic need for cheap labor to toil on sugar, tobacco, rice, and cotton plantations (Allen, 2012; Fleming, 1976; Hill, 1985a). Black slave labor in the U.S., according to Wesley (1967), accounted for a large role in not only task labor for the plantation economy but also artisan labor which involved building houses, manufacturing and repairing agricultural equipment, making clothing, and a number of other duties for which they received little or no compensation (see also Hill, 1985a). Prior to emancipation and continuing thereafter, Black skilled workers, in the Northern and Southern regions of the United States, were often excluded or, as Hill (1985a) wrote, evicted from certain occupations which they had previously dominated in order to ensure that labor opportunities were accessible for poor White workers—consequently, displacing Black workers.

Freed from the chains of legalized servitude, emancipated Black workers in the agricultural South were thrust into competition with lower-class White workers (Frazier, 1949). Even so, Black workers were, for the first time, in control of their own labor and, as Mandle (1983) noted, officially able to negotiate with planters regarding the conditions by which they would be compensated for their work. However, the most common and widespread labor option that would emerge following the Civil War for poor, uneducated southern Black individuals was a unique plantation system closely resembling that of slavery (Mandle, 1978; Ransom & Sutch, 1977; Thompson, 1975; Woodman, 1979)—sharecropping.

Presumably quite antithetical to what Black people had hoped for, sharecropping, or debt farming, was a labor relationship wherein landowners advanced provisions to workers in order to grow and harvest crops. These provisions included, but were not limited to, housing, land, feed for stock, mules, tools, seed, etc. In essence, the landowner retained ownership of the crop produced by the sharecropper, but was required contractually to divide either the crop or derived proceeds from crop sales with the sharecropper (Ransom & Sutch, 1977). Of course, this crop-lien system was inherently problematic, particularly for the sharecropper (see Mandle, 1978; Woodman, 1979). In the wake of an unsuccessful attempt to reconstruct the South, the federal government did little to protect Black labor. In fact, the enforcement of states' rights after 1877 hastened the erosion of the freedman's economic position and prolonged segregated racial employment (Hill, 1985a).

In the Jim Crow Era (1877-1954) of racial exclusion from certain occupations, income brackets, and labor unions (Arnesen, 2007; Honey, 1999; Reich, 2013), free Black workers, both in the North and the South, were unable to escape the prevailing discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes of White people who erroneously labeled them as "innately inferior . . . inefficient, lazy, incompetent, [and] incapable of filling a place in modern industrial organization" (Trotter, 2001, p, 24-25). At the turn of the twentieth century, White labor unions worked diligently to perpetuate occupational exclusion among Black workers by organizing strikes and employing violence tactics (Hill, 1985a). The consequences of such protest efforts proved deleterious for the Black proletariat as it became difficult for them to participate in the nation's Second Industrial Revolution (1985a). Successful protest strikes meant Black workers were practically excluded "from

almost all the higher paid skilled work in iron and steel manufacturing, in tobacco factories and in other industries. They also lost their near-monopoly of personal service jobs such as barber, waiter, and porter” (Hill, 1985a, p. 15).

Progressing from slaves, to free wage earners and sharecroppers, to working in the industrial age (Reich, 2013; Trotter, 2001), Black toil has often been characterized by gratis, cheap, low wage, service, unskilled, and low-skilled labor (Arnesen, 2007; Hill, 1985a). During the early 1900s, labor prospects for Black people were virtually limited to mediocre and menial occupations frequently associated with low pay and no organized labor/union protection (Hill, 1985a; see also, Arnesen, 2007; Frazier, 1949; Honey, 1999; Reich, 2013). Just as the education system had been dichotomously separated by race, so too had the labor system (Hill, 1985a), which made a clear delineation between “*White jobs*” and “*Black jobs*.” Taken together, these inequalities and a desire for resolve prompted the Black community to seek redress. Spanning the entire twentieth century, resilient Black individuals fought to rectify employment and income discrimination in various sectors of industry, including higher education, realizing extensive success in the 1960s with the aid of significant federal policy changes (Arnesen, 2007; Harris & Lieberman, 2013; Honey, 1999; Reich, 2013; Rodgers, 1984).

Waging War: Black Labor and Higher Education

The Influence of Student Integration on Black Labor in Higher Education

“Where there is oppression, there is resistance,” Allen (2012, p. 149) succinctly posited. As an undeniably oppressed group, Black people were indeed adamant about resisting the status quo labor structure that overwhelmingly accommodated White individuals. Twentieth-century Civil Rights movement leaders and activists were central

to the mission of compelling both federal and state courts, as well as Congress, to overturn constitutional segregation and ban employment discrimination (Fleming, 1976; Harris & Lieberman, 2013)—even within the halls of the ivory tower. For many colleges and universities, the war for equal employment rights (integration, compensation, access/opportunity, etc.) was waged on campuses across the U.S. with students playing a key role in such efforts.

Setting the stage for the mid-twentieth-century civil rights movement, Fleming (1976) wrote that Black higher education protest activity for racial employment equality dates back to the 1920s. In addition to northern historically Black colleges and universities' (HBCUs) role in educating Black people, a small number of northern predominantly White institutions (PWIs) were receptive to the idea. A survey on Negro education, published in 1917, estimated that roughly 500 Black students attended northern colleges (Fleming, 1976). In the South, Black learners seeking higher education were confined to their separate institutions established under the first and second Morrill Act.

Those administering higher education to these Black students were primarily White people. As a direct result of racial exclusion and discrimination in post-secondary PWIs (e.g. no Black college was equipped to offer the doctoral degree—Howard University was the first HBCU to confer a doctorate in 1957 (Hill, 1985b), qualified Black professors who had earned terminal degrees were scarce. In 1900, only seven Black people held a doctoral degree. Later, in 1920, this number had grown, though only slightly, to 21 (Greene, 1946). Due to a lack of Black educators, the majority of Black colleges had to depend upon White instructors, trustees, and administrators to oversee the

operations of their institutions. Frazier (1949) wrote that Black institutions of higher education established in the North by the Freedman's Bureau and missionary societies were led by White presidents and, at the beginning, all White teachers. Qualified Black faculty were gradually added while Black presidents were appointed at a much slower pace. In many cases, these White professionals accepted the ideology of racial superiority and held disdain for Black individuals (Fleming, 1976; Greene, 1946). It was during the Harlem Renaissance enlightenment period of the 1920s that both Black college students and faculty began objecting to racial discrimination and predominantly White faculties and administrators on Black campuses. According to Fleming (1976), "students were often joined by Black faculty members in their demand that Blacks be placed in leadership positions" (p. 89).

Insomuch as Black people fought to obtain leadership ranks within their own institutions, they also struggled in the quest to integrate the faculty and administrative ranks on White campuses. Prior to the 1900s, Black individuals who aspired to college teaching positions were restricted to Black land grant colleges. Only a very small number taught at predominantly White institutions before the turn of the twentieth century—among those included W.E.B. Dubois, Charles Reason, and Richard Greener (Johnson, Cobb-Roberts, & Shircliffe, 2007; Taylor, 1947). From the beginning of the Civil Rights movement, efforts to desegregate educational institutions primarily focused on enrolling Black students at all-White institutions (Hodge, 1976). Employment of Black professional staff followed thereafter. Thus, Black faculty integration on White campuses occurred as a result of Black student integration. By the 1940s, minimal progress had been made, particularly at HBCUs and less at White or mixed institutions.

Greene's (1946) work, examining the number of Black individuals who had obtained PhDs during the period of 1876-1943, found that out of the totaled 368 doctorates conferred to Black people, 267 had been or were employed as college teachers at all professorial ranks. As it pertains to administrative ranks, 19 were deans; 5 were deans of colleges; 2 were registrars; and 21 were college or university presidents—the majority of these professionals likely served at HBCUs. When examining White or mixed institutions, Greene (1946) found that the numbers were even more minuscule with only 7 of the 368 Black individuals having earned a doctorate serving as part of the teaching staff—ranging from associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and researcher.

A second attempt, prior to 1941, to identify Negro faculty working at White institutions, is recorded by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, a philanthropic organization with interests in race relations and education. Members of the Rosenwald Fund were unable to locate any Black faculty employed at White institutions, save two men who held non-teaching laboratory positions (Belles, 1968). Moss (1958) wrote that during the first forty years of the twentieth century, “Negroes were being admitted in increasing numbers to teaching posts in Negro colleges and to some administrative positions in these same colleges, but, in the main, excluded from teaching in predominantly White colleges” (p. 452). Due to the efforts and generosity of the Rosenwald Fund, who subsidized the salary of several Black faculty, 14 or more Black people, by 1945, had been appointed to professorships at White institutions.

The Impact of Brown v. Board of Education on Higher Education and Labor Integration

In line with altering employment inequality, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* was a major help. However, its focus was primarily on elementary

and secondary education, not higher education. The Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Hawkins v. Board of Education* ultimately called for the desegregation of institutions of higher education nationwide (Johnson, Cobb-Roberts, & Shircliffe, 2007; see also Wiggins, 1966, p. 16). In 1949, Virgil Hawkins applied for admission to the University of Florida's law school. Between 1949 and 1954, his petition and appeals were denied numerous times by the state courts. However, one week after the *Brown* ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Florida Supreme Court's decision and remanded the case to be considered in light of the *Brown* decision. The *Hawkins* case applied the *Brown* ruling to higher education; thus, setting the legal precedent by which institutions of higher education would be integrated.

As Black students began to gain entrance to previously all-White institutions, so too did Black professional staff. Moss (1958) estimated that at the time of his survey, there were 133 Black faculty members at 72 of the nation's White institutions—a sharp contrast to the 7 accounted for during the 1940s. Moss further wrote that although the late 1950s were characterized by larger inclusion of Black faculty into integrated institutions, this success was accompanied by their virtual exclusion from noteworthy administrative positions.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Higher Education Labor Integration

As has been previously stated, students played a key role in the integration of Black professionals at White institutions. According to Cohen (2013), southern student activists aided in “further opening up formerly White campuses to racial diversity, first in the student body . . . in the curriculum . . . and finally in the faculty” (p. 21) (see also Blackwell, 1987). By the mid-1960s, however, efforts to secure access to inalienable civil

rights for minorities, such as fair employment, received federal legislative support as a result of provisions granted with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which Logan and Winston (1971) and Hill (1985a) cited as the most comprehensive civil rights measure ever passed by Congress, forbids discrimination in education, housing, voting, public accommodations, and employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Hill, 1985a). Of the act's eleven sections, Title VII specifically calls for the provision of equal employment opportunities and "prohibits unlawful forms of discrimination in private and public employment" which covers "most educational institutions" (Hill, 1985a, p. 47).

The original act, however, did not provide employment protection for individuals working in educational institutions. Title VII specifically exempted "educational institution[s] with respect to the employment of individuals to perform work connected with the educational activities of such institution" (Civil Rights Act, 1964). In 1972, Title VII was amended primarily because women's organizations successfully convinced Congress of the rampant gender discrimination that existed in the academy (Anglade, 2015). As such, the legal protective powers of the original act were extended to minorities in colleges and universities. Together, this revolutionary anti-discrimination policy, the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, legal redress, development of affirmative action programs, and workplace diversity standards have contributed to improved labor market outcomes for minorities. As a direct result, there has been, over time, a significant decline in overt discrimination and exclusionary practices once experienced in the workplace by people of color—particularly in institutions of higher education (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Brown, 1982; Donohue & Heckman,

1991; Harris & Lieberman, 2013; Heckman & Payner, 1989; Hill, 1985a; Leonard, 1990; for an overview of major fair employment practices policy see Rodgers, 1984, p. 95).

The Black Higher Education Professional: A Post-Civil Rights Assessment

The aftermath of the twentieth-century Civil Rights movement, dissipating around the late 1960s, and the formation of race conscious policy has had tremendous positive outcomes for Black people in general, and specifically in higher education (U.S. Census Bureau, 1979). By far, student desegregation efforts and the influx of Black students entering institutions of post-secondary education has likely played the largest role as it relates to breaking barriers and mitigating challenges faced by racial minorities in the educational arena. Williams (2005b) wrote that emerging from the 1950s and 1960s, along with a change in racial attitudes and White support for equal rights, was the “growth of an educated Black middle class” (p. 25). He noted that the number of Black students graduating high school and college have since soared and as a result, the incomes of Black individuals have steadily increased.

So, educational attainment was, and continues to be, an agent of upward mobility for Black Americans. The rationale then, is that, one’s economic and employment standing can be influenced in a number of ways, one of which includes the level of education an individual attains. Due to major modifications to the nation’s educational system, the rise in the number of educated Blacks following *Brown v. Board* simultaneously resulted in a vast accessibility to occupational and professional opportunities for which they had previously been excluded. Consequently, equal employment opportunity coupled with educational attainment translated into more Black individuals being employed in professional capacities than historically was the case.

Generally speaking, the labor market showed significant improvements for African Americans following the passage of Civil Rights legislation (see Chay, 1996; Donohue & Heckman, 1991; Heckman & Payner, 1989; Rodgers, 1984). Rodgers' (1984) work analyzed the consequences of fair employment legislation on Black employment gains between 1958 and 1977. The author noted that in 1958 Black males were poorly represented in professional and managerial jobs while instead being concentrated in low paying blue-collar service and laborer jobs—most Black women worked in domestic or service jobs. By 1977, however, Black males were “much better represented in White-collar and skilled blue-collar jobs and significantly less likely to be laborers and operators” while Black women had also “moved into White-collar jobs in large numbers” (Rodgers, 1984, p. 101). Offsetting this was the fact that Black people tended to be “severely underrepresented in the most prestigious professions and the high-income White-collar jobs” (p. 101). For instance, Black people were more likely to be nurses, hygienists, paralegals, school teachers as opposed to medical doctors, dentists, lawyers, or academic professors. So, although significant progress was made during the post-Civil Rights period, a certain trend of disparities for Black individuals in the workforce continued to persist throughout the late twentieth century, specifically in the upper echelons and better paying occupations (Blackwell, 1987; Rodgers, 1984).

The Structure of Professional Employment in Higher Education

Within colleges and universities there exists two internal structures—the academic structure, made up of departments, schools, and colleges primarily led by faculty; and the administrative structure, made up of supporting services and business affairs led by administrators (Corson, 1975). In the academy, certain faculty and

administrator positions are deemed elite. Faculty positions are usually divided by rank order with certain levels being associated with additional status, prestige, and rewards as one moves up the hierarchy. At the lower rungs of the faculty ladder are lecturers and instructors; followed by assistant professors—these positions are likely not associated with the privilege of tenure—and towards the top of the hierarchy are associate professors and full professors who have received tenure. The inclusion of faculty in this discussion is important because individuals who eventually take on academic administrative roles (president, provost, dean) are typically selected from the academic pipeline (Jackson & O’Callaghan, 2009).

The administrative structure in higher education can be categorized in three areas: (1) academic affairs; (2) student affairs; and (3) administrative affairs (Sagaria, 1988). Academic affairs administrative units are tasked with supervising and coordinating the academic mission of the university, which include positions such as the president, provost, and deans of academic units (Jackson, 2001a). Student affairs administrative units oversee the “*out of class*” experiences and services provided to students by the institution. These positions might include vice president for student affairs, dean of students, and director of residence life. Lastly, administrative affairs positions such as, vice-president for finance or the director of alumni affairs, fall outside of the scope of the academic and student services mission of the institution (Jackson, 2001a).

The college president is situated at the top of the organizational hierarchy. Comparatively speaking, the college presidency is analogous to the Chief Executive Officer of a corporation. Traditionally, individuals reach the presidency as a result of professional promotions from faculty ranks to senior level administrative positions

(Robinson, 1996). The traditional academic career pathway to top administrative positions is described by Socolow (1978) as followed:

Senior positions in academic administration have long been the almost exclusive province of those who served a substantial time in [the] academe, moving from one rung of the ladder to the next—most often from professor to chairman to dean to vice president to president. (p. 42)

To compound the above, Cowley (1980), identified four areas of responsibility of the college president: (1) superintendence: general overseeing and guidance of an institution; (2) facilitation: providing support to faculty and administrative units; (3) development fund-raising and planning for the institutions future; and (4) leadership in policy making: taking an active role in proposing policy. American college or university presidents over the years have been White, married males, in their 60s, holding a doctorate in education (American Council on Education, 2012).

It is imperative to preface the following discussion of Black professional employment at institutions of higher education following the Civil Rights movement with the note that literature examining this topic, especially as it relates to administrators, is relatively limited. This gap can be explained when taking into account that early research attempts to understand the nature of leadership were primarily focused on White men (Northouse, 2013). As early as 1974, Moore and Wagstaff (1974) wrote that “little has been said in print about the recruitment, selection, hiring, and professional activities of Black educators in predominantly White colleges and universities . . . Very little is known about the Black faculty member or administrator” (p. vii). Hoskins’ (1978) echoed

this same sentiment stating “very little investigation has been done relative to Black administrators in higher education” (p. 1).

A Post-Civil Rights Assessment of Black Faculty

In higher education’s post-Civil Rights era, Black people achieved employment gains, although quite slowly. From the available data, it can be concluded that the general societal labor trend of Black underrepresentation in prestigious occupations also occurred at the nation’s colleges and universities, particularly on White campuses. Prior to the 1960s, Black academics were practically nonexistent at White institutions: “No major university in the United States has more than a token representation of Negroes on its faculty . . . We know of no Negro occupying a chairmanship or major administrative position in our sample of universities” (Caplow & McGee, 1958, pp. 226-227).

Following the 1960s social revolution, however, modest gains were made with regard to Black faculty inclusion at White campuses. Branch (2001) wrote that during the 1960s and 1970s there was a great influx of Black faculty on White campuses, primarily due to the emergence of ethnic studies and the Civil Rights movement. Fred Wale, a staff member of the Rosenwald Fund, had begun the process of tracking the number of Black faculty working at White institutions between 1945-47 (Belles, 1968). By 1947, he had mailed hundreds of letters to White institutions inquiring about their success in recruiting Black faculty. His data revealed that 178 of the White institutions he surveyed employed 40,000 faculty (see Table 1). Of those 40,000, only 75 were Black faculty members. Twenty years later, in 1967, the Southern Education Reporting Service, a private agency that collected and disseminated information on desegregation in education (Egerton, 1968), attempted to duplicate the data collection process initially began by Wale for

comparative reasons. Their data revealed that 130 of the White institutions surveyed employed 60,000 faculty. Of those 60,000, only 785 were Black faculty—a significant improvement from 1947.

Table 1

<i>Rosenwald and Southern Education Reporting Service Surveys</i>		
	Rosenwald, 1945-47	SER, 1967-68
Number of institutions contacted	600	179 ^a
Number of respondents supplying complete information	178	130
Number of respondents reporting Negro faculty members	42	79
Total number of Negro faculty members reported	75	785
Total number of all faculty at responding institutions	40,000	60,000

Note: Table compares the Rosenwald Fund Survey of Negro faculty at White institutions in 1945-47 and the Southern Education

Reporting Service survey at the same institutions in 1967-68

a. The institutions represented by this number are the same institutions that replied to the 1945-47 survey.

Belles, A. G. (1968). Negroes are few on college faculties. *Southern Education Report* 4(1), p. 23-25.

Despite their increase in numbers and visibility, Moore & Wagstaff (1974) wrote that the total number of Black faculty remained relatively small during the late twentieth century, partly, due to a shortage of Black Ph.D. holders. When examining all institutional types, data collected by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission estimated that during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s the percentage of Black faculty hovered at around 4% (Rai & Critzer, 2000).

A Post-Civil Rights Assessment of Black Administrators

It has previously been documented that prior to the 1970s the majority of the already small number of African American administrators were concentrated at Black

institutions and virtually non-existent at White institutions (Caplow & McGee, 1959; Greene, 1946; Moss, 1958). Hoskins' (1978) work, *Black Administrators in Higher Education*, appears to be the most thorough statistical survey and analysis tracking the progress of Black leaders at both Black and White colleges and universities following the 1960s Civil Rights era. In his study, Hoskins sampled a total of 457 Black administrators working at 66 (out of 72) of the nation's Black and White land-grant institutions. The descriptive results (Table 2) of his sample highlight the trend of underrepresentation of Black administrators in elite professional positions at White institutions, even after the passage of aggressive fair employment legislation and efforts of the Civil Rights movement.

In 1977, a total of 189 Black administrators reported being employed at PWIs compared to 268 Black administrators working on Black campuses. At White-land grant institutions, Black administrators were most likely to hold positions such as assistant dean, coordinator, officer, assistant director (59); dean, director, division chairperson (33); or associate dean, associate director, associate division chairperson, administrator (21). The least amount of parity found at White institutions was located at the very top of the higher education administration hierarchy. Hoskins' study found only one Black administrator (compared to 18 at Black institutions) working as either a president, chancellor or provost at a White-land grant—the data does not indicate exactly which position that individual held. In addition, seeing as though there were considerably more White-land grant institutions established under the first and second Morrill Acts than Black-land grants, the number of Black administrators at Black institutions—which

exceeded the number at White institutions—speaks to the overrepresentation of Black individuals at these institutions.

Table 2

Black Administrators at Black and White-Land Grant Institutions

Title Held	*White LG	Black LG	*Total
President, chancellor, provost	1	18	19
Vice-president, vice-chancellor, vice-provost	6	36	42
Assist. president, assist. chancellor, assist. provost	7	3	10
Registrar, manager, comptroller, head librarian, ombudsman	3	17	20
Dean, director, division chairperson	33	165	198
Associate dean, associate director, associate division chairperson, administrator	21	4	25
Department chairperson, assistant to the president, assistant to the chancellor, assistant to the provost	12	18	30
Assistant dean, coordinator, officer, assistant director	59	7	66
Total:	189	268	457

* Forty-seven of the Black administrators at White-land grant institutions could not be identified by their title due to institutional reporting policies. However, it was verified that those 47 respondents' title met the title parameters used for this study.

Hoskins, R. (1978). *Black administrators in higher education: Conditions and perceptions*. NY: Praeger. (p. 31-33)

A Post-Civil Rights Assessment of Black Presidents

Of particular interest to this study, is the progression of Black presidents serving at PWIs prior to and following the 1960s. Fikes (2004) provided a detailed chronological depiction of the number of Black presidents serving at both 2-year and 4-year PWIs between 1873 and 2004. His analysis indicated that the first Black person to serve as

president of a non-Black institution was Patrick Healy, a Jesuit priest with African ancestry. In 1876, Healy assumed the position of president at Georgetown University; however, few were aware of his racial pedigree because Healy had light skin and Caucasian features which enabled him to pass as a White individual.

Almost an entire century passed before another Black person would preside over a White institution. In 1966, trailblazer James Allen Colston was appointed president at Bronx Community College. Colston's landmark achievement occurred alongside the Civil Rights movement, however, it received very little attention. The next presidential appointment would gain considerable attention when Clifton R. Wharton Jr. rose to the ranks of the presidency at a major White university, Michigan State University, serving from 1970 to 1978. It is likely that Wharton is the president identified in Hoskins' study, as Michigan State University is a White-land grant institution.

Following the 1970s the number of Black individuals being selected to oversee the operations of White campuses increased considerably compared to the mere three that existed beforehand. However, the total number of Black CEOs heading majority White institutions by the end of the twentieth century remained relatively small. From his estimations, Fikes (2004) reported that "Of the 282 CEO positions held by Blacks from 1873 to 2004, 103 were at four-year colleges, universities, and private professional schools and 179 were at two-year schools" (p. 122). A breakdown by decade indicated that during the 1970s, the total number of Black presidents appointed to White colleges and universities was 30; followed by 61 in the 1980s; and 144 in the 1990s (Fikes, 2004). Undoubtedly, the steady increase decade by decade indicate a pattern of progression, nonetheless, the advancement appears to have been rather slow.

Onward to the Glass Ceiling

The movement for racial equality that preoccupied the majority of the twentieth century proved to be significant as major racial barriers were shattered, inclusion and diversity were elevated to the forefront of the American social agenda, and noteworthy advancements were made. Unfortunately, it would be naïve to assume that all goals of equality were entirely fulfilled as a result of the Civil Rights movement. In fact, the reality is that grave disparities continue to exist well into the twenty-first century not only for African Americans, but also for other marginalized and oppressed social groups.

As the twentieth century came to a close, glass ceiling terminology appeared to better explain what was being witnessed regarding the persistence of gender and racial disparities in the work place. Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) first used the phrase glass ceiling to highlight the trend of professional women being overlooked for promotions to elite corporate leadership positions as a result of an invisible, yet impenetrable, barrier. The metaphor captured the nation's attention and was used by business leaders, journalists, and policy makers. The term was later extended to include racial minorities (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995).

The U.S. Department of Labor (D.O.L.) (1991) defined the phenomenon as “those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions” (p. 1). In 1989, the D.O.L. conducted a preliminary investigation of the glass ceiling in nine Fortune 500 companies. The results were published in 1991 and entitled *A Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative*. The D.O.L.'s analysis concluded that women and racial minorities tended to be disproportionately underrepresented in senior level

management positions and that artificial barriers are a “significant cause for why minorities and women have not advanced further in corporate America” (p.18).

The Department of Labor’s efforts were instrumental in raising awareness about the plight of minorities in corporate America. Shortly after the report was released, Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 was enacted. The Act established the Glass Ceiling Commission and charged its twenty-one members with studying “the manner in which business fills management and decision-making positions” and formulating recommendations regarding “eliminating artificial barriers . . . and increasing the opportunities and developmental experiences of women and minorities” (Civil Rights Act, 1991, p 11). In 1995, the Commission released the findings from their large-scale study. The results confirmed “the enduring aptness of the glass ceiling metaphor. At the highest levels of business, there is indeed a barrier only rarely penetrated by women or persons of color” (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995, p. iii). Thus, it was found that, at the transitional juncture of the twentieth-first century, Black individuals, and other minorities were still positioned to encounter subtle barriers and discriminatory practices that were empirically found to persist in the U.S. labor force.

A Twenty-First Century Assessment: Diversity, Education, and Employment

By the turn of the twenty-first century, the racial makeup of America had shifted. Presently, the U.S. is more racially and ethnically diverse than in previous centuries. This trend is projected to increase over the upcoming decades (Cohn & Caumont, 2016). According to data from the United States Census Bureau (2016), in 1940 there were approximately 132 million people living in the U.S. Of those 132 million, approximately 90% were White people and 10% were Black people. By 2010, the number of people

living in the U.S. had increased to an estimated 308 million people with White individuals making up 72%, Black individuals composing 13%, and all other races and ethnicities (e.g. Native, Asian, Latino, and Multi-racial Americans) making up the remaining 15% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Cohn & Caumont, (2016) estimated that by 2055 “the U.S. will not have a single racial or ethnic majority” (p. 2). Shifting racial demographics, along with efforts to create equal opportunities and access for marginalized groups, has contributed to greater participation of racial minorities in both education and employment.

Shifting Demographics: Education

Considerable gains in education have been made among Black people. As it pertains to post-secondary education, both Black undergraduate and graduate enrollment and completion rates have significantly increased in the last five decades. In 1976, roughly 1 million Black people were enrolled at the undergraduate and graduate/professional level. By 2014, that number had increased to 2.7 million (White people, 9 million and 11.2 million, respectively) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014a). Similarly, the number of degrees conferred to Black individuals has risen as well. In 1976, 116,622 associates, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees were awarded to Black individuals; compared to 426,911 in 2014 (White people, 1.5 million and 2.3 million, respectively) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b; 2014c; 2014d; & 2014e). The implications of these increases have been extremely consequential for Black people as it has translated into better jobs specifically as it relates to professional/leadership occupations.

Shifting Demographics: Employment

Although White men continue to dominate the executive suite, the increasing representation of Black individuals and other minorities working in top management positions is unmistakable (Eagly & Chin, 2010; Zweigenhaft & Domhoff, 2006). For example, among the 1.5 million chief executives of all U.S. organizations, 28% are women, 6% are Hispanic, 5% are Asian, and 4% are African American (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015a). The noted improvements in diversity and inclusion in the U.S. labor force are seemingly overshadowed by the lack of parity and underrepresentation experienced by Black individuals when compared to White people. The data are clear, in that, African American people consistently lag behind White individuals across a broad spectrum of social and economic domains, including employment (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Wilson, 1999).

In their analysis of occupational racial inequality, Hero, Levy, and Radcliff (2013) found that “Whites continued to find their way into the professional class (college professors, physicians, managers, administrators, etc.) at a faster pace than Blacks” (p. 56). Even White women, a social group that is unequivocally regarded as a minority, appear to fare better than racial minorities in their quest for leadership advancement (Huffman, 2012). Moreover, the high proportion of White males that saturate influential positions of governance such as presidential candidates, members of Congress, boards of directors and the “C-suite” (Chief Executive Officers, CEOs; Chief Operating Officers, COOs; Chief Financial Officers, CFOs) do so in numbers that far exceed their percentage of the U.S. population as a whole (Hoyt & Chemers, 2008). According to a report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015b), although White males and females made up 80%

of all people employed, they comprised 91% of CEOs employed by organizations in 2014.

Black Faculty in the Twenty-First Century

The glass ceiling effect of Black underrepresentation in influential positions of leadership is also salient within higher education professional employment. An examination of the data on African American faculty reveals their underrepresentation and low status in the academy (Allen, Epps, Guillory, Suh, & Bonous-Hammarth, 2000). As recent as 2014, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that approximately 3.9 million people were employed in the nation's 4,724 degree granting institutions (Snyder, de Brey & Dillow, 2016, p. 532). Of that 3.9 million, roughly 377,000 were Black workers. The data indicated that Black individuals working on college and university campuses appeared to be most concentrated in office/administrative support and service occupations, 73,000 and 56,000 respectively; 129,000 collectively. Of the 1.5 million faculty employed, 105,000 (about 6.8%) are Black faculty (Snyder et al., 2016)—a percentage considerably smaller than their percentage (13.2%) of the U.S. population (Colby & Ortman, 2015, p. 9). Conversely, about 72% (or 1.1 million) of faculty were White individuals (Snyder et al., 2016)—a percentage considerably greater than their percentage (62.2%) of the U.S. population (Colby & Ortman, 2015).

Furthermore, disparities exist when examining the type of appointment that Black faculty are awarded when compared to their White counterparts. For instance, Black faculty are more likely to be employed on a part-time basis (62,000; White faculty, 549,000) than on a full-time basis (43,000; White faculty, 575,000). Professorial rank for

Black full-time faculty was more likely to be at the lecturer, instructor, or assistant professor level (20,000; White faculty, 302,000) and less likely to be at the associate professor or full professor level (15,000; White faculty, 337,000) (Snyder et al., 2016, p. 532, 533, & 538). The fact that Black faculty are less likely than White faculty to obtain tenured positions (Allen et al., 2000) is significant when attempting to understand the lack of diversity in elite positions of higher education leadership, as progression through the administrative ranks usually begin with promotions in academic rank.

Black Administrators in the Twenty-First Century

When examining Black higher education administrators, the numbers are significantly smaller than White administrators. Few Black people, and other individuals of color, have been able to successfully obtain executive administrative positions (Valverde, 2003)—that is, those positions that lead to the college and university presidency. According to the American Council on Education (2012), presidents were more likely to have served as chief academic officers (provosts) or senior academic affairs officers in their prior position. Kim and Cook (2013), in their work, *On the Pathway to the Presidency*, surveyed 3,906 individuals in senior leadership positions at 308 of the nation's 4-year institutions. In their analysis, they found that African Americans were least likely to serve in those positions that lead to the college presidency and more likely to hold positions as chief diversity officers (89%) than any other type of senior level administrator. Harvey (1999) noted that “within the administrative arena, a greater proportion of African Americans seem to be located within the student affairs, minority affairs, and affirmative action arena than are found in academic affairs or financial affairs” (p. 3).

When comparing the overall progression of African Americans holding chief academic and senior academic affairs positions from 2008 to 2013, the results revealed that there was actually a decline during that period. In 2008, the data suggested that Black individuals made up 5.3% of senior academic affairs officers and only 3.7% of chief academic officers. By 2013, the percentage of Black people holding senior academic officer positions had decreased only slightly to 5%, whereas, the percentage of Black provosts had dropped significantly to 2.3%. According to Kim and Cook (2013), these findings suggest that “the pool of minorities in the administrative role that most frequently precedes the presidency has diminished over the past few years” (p. 14). This finding reaffirms the challenges that exist within the academic/administrative pipeline and that significant numbers of individuals of color are not positioned to inherit key roles of leadership that lead to the college and university presidency.

Black College Presidents in the Twenty-First Century

The assertion that Black college and university presidents are a rarity is not an exaggeration, especially when examining predominantly White institutions. Evidence of improvement in increasing the number of racial minorities holding these executive level positions has been recorded. For example, between 2011 and 2016, the percentage of racial minorities leading post-secondary institutions increased from 13% to 17% (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). More specifically, the percentage of African American presidents also increased from roughly 6% in 2011 to 8% in 2016. However, challenges still persist as White presidents continue to be overrepresented in the office of the presidency (83%) and racial minority presidents remain underrepresented (17%). In 2016, less than one in five individuals of color served as a college or university president.

Despite advancements in diversification, the American Council on Education's (ACE) 2017 publication, *The American College President*, reveals an overall inconsistent and slow progression of the number of racial minorities that attain the presidency (Gagliardi et al., 2017). In 2016, ACE surveyed a total of 1,546 public, private, and for-profit college and university presidents nationwide. They found that during a 30-year time period, from 1986 to 2006, the percentage of racial minority presidents has only increased 9%—from roughly 8% to 17%. When specifically examining African American presidents, a comparable pattern exists. From 1986 to 2016, the percentage of Black presidents has only increased slightly by 3%—from 5% to 8%. Out of the total 1,546 college presidents surveyed in 2016, only 124 (8%) were African American presidents compared to 1,283 (83%) that were White presidents. Interestingly, there was very little change or movement for African American presidents from 1986 to 2011. Most of the change that has occurred has happened recently, from 2012 to 2016. In terms of gender, 82 Black presidents were men and 42 Black presidents were women (898 White male presidents, 385 White female presidents, respectively) (Gagliardi et al., 2017).

Moreover, people of color were more likely to gain access to presidencies at minority-serving institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). In 2016, racial minorities represented 36% of the presidencies at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) which was greater than their representation at non-minority-serving institutions (Gagliardi et al., 2017). When excluding MSIs in their sample, only 11% of all non-minority-serving institutions were led by minority presidents—that is, 89% of all non-minority-serving institutions were led by White presidents, 6% by Black

presidents, 2% by Hispanic presidents, 1% by Asian American presidents, 1% by Middle Eastern presidents, and 1% by presidents of multiple races (Gagliardi et al., 2017). An interesting finding, however, is that White men and women were more likely to head both minority-serving institutions (64%) and non-minority-serving institutions (89%) than were racial minorities.

The finding that Black presidents are more likely to serve at MSI's than non-MSI's (along with the finding that Black senior level administrators are more likely to be chief diversity officers than any other type of administrator) becomes disconcerting when considering the covert segregated undertones which suggest that: (1) racial minorities are best situated in administrative roles related to the diversity mission of an institution, and (2) racial minorities aspiring to presidency roles should do so at minority-serving institutions where the opportunities for access are far greater than at non-minority-serving institutions. To this end, Roach and Brown (2001) wrote that the "existence of a two-track leadership system for ambitious Blacks in higher education — one for Black schools and another for predominantly White schools — is very much alive" (p. 18).

In addition to their slow, minimal, and even stagnant advancement to the college and university presidency and overrepresentation at minority-serving institutions, African American administrators who eventually become presidents experience additional inequities. For example, racial minority presidents are more likely to lead at public institutions (22%) of all types (e.g. doctoral, master's, bachelor's, and associate granting) than private institutions (11%) of all types (Gagliardi et al., 2017). Specifically, racial minority leaders tend to be most highly represented at public master's (27%) and bachelor's (23%) granting institutions and least represented at private doctoral (13%) and

master's (6%) granting institutions. In summation, racial minorities are less likely to serve in a presidential capacity at colleges and universities that are predominantly White and are typically associated with greater prestige and elitism (Holmes, 2004).

Black Presidents' Experience at PWIs

Limited research illustrates the experiences of Black presidents at PWIs. The research suggests that race plays a key role in how they are perceived, valued, treated, and ultimately how they perform their work (Bridges, 2003; Harvey, 1999). In general, Black administrators employed at PWIs have reported feelings of disenchantment and isolation in their race-specific occupations (Poussaint, 1974), felt they were denied adequate power to perform their work effectively (Tucker (1980), and described their work environments as hostile in which it was essential to “develop a tough skin so that they could deal with racist behavior, personal harassment, and indignities” (Davis, 1999, p. 149).

Specifically, and noteworthy to this study, the experience of Black presidents working at PWIs have been recounted by a few scholars (Farris, 1999; King, 1999; Nelms, 1999). In Harvey's (1999) edited volume, first-hand accounts of Black presidents who had served at PWIs documented how race, in some way, factored into their unique work experience as a minority heading a majority White institution. For instance, King (1999) was appointed as the first Black, female president at Metropolitan State University of Minnesota in 1977. Recalling her presidency, she stated that a number of encounters with colleagues, for which race and gender played a role, influenced the decisions she made during her tenure. She reported realizing the importance of hiring candidates who would be “comfortable reporting to and working with a Black female president” (King,

1999, p. 31), there being a lack of urgency from her White peers and an expectation to wait to take action on programming initiatives aimed at aiding minorities to overcome past injustices, and receiving hate mail/threats from the general public despite her work to improve the institution and surrounding community.

After being named the chancellor of Indiana University East, Nelms (1999) also recalled facing several incidents reflecting, as he describes, “varying degrees of ignorance at best or racism at worst” (p. 48). Some instances included being chastised and challenged by his subordinates, having a colleague remind him of his minority status, experiencing disparities in the evaluation process when compared to other university system chancellors, being negatively perceived by some community members, and being referred to as the “head nigger in charge” by a university stakeholder. In his reflection of these situations, Nelms (1999) wrote:

In almost all cases, my Caucasian colleagues and superiors have interpreted these situations differently than I have. Without failure, they seem to be able to rationalize away the racist behavior of a colleague while failing to understand my reaction! In comparing notes with colleagues from other universities, I find my experience is not unique. Indeed, every African American CEO with whom I am acquainted has his or her own horror stories to tell. (pp. 51-52)

Although both Nelms and King (1999) spoke in detail about the challenges they faced presiding over PWIs, they did mention the positive encounters they experienced with supportive colleagues while employed as president/chancellor.

A small number of doctoral dissertations focusing solely on Black leaders at PWIs have been conducted (Bridges, 2003; Bush, 1999; Robinson, 1996). Bridges’ (2003)

study explored the influence of race on Black male president's effectiveness at PWIs. To this end, Bridges conducted case study interviews with two Black presidents. He also interviewed vice presidents and deans on each campus to gather their perspectives on if and how race influenced their president's effectiveness. As a result, Bridges developed five conclusions: (1) the importance of institutional context for Black PWI presidents; (2) race was more of an "off campus" than an "on campus" issue; (3) Black presidents perceived race as more of an issue in their work than White administrators did; (4) Black presidents helped White administrators adjust their views on race; and (5) the harshest critics of Black presidents were often people of their own race (Bridges, 2003, p. 194). Neither senior administrators nor presidents believed that their ability to lead effectively was influenced by their racial status.

Robinson (1996) was interested in identifying factors that hindered and facilitated the presidential advancement of African Americans at PWIs. A total of 18 Black male and female presidents were surveyed and four males were selected for interviews. Robinson's results revealed that participants most frequently cited racial discrimination as the main factor hindering their advancement. Although approximately 40% of participants indicated that racial stereotyping was a hindrance to their career advancement, more than half indicated that it was not. Administrative development opportunities, mentoring, professional affiliations, and networking were all found to be significant factors that facilitated career advancement (Robinson, 1996). Because Robinson's study focused on the career paths of participants, her study did not provide a depiction of their experiences as presidents at PWIs.

In her qualitative study of seven African American female presidents of PWIs, Bush (1999) sought to understand how the cultural characteristics exhibited by these leaders intersected with the organizational culture of the institutions they led. All seven leaders reported exhibiting African American cultural characteristics such as assertiveness, forthrightness, ethical awareness, and an interactive communication style (Bush, 1999). Five themes emerged when analyzing the intersection of African American culture and organizational culture: (1) dynamics of an “outsider” as leader, (2) common elements in the presidents’ origins (e.g. growing up in the South), (3) the association of the presidents with change, (4) presidential characteristics in the women’s leadership style (e.g. inclusive decision making, effective communication), and (5) pressure placed on Black female presidents of PWIs by other Black individuals. Although not a focus of Bush’s study, race arose as an issue at all institutions. All responding presidents reported having to “deal with the pressure to isolate themselves from their cultural roots or racial group and the stress inherent in such isolation” (Bush, 1999, p. 193)—maintaining a bicultural awareness of the majority culture and their primary culture.

A common theme found in the review of the above literature was that race influenced, to some degree, the way in which Black presidents at PWIs approached their work; the interactions, encounters, and experiences they had on the job; and the perceptions that others had of them.

Summary

The history of Black people in America is indeed soiled. From struggles in education and the labor force, much progress has been made with the aid of social justice minded individuals and initiatives. Nevertheless, there remains much work to be done. A

review of the historical and present-day status of Black individuals in higher education labor systems reveal a recurring motif of underrepresentation within elite academic occupational positions—from faculty, to administration, and finally the college presidency. Their difficulty in obtaining these roles and subsequent placement in lower-level positions, which are “less often regarded as pathways to the top” (Harvey, 1999, p. 3), speak to the subtle social and institutional barriers that create spaces in which both overt and covert discrimination is fostered and thus, experienced by the African American social group.

The scarcity of Black higher education administrators, particularly at the presidential level, has been established by a number of scholars. Few researchers, however, have paid attention to the conditions surrounding the appointment of Black college presidents who successfully break through the pervasive glass ceiling at PWIs. Past research on Black college and university presidents leading PWIs has tended to focus on their experiences with racism (Farris, 1999; King, 1999; Nelms, 1999), barriers and facilitators to their career advancement (Robinson, 1996), the intersection of race/ethnic culture and campus culture (Bush, 1999), and the influence of race on leadership effectiveness (Bridges, 2003). This study aimed to fill a clear gap in the literature by exploring the institutional conditions under which Black presidents are hired at PWIs. In addition, this study sought to investigate the lived experiences of Black leaders serving in majority White contexts. To enhance the conceptualization of these historic and modern issues, chapter III introduces the glass cliff thesis as a means to explore and frame the above-mentioned ideas.

CHAPTER III - LITERATURE REVIEW, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

“So even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream” (King & Kadir, 2012, p. 1).

Realizing Kings’ Dream but Missing the Mark: Factors Facilitating Racial Disparities in the College Presidency

In spite of the nation’s progressive movement from the 1900s until now, Black people remain largely absent in the CEO role of colleges and universities, particularly at predominantly White institutions (PWIs). Some scholars have attempted to identify specific factors that contribute to this paucity. Primary factors identified in this chapter include, (1) the “*pipeline problem*,” (2) enduring racism and discrimination, and (3) the glass cliff phenomenon. In addition to exploring these issues, theoretical frameworks relevant to conceptualizing this study will be presented to further enhance the exploration of the glass cliff as it applies to Black presidents serving at PWIs.

The “Pipeline Problem”

The “*pipeline problem*” refers to the small number of African Americans matriculating through graduate study, the limited number of Black faculty, and the significant lack of successful and competent role models (Cruse, 1994). Since securing a graduate degree is a prerequisite for most faculty and executive administrative roles (Robinson, 1996), not persisting to completion jeopardizes African Americans’ ability to participate in such roles (Holmes, 2004). The breakdown in the educational pipeline for Black individuals is revealed in post-secondary national data. The number of doctoral degrees awarded to African American individuals in 2013 was 12,084 (White individuals,

110,775); significantly less than the 87,988 master's degrees awarded to Black people in that same year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014d; 2014e).

The supply and demand argument that “there are simply not enough Blacks to go around” (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974) is often used as justification for the lack of racial diversity in influential positions of academic leadership (p. 44). However, there are others who would disagree. A participant in Holmes’ (2004) study on Black college presidents stated that the above argument is “pure rhetoric” and that “there are a number of credentialed individuals capable of leading any type of institution but will never be considered or presumed qualified in some institutions simply because of the color of their skin” (p. 28). In their summation of the insufficient Black applicant pool rationale, Moore and Wagstaff (1974) wrote that, “The demand of White institutions for Black scholars is more myth than reality. The number of available Blacks is smaller than it should be, but the demand for them is far less” (p. 41). Furthermore, Harvey (1999) noted that “Certainly, there is no shortage of willing, well-prepared candidates” and cited a resistance to affirmative action policy and programming as the reason for the low representation of Black leaders in top higher education leadership positions (p. 3). Finally, the small number of Black individuals in the academic and administrative pipeline is, as Watson (1972) wrote, more reflective of “the historic lack of opportunity for both training and placement” (p. 4) rather than an unwillingness to participate in these roles.

Enduring Racial Discrimination

Closely related to dissenting opinions regarding the “*pipeline problem*” is the argument that racial discrimination is a factor (though not the sole factor) in the low

representation of Black people in higher education's elite leadership ranks. Pager and Shepard (2008) defined racial discrimination as the, "unequal treatment of persons or groups on the basis of their race or ethnicity" (p. 182). Inherent in the definition of racial discrimination is an emphasis on behavior that can be motivated by racism (superior/inferior ideologies), racial prejudice (negative attitudes/emotions), and racial stereotypes (faulty generalizations) (Quillian, 2006). Dittmer (2001) noted that although the twentieth-century Civil Rights crusade was the most progressive social movement in the U.S., it did not eradicate racism. Although positive change has occurred for Black people in America, the mark for true equality, as envisioned by esteemed social activist Martin Luther King, Jr. in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech has yet to be fully realized.

In a post-Civil Rights, and some would argue post-racist era, where overt and the most brutal forms of discrimination (e.g. prejudiced and biased attitudes; legalized segregation; widespread racism among the White public) have drastically decreased and are no longer widely accepted as the "*American way of life*," gaps in racial inequality have not yet fully closed (Harris & Lieberman, 2013; Pager & Shepherd, 2008; Quillian, 2006). Several scholars suggest that the existence of inequality gaps in higher education among racial groups are motivated by discrimination (see Harvey, 1999; Holmes, 2004; Jordan, 1988; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Roach & Brown, 2001). Moreover, when taking into account systems such as secondary education, policing, criminal justice, incarceration, healthcare, employment and income, housing, credit, and consumer markets, other researchers cite racial discrimination as a factor in the strikingly different outcomes produced among Black and White individuals in the above-mentioned areas

(Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Dimock, Kiley, & Suls, 2013; Harris & Lieberman, 2013; Pager & Shepherd, 2008; Williams, 2005b). Since higher education is a microcosm of the larger society, in which discrimination has been reported to exist, it is argued here that colleges and universities likely participate (intentionally or unintentionally) in acts of racial discrimination related to employment practices, including top administrative positions.

Racism in a “Post-Racist” Society

So then, the logical question is how and why does racial inequality continue to pervade social systems, particularly institutions of higher education, in a seemingly post-civil rights/post-racist society? Harris, Lieberman, and their colleagues (2013) grappled to understand this conundrum in their 2013 book, *Beyond Discrimination: Racial Inequality in a Post-Racist Society*. They reason that:

The civil rights revolution removed the most visible and blatant means of producing and reproducing racial inequality from American society. But beneath the surface of racism and discrimination lay another layer of institutions and processes that have made racial inequality persist. These subterranean mechanisms have not been fully exposed or explored and they remain poorly understood; identifying and analyzing these mechanisms is critical to understanding and ameliorating racial inequality. (p. 2)

Taking an institutional/organizational/structural (versus individual) perspective, allows one to move beyond the ideological frame of reference that manifestations of racial inequality are not, as Wilson (1999) wrote, “solely reducible to the belief system of individuals. It may also be embedded in institutional norms” (p. 15). Pager and Shepard (2008) referred to institutional racial discrimination as the policies and practices

employed by organizations which serve to disadvantage social groups. Several scholars have also considered the macro role of organizations and institutions in the continued existence of discrimination. For instance, Bonilla-Silva (2013), in his book *Racism without Racists*, stated that present day racial inequalities are “reproduced through “*new racism*” practices that are subtle, institutional, and apparently nonracial” (p. 14). Furthermore, Carmichael and Hamilton (1967) used the phrase “*institutional racism*” to distinguish between overt (individual) and covert (institutional) sources of racial bias. Even within employment law, the distinction between disparate treatment and disparate impact point to the different ways in which racial disparities can manifest. In legal courts, disparate treatment refers to intentional employment discrimination and differential treatment (Hutchens & Sun, 2011) whereas, disparate impact is determined to have occurred when a “seemingly neutral employment practice or policy has an adverse impact on a protected class of individuals” (Jackson & O’Callaghan, 2009, p. 34). Disparate impact speaks to the sometimes, unintentional nature of discrimination (Quillian, 2006).

Taken together, contemporary forms of racial discrimination within organized systems (e.g. education, employment) appear to take on subtle and unidentifiable forms via institutional practices that are employed; thus, advancing the interests of White people (men, in particular) while systematically disadvantaging women and racial minorities. So, does organizational discrimination experienced by Black professionals in the academy suddenly dissipate at the top of the academic ladder or does it persist in the institutional practices used to recruit and appoint Black presidents at PWIs? Bonilla-Silva (2013), in addition to Pager and Shepherd (2008), urged researchers to consider the organizational and institutional processes at play when studying modern forms of racial

inequalities (e.g. underrepresentation of Black individuals in the college presidency, specifically at PWIs). To this end, the previously eluded to glass cliff thesis, which explicitly examines organizational conditions in relation to institutional hiring practices of minorities to senior leadership positions, is used as a framework to explore issues related to race, higher education leadership, and subtle forms of organizational inequities.

The Glass Cliff

Much of the leadership literature on the low representation of minorities in the upper echelons of higher education examine the role of individual factors such as, education, age, career paths, management style, and effectiveness in the attainment of executive roles (Ryan, Haslam, Wilson-Kovacs, Hersby, & Kulich, 2007). Other scholars, however, have begun to examine organizational or institutional factors that increase the chances of minorities being promoted to top positions (president/chancellor) despite the well-known barriers that exist. For the small number of Black leaders who are able to successfully reach the pinnacle of the higher education labor hierarchy, of particular interest, is gaining an understanding of the institutional conditions surrounding their appointment. A number of researchers have premised, and found evidence, that women and racial minorities are promoted to precarious or less than ideal leadership positions more often than their White male counterparts—simply coined the glass cliff.

In their seminal archival study, “The Glass Cliff: Evidence that Women are Over-Represented in Precarious Leadership Positions,” Ryan and Haslam’s (2005) research was a direct response to claims that women who achieve senior leadership positions ultimately have a negative impact on organizational performance. Countering the argument that hiring women leaders led to poor company performance and financial loss,

Ryan and Haslam instead posited that periods of organizational loss, failure, and crisis prompted the appointment of female leaders. This phenomenon was coined the glass cliff—an extension of the glass ceiling. It was defined as the preferential placement of women (as opposed to White men) in leadership roles that are inherently risky, precarious, or associated with an increased risk of negative consequences (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). A risky leadership position is one that is characterized by consistently declining organizational performance and hence, an increased chance of failure. Conversely, a non-risky leadership role is characterized by continuing organizational success and hence, a safer position (Ryan et al., 2007).

In essence, the authors argued that, women (and in the case of this study, Black people) who are able to break through the glass ceiling are afterwards placed on a glass cliff and expected to lead during periods of organizational instability. The results of their study, examining the share price performance of 38 top 100 companies in the U.K. both before and after the appointment of male ($n = 19$) and female ($n = 19$) board members, found support for the idea that women were more likely than men to be selected leaders during periods of poor company performance. The scholarship following this groundbreaking study has primarily focused on women and secondarily on racial minorities.

Further Evidence of the Glass Cliff

After finding evidence of the glass cliff, subsequent research efforts attempted to replicate Ryan and Haslam's (2005) findings. Several studies, examined in different organizational contexts, geographical locations, using various research methodologies and larger sample sizes, have since found additional support for the glass cliff

phenomenon. For example, Brady, Isaacs, Reeves, Burroway, and Reynolds (2011) sought to identify firm characteristics (e.g. sector, size, stability, scandal) that predicted the sex of executive leaders. In their examination of 3,691 executives (262 women) in 444 U.S. Fortune 500 companies, they found that women were more likely to hold executive leadership roles in firms that had experienced a recent scandal. Likewise, Cook and Glass (2014a), after analyzing data between 1996 and 2010, found that female leaders were more likely than male leaders to be appointed CEO in struggling Fortune 500 companies.

With a large amount of glass cliff studies focused on private sector organizations, Smith's (2015) study aimed to examine the presence of glass cliff contexts in the public sector. Using a national sample of school districts, Smith (2015) found that women held more leadership positions within public school contexts that were associated with high risk and/or complex work environments. Other researchers have also found evidence of glass cliff conditions experienced by women employed in the public sector (see Sabharwal, 2015; Smith & Monaghan, 2013). With regard to politics, Ryan, Haslam, and Kulich (2010) used archival data to investigate the glass cliff during the U.K. general election. Their results indicated that, in the Conservative party, women candidates were selected to contest seats that were significantly harder to win than male candidates.

Mixed Findings on the Glass Cliff

While there is evidence indicating the existence of organizational glass cliffs, there are also studies that have found only partial or no support of its existence. For instance, Adams, Gupta, and Leeth's (2009) study found that glass cliff conditions were

not present for women CEOs at U.S. firms (for a response, see Ryan & Haslam, 2009; Haslam, Ryan, Kulich, Trojanowski, & Atkins, 2010). Similarly, instead of a glass cliff effect, Cook and Glass (2014b) found that diversity among decision makers—not organizational performance—significantly increased women’s chances of being promoted to CEO roles in Fortune 500 companies. Another set of contradictory findings include Hennessey, MacDonald and Carroll’s (2014) study which examined female board member appointments in Canada. The researchers found that women tended to be selected to fill leadership positions at organizations experiencing superior stock market performance prior to their appointments—suggesting a solid ledge as opposed to a glass cliff. Acar’s (2015) study examining female managers in information technology organizations yielded no support for the glass cliff thesis. Finally, in their examination of companies on the U.K. stock exchange, Mulcahy and Linehan (2014) found partial support for the glass cliff citing that only when company loss was big was there an increase in gender diversity on organizational boards.

In light of these mixed conclusions, Ryan, Haslam, Morgenroth, Rink, Stoker, & Peters (2016) offered a rejoinder, stating that they do not define the glass cliff as a theory but rather a phenomenon that is either observed or not, rather than an assumption to be proved or disproved. These mixed conclusions suggest “that the glass cliff is a nuanced and context-dependent phenomenon” (p. 449). As such, researchers should utilize previous evidence coupled with the application of social theories to understand and identify underlying processes that aid in explaining the glass cliff phenomenon (Ryan et al., 2016).

The Glass Cliff and Racial Minorities

Just as the majority of leadership studies on inequity focus on the low representation of women in the upper echelons of leadership, so too does scholarship on the glass cliff. The phenomenon has been researched almost exclusively in terms of the plight of women leaders in the workplace whereas only a small fraction of studies has focused on race and the glass cliff. Notwithstanding, Ryan and Haslam (2007) were careful to acknowledge the likelihood that members of other minority groups (e.g. race/ethnicity, people with disabilities, non-heterosexuals) were also likely to experience similar challenges associated with glass cliffs.

Cook and Glass (2008) were the first scholars to intentionally endeavor to answer the question of whether racial minorities who are selected to elite leadership roles are also subjected to glass cliff conditions. The results of their study, examining the influence of race on stock market reactions to the announcements of firm leadership appointments, indicated that over time (1 to 11 days), stock market reactions became significantly negative towards the impending appointment of Black firm leaders, thus producing a decline in share prices which is characteristic of a precarious organizational (or glass cliff) condition. From this data, the authors suggested that Black leaders are provided promotional opportunities that are inferior to that of White leaders who, conversely, witnessed an increase in share prices following employment announcements.

One issue of note is that the methodology in the above-mentioned study varied from previous glass cliff studies, in that, company performance was examined after the leader began work instead of prior to their appointment. Instead, Cook and Glass' (2008) study analyzed company performance starting on the first day of and subsequent days

following employment press releases. This distinction is important as the glass cliff is characterized by consistently, declining organizational performance prior to the appointment of a new leader. As such, these results, while telling of the issues Black people face in corporate leadership, should be interpreted with caution as the study appears to speak more to implicit theories about race and leadership (e.g. Black people are not considered to be “*good*” leaders, resulting in a decline in share prices).

Cook and Glass continued their efforts in exploring the conditions that surround the appointment of racial and ethnic minorities to top leadership positions. In their 2014(c) study, they examined CEO transitions among U.S. Fortune 500 companies over a 15-year period in relation to the (1) glass cliff effect, (2) bold moves effect, and (3) savior effect. They found no evidence of the glass cliff but rather the opposite. Racial/ethnic minorities, in their study, were more likely than White individuals to be promoted to strongly performing firms—a phenomenon they coined as the bold moves effect (similar to Hennessey’s et al., 2014 finding of a solid ledge). Using a similar dataset, Cook and Glass (2014a) expanded their analysis to include what they termed occupational minorities—that is, White women as well as men and women of color. These results found support for the glass cliff reporting that occupational minorities were more likely than White men to be promoted CEOs of poorly performing companies.

Extending the research that found evidence of a political glass cliff for women, Kulich, Ryan, and Haslam (2014) analyzed U.K. general election data and whether Black and minority ethnic (BME) members experienced precarious political appointments. Similar to their findings on women, the researchers found that BME groups, in the Conservative party, received significantly fewer votes than White men and were

overrepresented in constituencies where the seats were less likely to win. Overall, these race-focused studies provide evidence similar to what has been reported regarding women—that racial minority leaders are preferentially appointed to leadership positions during periods of harsh organizational conditions.

The Glass Cliff and Higher Education

Although a preponderance of glass cliff research has explored the concept in various settings such as business (e.g. board of directors of FTSE 100 companies, CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, graduate business/management students, business leaders), law, politics, the public sector, and secondary education, only two known studies have explored this phenomenon within higher education settings. Both studies, one which focused on gender and the other on race, found supporting evidence of the glass cliff. Cook and Glass' (2013) study sought to determine whether college and university athletic minority coaches were predisposed to glass cliff appointments. When analyzing data concerning leadership transitions among NCAA men's basketball head coaches over a 30-year period, the authors found that minority coaches were more likely to be promoted to losing athletic programs. In line with the literature on racial minority leadership in higher education, Cook and Glass (2013) also found that minority coaches were more likely to be appointed to positions at minority-serving institutions (e.g. HBCUs).

Peterson (2016) analyzed the glass cliff effect in relation to senior level women administrators in higher education. Aimed at understanding the trend of an increased number of women gaining access to senior management positions in Swedish academe, the authors conducted qualitative interviews with 22 women in senior management positions (e.g. chancellors, deans, and professors) at 10 higher education institutions.

They found that the female participants were more likely to be selected to senior academic management positions that had declined in status, merit, and prestige. In addition, the jobs themselves were reported to be extremely time-consuming and challenging. At present, there are no known studies that examine organizational conditions surrounding the appointment of racial minorities to the college/university presidency/chancellorship in U.S. higher education.

Underlying Processes of the Glass Cliff

As the concept of causality cannot be reduced to one sole factor, researchers suggest that glass cliff appointments are likely explained or determined by a range of processes (not just one factor), including (1) selection bias; (2) stereotypes and implicit theories about gender and leadership; (3) organizational need for change; (4) individual preferences and choices; and (5) social/structural realities (Bruckmüller, Ryan, Rink, & Haslam, 2014; Ryan et al., 2016). Still, research focused on identifying these underlying causes has mainly focused on women. As such, literature explaining why glass cliffs conditions might exist for leaders of color is a research topic that has not been fully explored. It is presumed, however, that many of the findings presented below explaining why glass cliffs occur for women may also be applicable to minority racial groups.

Selection Bias. To understand the origins of the glass cliff phenomenon, researchers initially aimed to examine whether the appointment of female leaders during periods of organizational crisis was a factor of preferential employment selection. As such, a number of experimental scenario studies were performed to investigate hiring decisions under different conditions of company performance. In these studies, participants were asked to read a scenario about an organization that was performing well

and an organization that was performing poorly. They were then informed about a vacant position in the organization and asked to evaluate and rank whether equally qualified female and male candidates would be best suited for the job.

Haslam and Ryan's (2008, Study 1) scenario based study found that business management graduate students rated both female and male candidates equally when the company was performing well. However, when company performance was in decline, the participants showed an overwhelming preference for selecting the female candidate. Similar findings were found when exploring business leaders' perceptions of male and female leadership suitability during organizational success and decline (Haslam & Ryan, 2008, Study 3). Findings indicated that adverse leadership appointments were associated with the belief that glass cliff conditions (a) suit the distinctive leadership abilities of women; (b) provide women with good leadership opportunities; and (c) are particularly stressful for women (Haslam & Ryan, 2008).

Although not a finding in the above studies, Hunt-Earle's (2012) research suggested that participant-selector gender influenced decisions to appoint male or female leaders. The overall results of this study, consisting of 40 participants ($n = 20$ male; $n = 20$ female) from various professions, found support for the glass cliff. However, when analyzing the results by gender the data revealed that male participants had no gender preference when the company was failing, but preferred the male candidate when the company was doing well. On the other hand, female participants consistently favored the selection of the female candidate, but did so more strongly when company performance was poor. These findings suggest that the gender of the selector does indeed influence job candidate choice.

Additional experimental studies found evidence supporting the notion that biases held by individuals making selection decisions play a role in creating of glass cliff conditions. For instance, one study concluded that voters preferred female politicians when the seat was “*harder to win*” (Ryan et al., 2010, Study 2). Another study found that high school students favored female youth representative leaders for a failing music festival (Haslam & Ryan, 2008, Study 2). One final study indicated that participants strongly preferred female candidates as lead counsel in high-risk legal cases (Ashby, Ryan, & Haslam, 2007) (see also Brown, Diekmann & Schneider, 2011).

Stereotypes and Implicit Theories. Evidence suggesting that selection bias contributes to glass cliff conditions led researchers to consider processes underlying selection decisions. One such process is related to personally held beliefs about women, men, and leadership. Managerial stereotypes have been reported to be “*gendered*,” with masculine traits associated with good leadership whereas feminine traits were not (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011)—this is known as the “think manager-think male” paradigm (Schien, 1973). However, researchers have found that this association tends to reverse during times of organizational crisis suggesting that women possess certain leadership traits that may be more desirable than male leadership qualities in these periods. Such implicit stereotypical beliefs about women’s perceived leadership qualities may contribute to the existence of the glass cliff. When examining gender and managerial stereotypes in the context of successful and poorly performing companies, participants in Ryan, Haslam, Hersby, and Bongiorno’s (2011, Study 2) study reported that ideal managers of unsuccessful companies should possess feminine leadership traits rather than

male leadership traits—the “think crisis-think female” association (for similar findings see Haslam & Ryan, 2008, Study 3; Gartzia, Ryan, Balluerka, & Aritzeta, 2012).

Other experimental research provides evidence for the “think crisis-think female” paradigm. For instance, Bruckmüller and Branscombe’s (2010, Study 2) scenario based study depicted a leadership position at a supermarket chain that was either in good standing or experiencing crisis. Participants were then asked to rate the male and female candidate based on stereotypical masculine traits (“think manager-think male”) and stereotypical feminine traits (“think crisis-think female”). The results indicated that stereotypical masculine attributes were most predictive of who participants selected to lead the successful company (male candidate) while stereotypical feminine traits were most predictive of who participants selected to lead the company in crisis (female candidate).

Arguments that women possess certain leadership qualities that are more desirable during times of crisis can also be applied to racial minority groups. Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002) reported that low-status groups (e.g. women, racial minorities) are generally associated with “warm” attributes such as kindness and helpfulness (Eagly & Carli, 2007). As such, Kulich et al., (2014) argued that since women and racial minorities presumably share the attribute of “warmth,” racial minority leaders might also be perceived as having the appropriate traits to lead during inclement organizational conditions (see also Cook & Glass, 2014c, p. 442). Even so, further research is needed to support this hypothesis.

Organizational Need for Change. Organizational crises are a main feature of glass cliff conditions and some argue that the onset of a crisis implies a time for risk- taking

and challenging/changing the status quo (Boin, & Hart, 2003; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Crises are characterized by “deteriorating financial performance, technical failure, accidents and incidents, scandal, or changes in organization and market dynamics” (Ryan et al., 2016, p. 451). As such, organizations might use crisis situations as opportunities to appoint non-traditional leaders, such as minorities, to positions typically unavailable to them. This signals an effort to change routine leadership practices. Research indicates that manipulating organizational change (e.g. changing history of leadership) can explain glass cliff conditions.

Bruckmüller and Branscombe’s (2010) scenario based study (Study 1) found that when there was a history of male leadership, participants chose to appoint a female candidate when the company was in trouble, but favored male candidates when the company was successful. However, when there was a history of female leadership both male and female candidates were appointed equally. Brown, Diekman, and Schneider’s (2011) experimental study (Study 1) found that threats to an organization signaled a need for change rather than stability. Furthermore, their study revealed that women leaders were generally associated with institutional change or a need for change whereas male leaders were associated with organizational stability or maintaining the status quo (e.g. White, male leadership) (Brown et al., 2011, Study 2a) (see also Kulich, Lorenzi-Cioldi, Iacoviello, Faniko, & Ryan, 2015, Study 2). This same logic can be applied to racial minorities. Kulich et al., (2014) wrote that the choice to select a non-traditional leader during crisis who is “not White or not male may be perceived as a positive sign,” signaling change (p. 91). Although being asked to lead an organization during times of crisis is viewed by some minorities as an opportunity, there still remains an element of

risk associated with such leadership opportunities. However, taking such a risk is not detrimental to one's career (Ryan & Haslam, 2007).

Individual Preferences and Choices. Another underlying process attempting to explain the occurrence of the glass cliff phenomenon refers to the preferences and choices that women (or racial minorities) ultimately make. The argument here is that women prefer to lead challenging companies or that women may be more willing than men to accept leadership positions during periods of crisis because they view the opportunity as one generally not available to them. For instance, Ashby et al., (2007) found that participants' perceptions of opportunity based on gender differed when asked to select between a male or female candidate to lead a legal case that was highly likely to fail. The results of this study indicated that positions associated with high risk were perceived as providing a considerably better opportunity for female candidates to further their careers than male candidates.

In addition, little evidence supported the notion that women prefer to lead during challenging times. Rink, Ryan, and Stoker (2012) found that women took into consideration the precariousness of a leadership position (e.g. the lack of resources needed to be successful) and were reluctant to take on such risky roles if the position lacked desired resources/support. It is possible, however, that undesirable positions can be seen as more attractive when women notice it is the only one available to them (Ryan et al., 2016). This same rationale may hold true for racial minorities who are less likely to obtain mainstream leadership positions (e.g. CEO, VP). Collins (1997) found that Black executives were willing to accept precarious or “*racialized*” management job offers—that is, those jobs that center on the diversity mission of an organization (e.g. affirmative

action) and were less likely to lead to a mainstream management appointment—out of fear that the position would be the “first and only opportunity” they would receive (p. 60).

Social Structural Realities. A final explanation of why glass cliffs occur is that the phenomenon may be the result of sexism or in-group favoritism—both manifestations of discrimination (Ryan, Haslam, & Postmes, 2007). In-group favoritism posits that because decision makers within organizations are typically predominantly White males, there is a tendency to reserve leadership positions for fellow in-group members (e.g. other White men). The scarce existing empirical evidence provided mixed results citing discrimination (e.g. in-group favoritism and sexism) as a factor contributing to glass cliffs (see Bruckmüller et al., 2014). For example, some studies showed that gender was not a factor in participants’ selection of male leaders to successful organizations and female leaders to struggling/failing organizations—producing no evidence of in-group favoritism (Brown et al., 2011; Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Haslam & Ryan, 2008, Study 1). Whereas, Hunt-Earle’s (2012) study found that participant gender did influence leadership selections to glass cliff conditions.

The few studies examining sexist attitudes and the glass cliff also produced inconsistent findings. Ashby et al., (2007), when measuring overt sexism, found that preferences to select women to fill leadership positions in failing organizations was not a product of overt sexist intent. Conversely, Gartzia et al., (2012) found that participants who possessed more sexist attitudes were more likely to select both the male and female candidates with stereotypical masculine traits during periods of organizational crisis. It has been suggested that subtle forms of sexism, as opposed to blatant forms, play a role in

explaining glass cliff occurrences. For example, when a manager is expected to take responsibility for company failures, there was a strong preference for that leader to exhibit female leadership traits (Ryan et al., 2011, Study 3). Furthermore, Haslam and Ryan (2008, Study 3) found that participants favored women leaders during times of organizational crisis despite an expectation that such a role would be more stressful for a woman leader than for a man. Accordingly, Bruckmüller et al., (2014) noted a “willingness to expose a woman to higher stress . . . [and] keep a man away . . . can certainly be interpreted as a form of sexism” (p. 216).

Supporting Frameworks

To make better sense of the published evidence that has been gathered regarding the glass cliff phenomenon and its impact on minority leadership, particularly racial minorities, two theoretical concepts were employed: (1) Critical Race Theory (CRT) and (2) Situational Leadership Theory (SLT). The primary focus of this study was on race and leadership. As such, conceptual frameworks geared towards guiding such discussions in relation to the glass cliff phenomenon were deemed appropriate. Both CRT and SLT provided a lens through which to critically explore how race influences the experiences of Black presidents who are possibly appointed to institutions characterized by precarious or adverse organizational conditions.

Critical Race Theory

Critical theory, the overarching perspective from which CRT was developed, is appropriate here as it provides a context with which to investigate structural inequities. Patton (2002) wrote that critical theory focuses on “how injustice and subjugation shape

people's experiences and understandings of the world" (p. 130). Furthermore, Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) noted:

A critical social theory is concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy, matters of race, class, and gender, ideologies, discourses, education, religion, and other social institutions and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system . . . Inquiry that aspires to the name "*critical*" must be connected to an attempt to confront the injustice of a particular society.

Research thus becomes a transformative endeavor. (pp. 305-306)

Along with the element of critique, another key factor in the critical theory framework is its emphasis on enacting social change (Patton, 2002). The goal of a critical perspective is to "use research to critique society, raise consciousness, and change the balance of power in favor of those less powerful" (Patton, 2002, p. 548).

Critical race theory (CRT) was a result of the mid-twentieth century progressive movement and legal studies during that era (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995). With a more narrowed focus, yet still fueled by the perspectives of critical theory, CRT emerged as a framework in the 1970s due to an awareness of the need for theories and strategies that would "combat subtler forms of racism" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 4). According to Delgado et al., (2012), CRT is composed of five basic tenets:

1. Racism is normal and ordinary, not aberrant (permanence of racism).
2. Because racism advances the interests of both White elites and working-class Whites, there is little incentive to eradicate it (interest convergence).
3. Minority status brings with it a presumed competence to speak about one's experience with race and racism (storytelling).

4. Race and races are products of social thought and relations (social construction).
5. Each race has its own origins and ever-evolving history (differential racialization); no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity (intersectionality). (p. 7-10)

Particularly relevant to this study are the CRT tenets related to the permanence of racism, interest convergence, storytelling, and intersectionality. It is argued here that racist or discriminatory hierarchical leadership structures—whether conscious (intentional) or unconscious (unintentional) (Lawrence, 1995)—which privilege White leaders are indeed a past and present reality in higher education leadership and governance (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004) and is a factor that may help explain glass cliff conditions for racial minorities. Additionally, it is reasoned that such unintentional acts of discriminatory practices experienced by marginalized groups directly or indirectly advantage or serve the interest of the dominant White group thereby, stifling efforts to create change. For instance, reserving the less desirable leadership roles for minority groups serve the interest of majority groups, as the more desirable leadership roles are accessible to them alone. The act of storytelling provides an outlet for racial minorities to competently communicate their experiences with race and racism to “their White counterparts [who] are unlikely to know” or be aware of such narratives (Delgado et al., 2012, p. 10). In line with CRT, it is assumed that because of their racial status African American participants will be able to competently offer their perspectives regarding the influence of race on their leadership experiences during qualitative data collection. Lastly, although not a primary focus of the study, it is assumed that the tenet of

intersectionality will emerge when speaking to African American female participants about their multiple and intersecting identities.

It has been established from the review of published literature that inequities exist for racial minorities in organizational leadership and power structures thus, suggesting the appropriateness of CRT as one of the study's conceptual frameworks. The theoretical elements of raising social awareness and affecting change through the work of scholarship are also aligned with this study. The CRT tenets applied in this study are permanence of racism, interest convergence, storytelling, and intersectionality. Each provided a lens by which to examine subtle forms of organizational inequity.

Situational Leadership Theory

In addition to CRT, the theoretical perspective of Situational Leadership was also used to frame this study. Because context shapes how leaders lead, it was important to undergird this study with an appropriate theory of leadership in conjunction with CRT. "Organizational characteristics, such as the stability of an organization" are just one of several contexts that influence what leaders do (Antonakis, Schriesheim, Donovan, Gopalakrishna-Pillai, Pellegrini, & Rossomme, 2004, p. 61). Northouse (2013) posited that "different situations demand different kinds of leadership . . . [and] to be an effective leader requires that a person adapt his or her style to the demands of different situations" (p. 99). Hersey and Blanchard (1969) were the first to develop the Situational Leadership theoretical approach to better understand context-specific management (at that time referred to as the life cycle theory of leadership). In 1985, SLT was expanded to become the Situational Leadership II (SLII) model (Blanchard, 1985; Blanchard, Zigarmi,

Zigarmi, 1985), and incorporated two additional features: leadership style and development level of subordinates.

The situational leadership perspective suggests that leadership or one's leadership style is comprised of two dimensions: (1) a directive dimension and (2) a supportive dimension (Northouse, 2013). Examples of directive behaviors include giving directions, establishing goals, setting time lines, and defining roles whereas examples of supportive behaviors include asking for input, solving problems, praising, and listening. The decision on which style (i.e. directive or supportive) is appropriate to employ in a given situation is dependent on the development level of subordinates. According to the theory, subordinates' development level is understood in terms of how competent and committed they are to performing a task. Since employee ability and motivation fluctuate over time, the theory suggests that leaders should adjust their involvement in directive and supportive behaviors to suit the varying needs of their subordinates. Thus, at its core, situational leadership "demands that leaders match their style to the competence and commitment of subordinates" (Northouse, 2013, p. 99).

Within this theoretical framework, leadership style is comprised of four distinct categories of directive and supportive behaviors. One's level (i.e. high or low) of engagement in directive and supportive behaviors determines their style of leadership. Northouse (2013) lists the four categories as followed: (1) Directing style: High directive and low supportive; (2) Coaching style: High directive and high supportive; (3) Supporting style: High supportive and low directive; and lastly, (4) Delegating style: Low supportive and low directive (see Figure 1). Most relevant to this study, are the four categories of leadership styles.

Figure 1. Situational Leadership: The Four Leadership Styles

Directing Style	Coaching Style	Supporting Style	Delegating Style
High Directive Low Supportive	High Directive High Supportive	Low Directive High Supportive	Low Directive Low Supportive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on goal achievement • Gives instructions • Supervises carefully • Less time on supportive behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on goal achievement • Focus on giving encouragement and soliciting input • Leader makes final decision on how goals are accomplished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less time on goal achievement • Focus on supportive behaviors • Gives subordinates control • Available to facilitate problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less time on goal achievement • Less time on supportive behaviors • Subordinates take responsibility of task • Leader refrains from intervening

The use of the situational leadership theory in this study has the potential to expand the body of knowledge that suggests that Black leaders possess qualities, presently unknown, that are preferentially desirable during periods of organizational crisis (see Cook & Glass, 2014c). Of interest, is an understanding of exactly what specific leadership styles are used by Black leaders within majority White contexts characterized by adverse conditions.

Summary

The history of Black people in the United States is a unique one, laced with both challenges and successes. From slavery to inclusion into the American social order, Black individuals have made great strides, particularly as it relates to education and employment. More Black people are accessing education and professional occupations from which they were formally excluded. Despite such progressive steps, barriers to

success remain. Specifically, in the domain of higher education, Black individuals continue to be largely underrepresented in executive leadership roles such as the college and university presidency among the nation's predominantly White institutions. For the few who are able to break through social and employment barriers, what organizational and institutional conditions characterize their appointments?

Evidence from glass cliff literature suggests that racial minorities (and women) are more likely to be appointed leaders of poorly performing organizations. Though PWIs often boast of their commitment to diversity, the lack of structural diversity in upper administration depicts a picture quite incongruent with spoken or written mission statements of inclusion (Harvey, 1999; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). The glass cliff thesis is one avenue in which to frame scholarship investigating leadership inequities as a result of race. Ryan's et al., (2016) recommended strategy of how to examine inequities among Black and White presidents is "to examine the circumstances surrounding leadership positions or the nature of the positions themselves" (p. 531). This study aims to identify organizational conditions that shape the hiring practices of Black presidents at PWIs. It is not suggested that White presidents do not experience challenges in their leadership roles, but it is premised that minorities may experience challenges above and beyond the struggles of their White counterparts. Ryan et al., (2007) noted, "Although challenge is essential for career progression, some opportunities are better than others" (p. x).

No known studies examine the glass cliff in relation to race and higher education senior leadership. Up until this point, glass cliff studies have primarily focused on gender. Considering the lack of studies that exist, such an examination of the intersections of

race, higher education leadership, and the glass cliff thesis is warranted. The use of the glass cliff framework (in conjunction with CRT and SLT conceptual frameworks) as a means to explore the organizational conditions by which Black presidents are appointed to PWIs, will provide significant insight into the factors that shape minority access to elite positions of higher education leadership.

CHAPTER IV – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

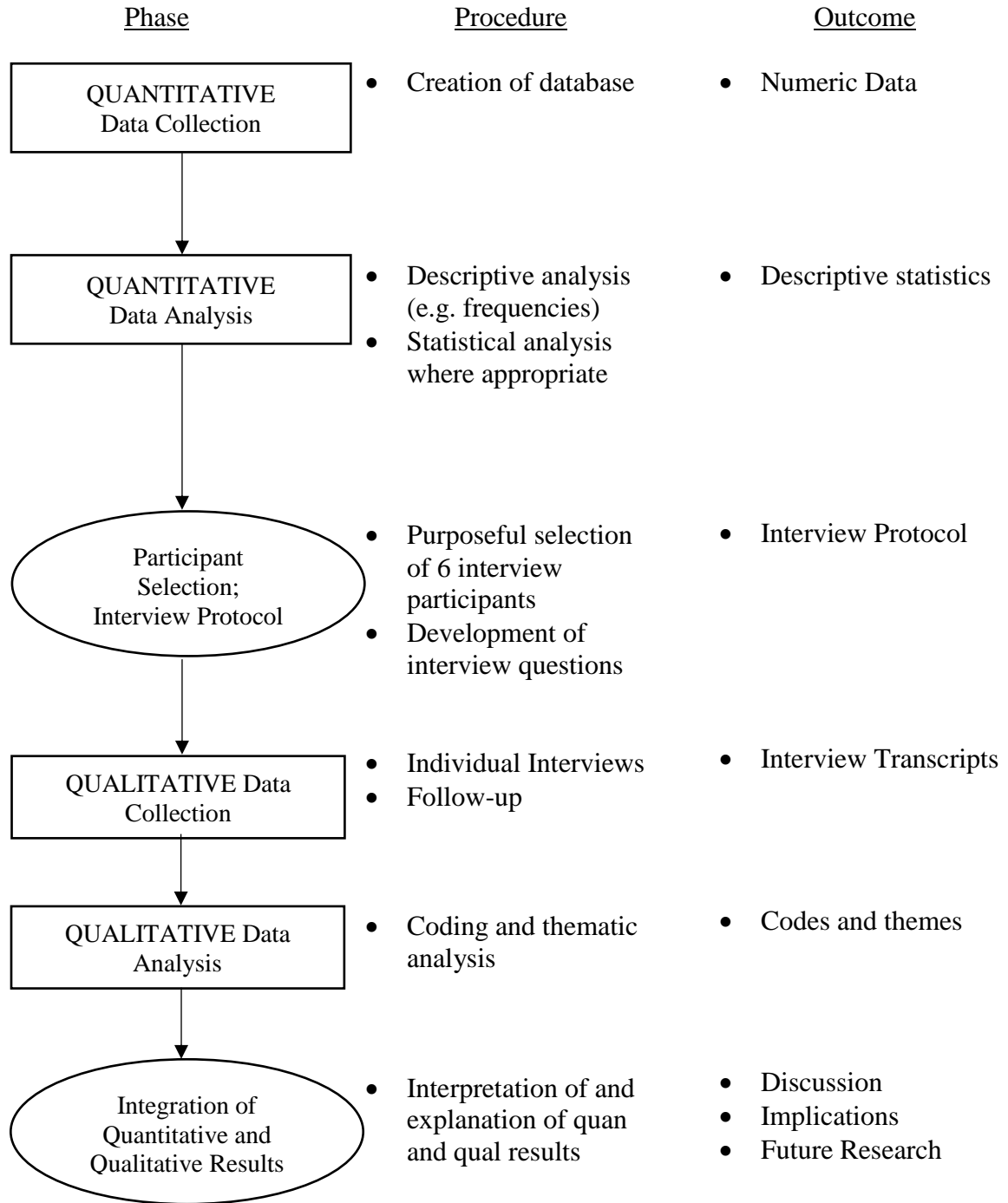
The purpose of this study was to assess the prevalence of adverse conditions, conceptualized via the glass cliff framework, surrounding the appointment of Black college and university presidents at PWIs in comparison to White presidents; as well as gain an understanding of the experiences of Black presidents navigating majority White contexts as racial minorities. To this end, a mixed methods research design was employed. This design was used because it allowed for (1) enhanced validity and triangulation; (2) explanation of initial results; and (3) improved credibility of findings (see Bryman, 2006).

Mixed methods research “focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study . . . Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 5). An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used (QUAN → qual = explain results). This design occurred in two distinct interactive phases with emphasis given to the quantitative strand. The quantitative phase was emphasized because it aimed to assess the prevalence of adverse conditions at PWIs where Black presidents were appointed to lead.

In the quantitative phase of the design, a database of archival data from years 2000 to 2015 was created and used to assess and compare the presence, prevalence, and magnitude (i.e. large or small differences) of precarious or adverse conditions surrounding the appointment of Black and White college and university presidents at

selected PWIs. The qualitative phase was implemented to build upon the results obtained in the quantitative phase. Thus, the primary point of interface (or the stage at which both data strands were mixed) occurred during the collection of a qualitative data. The quantitative results were used to make decisions in the qualitative phase related to the refinement of research questions, the selection of participants, and the development of an interview protocol (Creswell & Clark, 2011). In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six African American presidents in order to explore their lived and unique experiences as racial minorities leading majority White institutions. In the final step, both quantitative and qualitative data were combined and interpreted to determine how the qualitative results helped explain the quantitative results and draw overall conclusions (Creswell & Clark, 2011). (See Figure 2)

Figure 2. Diagram of Explanatory Sequential Design.



Philosophical Paradigms

Traditional to most research studies is an identification of the selected philosophical paradigm or worldview that grounds the research study. The purpose of establishing a philosophical foundation or worldview for research is to identify one's beliefs and assumptions (or paradigm/worldview) about the acquisition of knowledge (or epistemology), which in turn informs and guides the study (Creswell & Clarke, 2011). Both quantitative and qualitative methods have their corresponding set of philosophical paradigms. Mixed method researchers have worked to identify underlying philosophies that inform both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Creswell and Clarke (2011, p. 45) identify options from which researchers can choose however, the authors suggest the use of a dialectical philosophical stance when employing explanatory mixed methods designs. This stance emphasizes the use of multiple and shifting paradigms throughout the study under the condition that the researcher is clear about when each worldview is used (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). In this section, I will outline each worldview that was used to inform both the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study.

For the quantitative phase, an objectivist epistemological paradigm informed the study. Crotty (1998) stated that objectivism is “the epistemological view that things exist as meaningful entities independently of consciousness and experience, that they have truth and meaning residing in them as objects . . . and that careful research can attain that objective truth and meaning” (p. 5-6). Claims of objectivity are true or false regardless of what others think or feel about them (Honderich, 2005). An objectivist epistemology is based on quantitative research and associated with a number of theoretical perspectives (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). Underpinning this objectivist philosophical paradigm,

was a post-positivism theoretical perspective. The inclusion of a theoretical perspective (not to be confused with a theoretical framework, see Jones et al., 2006, p. 16) is to state what the paradigmatic assumptions are (Crotty, 1998). Post-positivism, a modern form of positivism, is grounded in empirical and verifiable evidence which “talks of probability rather than certainty, claims a certain level of objectivity rather than absolute objectivity, and seeks to approximate the truth rather than aspiring to grasp it in its totality” (Crotty, 1998, p. 29). The assumptions of this paradigm suggest that knowledge is based on (1) determinism (cause and effect thinking); (2) reductionism (narrowing and focusing on select variables); (3) empirical observation and measurement; and (4) theory verification (Creswell, 2003). An objectivist paradigm examined through the lens of a post-positivist perspective is appropriate in the study’s quantitative phase as the goal was to numerically describe the prevalence of precarious or adverse conditions experienced among Black and White presidents at PWIs and determine whether there were any differences between groups.

In accordance with the dialectical stance, the philosophical worldview for the qualitative phase of the study shifted from employing the assumptions of post-positivism to using the assumptions of a constructivist (or constructionist) epistemological paradigm. This view states that, “there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world. Meaning is not discovered, but constructed” (Crotty, 1998). This worldview focuses on how individuals make meaning of phenomena through their interactions with others or their personal histories (Creswell & Clark, 2011). A constructivist paradigm is typically associated with qualitative research. Undergirding this constructivist philosophy

was a critical theoretical perspective. A critical lens refers to the “situation where human experiences are systematically repressed in a given society” (Coomer, 1989, p. 176)—that is, a system that affords advantages to some while disadvantaging others. The goal of a critical perspective is to “use research to critique society, raise consciousness, and change the balance of power in favor of those less powerful” (Patton, 2002, p. 548). The assumptions in this paradigm suggest that knowledge is based on (1) seeking understanding of the world in which individuals live and work; (2) multiple meanings; (3) social and historical construction of meaning; and (4) theory generation (Creswell, 2003). A constructivist paradigm undergirded with a critical theoretical perspective was appropriate in the qualitative phase of the study as the goal was to gain an understanding of how Black presidents navigate and make meaning of their experiences leading PWIs. The remainder of this chapter discusses the quantitative and qualitative phases separately to ensure clarity.

Quantitative Research Methodology and Design

This section examines the (1) research questions; (2) quantitative methodology; and the (3) research design that guided the quantitative phase of this study.

Research Questions

The overarching research question guiding the quantitative phase was, are organizational conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed at PWIs different than those experienced by White presidents? The two specific research questions are listed below:

1. Are there observed differences in the prevalence or frequency of adverse conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed to lead at PWIs when compared to White presidents?

H1: Black leaders appointed at PWIs experience more instances of adverse conditions than White leaders appointed at PWIs.

2. Are there observed differences in the magnitude (i.e. large or small differences) of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White presidents appointed at PWIs?

H2: There are differences in the magnitude of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White leaders.

Quantitative Methodology

The purpose of quantitative research is to explain a phenomenon through the collection of numerical data that is then analyzed using statistically based methods (Muijs, 2004). The phenomenon, conceptualized using the glass cliff framework, that this study aimed to observe and quantify was the prevalence or frequency of adverse conditions present around the time that Black and White presidents were appointed at PWIs. As such, the use of quantitative methods was suitable for examining the study's research questions. Quantitative approaches have been used to explore precarious or adverse conditions in a number of organizational settings; however, no such investigation has been conducted examining higher education settings and the college presidency (for reference, see Chapter III). Thus, quantitative research of this nature would add to the existing knowledge base on the glass cliff phenomenon.

Quantitative research methodologies are typically divided into two categories: experimental and non-experimental (Belli, 2009). Because this study does not intend to manipulate variables or randomly assign participants to control and experimental groups, a non-experimental design was used. Non-experimental methodologies are often used in educational research because there are a number of variables that cannot be manipulated (Johnson, 2001). As such, a classification system of non-experimental quantitative research was proposed by Johnson (2001), for which the aim was to establish a system that describes what is done when utilizing this type of methodology. Johnson (2001) argued that non-experimental research is an important tool that can “provide increased evidence of the external validity of previously established experimental research findings” (p. 3). Since there is experimental evidence supporting the presence of the glass cliff in organizations led by minorities (for reference, see Chapter III), this study had the potential to validate previous findings when examining higher education contexts.

Johnson’s (2001) typology of non-experimental research consists of two dimensions, each with three categories. The first dimension focuses on the purpose of the research study (e.g. description, prediction, or explanation) and the second dimension categorizes the research based on the time frame in which data were collected (e.g. cross-sectional, longitudinal, or retrospective). The combination of both dimensions produces nine distinct categories that researchers can use as a means to describe the type of non-experimental methodology they might employ.

The type of non-experimental methodology used in this study was a descriptive-retrospective (archival) design. The descriptive dimension illustrates that the primary goal of research is to describe some phenomenon and/or document its characteristics.

Black (1999) stated that the purpose of descriptive research is to determine what events are occurring and how prevalent the phenomenon is. In addition, the retrospective (archival) dimension allows the researcher to use past and existing data to explain or explore a current phenomenon. Taken together, the quantitative phase of the study employed an archival, descriptive non-experimental research design that used past and present data to explore the glass cliff phenomenon within higher education.

Research Design

This section explores the specific strategies used in carrying out the study. A discussion of the (1) description of institutions; (2) selection of institutions; (3) creation of an adverse database/instrument; (4) data collection procedures, and (5) analysis of data will be provided.

Description of Institutions and Rationale for their Inclusion. The type of institutions examined in this study were predominantly White institutions where Black and White presidents had been appointed between the years of 2000 and 2015. For this study, PWIs were defined as institutions “of higher learning in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment” (Brown & Dancy, 2010a, p. 523). PWIs were selected as the focal point of this study for two reasons. First, literature examining the college presidency indicated that barriers to advancement for racial minorities are more prominent at PWIs as opposed to minority-serving institutions (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Black presidents are typically better represented at minority-serving institutions and underrepresented at non-minority-serving institutions. Considering that barriers for Black leaders are more prominent at PWIs (when compared

to MSIs), an examination of the organizational conditions surrounding their appointment in these contexts was more appropriate for the purposes of this study.

Secondly, the type of institutions that Black presidents are most likely to preside over, MSIs such as historically Black colleges and universities, are inherently precarious or adverse. Although there is a pronounced need for scholarship examining leadership structures at HBCUs, these institutions were omitted from analysis in an effort to decrease the presence of variables that would potentially confound the primary research goal. From their inception to modern day, HBCUs (in general) have experienced turmoil and thus, the nature of these institutions is often characterized by adverse conditions—the same, however, cannot be said for PWIs. Despite the many benefits HBCUs afford to post-secondary education, they are, unfortunately, persistently challenged with issues related to low retention rates; graduation rates that fall below the national average; a lack of financial resources; small endowment sizes; instability in leadership; the retention of quality faculty; declining student enrollment; and increased competition from historically White institutions (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 2014; Gasman & Commodore, 2014). It was assumed that studying adverse conditions among Black presidents at HBCUs would be counterproductive to the research goals of this study and as such, these institutions were excluded.

Selection of Institutions. Purposeful sampling was used to identify institutions that would be studied. Black-led predominantly White institutions were identified first, and based on the institutional characteristics of the Black-led institutions, White-led PWIs were identified secondly. Since the number of Black individuals leading PWIs is relatively small, it was imperative to identify as many Black-led institutions in order to

obtain a meaningful sample. As such, geographical location was not restricted. Furthermore, for the sake of uniformity and because Black presidents are more likely to be represented at public institutions (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017), the search was limited to public, four-year colleges and universities.

The first cycle of selecting institutions were based on two main criteria: (1) status as a public, four-year PWI and (2) whether the current president leading the institution was a Black person. As no comprehensive list exists detailing this information, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System's (IPEDS) database and institutional webpages were the primary tools used in locating institutions that fit within the above-mentioned criteria. To ascertain the first criteria, the IPEDS College Navigator search engine was utilized to locate every public, 4-year institution in every state within the United States. For each public 4-year institution in each state, student enrollment data were viewed via the College Navigator tool to determine if White students accounted for 50% or greater of the student enrollment. If they did, the institutional webpage was then viewed to ascertain the second criteria—whether the current president/chancellor was Black. At the time of this study, the search yielded a total of 22 currently serving Black presidents at twenty-two of the nation's public, 4-year, PWIs. However, two institutions were later removed from the sample because of a lack of available data; thus, leaving a total of 20 institutions to be analyzed. In addition to collecting the president's/chancellor's demographic information (race, gender), the following institutional specific information was collected using the Carnegie Classification of Institutions in Higher Education (CCIHE) database: institutional classification,

institutional category, institutional size, and institutional setting. Information related to institutional region was also gathered.

Once a list of Black-led PWIs and their corresponding institutional attributes were formulated, the selection of White-led sister (or similar) institutions were identified for comparative purposes between both groups in subsequent data analysis. Based on the institutional information gathered for the Black-led institutions (i.e., institutional control, level, classification/category, setting, and size), the ‘find similar institutions’ function on the CCIHE database was used to locate White-led institutions that possessed comparable institutional attributes as the Black-led institutions. After the CCIHE database generated a list of similar institutions, a random list generator was used to reorder and number the list. Moreover, a random number generator was used to facilitate the selection of White-led sister institutions at random. The number generated at random was matched with the corresponding number on the randomized list to select White-led sister institutions. Next, the IPEDS College Navigator tool was used to determine if the randomly selected institution held PWI status. If the institution was a PWI, then a search of the institutional webpage was performed to determine whether the current president was a White male. If the criteria were not met, then another number was generated at random and this process was repeated until twenty sister White-led PWIs had been identified.

Database/Instrument. Again, the goal of quantitative phase was to ascertain the presence, prevalence, and magnitude of adverse conditions for both Black and White presidents appointed to lead PWIs thereby, being able to determine the existence or non-existence of glass cliffs within higher education leadership structures. Having selected the Black and White presidents and their corresponding institutions, the next step was the

creation of a database of adverse conditions. Since the glass cliff is characterized by periods of consistent and poor organizational performance prior to the appointment of a minority leader, the database served as a means to capture operationally defined adverse conditions over a cumulative four-year period for each institution.

As organizational adversity is a distinguishing factor of the glass cliff, an operational definition of what adversity looks like in higher education settings was necessary. Thus, for this study, adverse conditions were defined as factors that placed colleges and universities at-risk of performing poorly or failing. In essence, it was adversity on a continuum (e.g. low organizational adversity and high organizational adversity). Institutions at risk of performing poorly or failing would likely be located near the high end of the adversity continuum experiencing organizational instability, unfavorable organizational conditions, and a high risk of failure (See Figure 3).

Figure 3. Defining Adversity in Higher Education

Adversity	
Low	High
Organizational Stability	Organizational Instability
Favorable Organizational Conditions	Unfavorable Organizational Conditions
Low risk/High Success	High risk/High Failure

Identifying those specific variables or factors descriptive of a college or university functioning under adverse conditions was the next step in the database creation. The question guiding this deliberation was, what specific factors characterize a successful versus poorly performing college or university? From this line of inquiry, three categories

of adverse conditions emerged: (1) financial hardship, (2) student outcomes, and (3) the presence of a crisis/es.

The first category, consisting of the financial hardship variables, sought to capture increases and/or decreases related to fluctuations in institutional tuition and fees, revenue, state support, and endowment over a four-year period specific to the time of appointment for each individual president. An increase in tuition and fees and a decrease in revenue, state support, and endowment were considered as adverse. The second category, comprising the student outcomes variables, aimed to capture fluctuations in student enrollment, retention, and graduation/completion rates—with a decrease in each of these variables being indicative of adversity.

The final category, presence of a crisis/es, captured information related to recent or ongoing crises faced by the institution. Periods of intense organizational difficulty or trouble included events such as scandals (i.e., unethical/illegal behavior, Title IX violations/investigations; lawsuits/settlements; student protests; faculty strikes), natural disasters, campus violence, and votes of no confidence in previous leadership. In total, there were eight adverse conditions of interest across three categories: (1) increased tuition and fees; (2) decreased revenue; (3) decreased state support; (4) decreased endowment; (5) decreased student retention; (6) decreased student enrollment; (7) decreased student graduation; and (8) presence of a crisis/es (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Categorization and Description of Adverse Conditions

Categories	Description of Adverse Conditions
Financial Hardship	Increased Tuition & Fees
	Decreased Revenue
	Decreased State Support
	Decreased Endowment
Student Outcomes	Decreased Retention
	Decreased Enrollment
	Decreased Graduation
Presence of Crisis	Scandal/Crisis
	Natural Disaster
	Campus Violence
	Votes of no Confidence

Data Collection Procedures. After defining the adverse conditions, data related to the three categories (e.g. financial hardship, student outcomes, and the presence of a crisis/es) were collected for each institution, 20 Black-led and 20 White-led. To retrieve data for the first two categories (financial hardship and student outcomes), the IPEDS online Data Center was used to capture four consecutive years of archival data. The four-year period to be examined for each institution was determined based on the appointment year of the president. As most of the appointment years differed for each currently serving president, IPEDS data were gathered across various combinations of four-year periods ranging between years 2000 and 2015. For example, if the president

was appointed in 2016, then the four years of interest were the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 academic years. The first year served as a baseline comparison, allowing for three years of comparative data (year 1 to year 2; year 2 to year 3; and year 3 to year 4) per variable of interest for a single institution.

Custom survey data files were created for all 40 institutions using IPEDS final release data. The following IPEDS variables used in this study are listed as followed (for a description of these variables, please refer to Appendix A): (1) published in-state tuition and fees, (2) total all revenues and other additions, (3) state appropriations, (4) value of endowment assets at the end of the fiscal year, (5) full-time retention rate, (6) fall enrollment, and (7) graduation rate data, 150% time to complete. All gathered data were compiled in an Excel spreadsheet and missing data were notated where appropriate.

Lastly, to obtain data for the final category (presence of a crisis/es), Internet searches were performed. Media sources (e.g. articles, videos, news reports, legal documents, etc.) were used to locate any instances of institutional crisis/es (scandals—that is, unethical/illegal behavior; Title IX violations/investigations; lawsuits/settlements; student protests; faculty strikes; natural disasters; campus violence; and votes of no confidence in prior leadership) occurring within the four-year period of interest for each institution. Events that would be considered commonplace or part of the college culture, such as hazing, and drug and alcohol abuse, were excluded from the search process. The gathered information was then transferred to the existing Excel database.

Analysis of Data. The collected IPEDS and presences of a crisis/es data were first coded to calculate frequencies. Next, in order to uniformly analyze the data for differences in magnitude using the same metric, the raw data from IPEDS were converted

into percent changes. Excel software was heavily relied on in order to execute the above-mentioned tasks. Coded data, percent change data, and relevant demographic and descriptive data were subsequently transferred to a new Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet contained trend data over a four-year academic period related to each of the eight adverse conditions for all 40 institutions of interest. The data compiled in the Excel spreadsheet was then analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics.

Data Coding: Research Question 1

First, demographic and descriptive information were coded (e.g. president's race and gender, institutional category, classification, size, setting, and region). Second, to address the study's first research question, observed fluctuations from year to year (year 1 to year 2; year 2 to year 3; and year 3 to year 4) for the adverse variables in the financial hardship and student outcomes categories were coded to capture the frequency of institutional losses and gains. For example, when coding the tuition and fees variable, IPEDS data were consulted to determine if there had been an increase, decrease, or no change at all in institutional tuition and fees from year to year. Institutions for which no change was observed from year to year received a coding of 0, institutions for which an increase was observed received a coding of 1, and institutions for which a decrease was observed received a coding of 2 (e.g. 0 = no change in tuition, 1 = increase in tuition, 2 = decrease in tuition)—allowing for three years of comparative data, per variable, and per institution. To reiterate, an increase in tuition and fees signaled adversity and a decrease in revenue, state support, endowment, student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates was indicative of adversity. This coding process was completed for all of the adverse conditions in the financial hardship and student outcomes categories.

For the third category, presence of a crisis, a similar coding system was used. Information retrieved from online searches to locate any instances of institutional crisis/es was used for this final coding process. Over the four-year period, institutions experiencing no crisis was coded as 0; a crisis or scandal was coded as 1; a natural disaster was coded as 2; campus violence was coded as 3; a vote of no confidence in previous leadership was coded as 4; two instances of crisis was coded as 5; three instances of crisis was coded as 6; and four instances of crisis was coded as 7. It is important to note that the numbering/coding system employed carried no weight but was rather used as a means to uniformly capture frequency data in SPSS.

Data Conversion: Research Question 2

Raw data, which consisted of dollar, number, and percentage amounts, were converted to a uniformed metric so that the data could be analyzed consistently in order to address the study's second research question related to magnitude and size. That is, whether differences in the magnitude (i.e. large or small differences) of institutional losses and gains were experienced by Black and White groups. For example, did Black-led institutions experience a greater loss in student enrollment over a four-year period than White-led institutions or vice versa? Practically speaking, from an executive leadership perspective, small institutional losses are likely more ideal than large losses. In addition to observing instances of institutional loss, it was also of interest to examine instances of institutional gains as greater gains served as an implication of greater organizational stability and smaller gains served to signal less stability.

As such, percent changes from year to year (e.g. year 1 to year 2; year 2 to year 3; and year 3 to year 4) were calculated for all variables in the financial hardship and

student outcomes categories to determine the magnitude of each variable increase or decrease from year to year. Finally, percent changes were also calculated comparing each year to the baseline year (e.g. year 1 to year 2; year 1 to year 3; year 1 to year 4). These calculations were performed to capture the magnitude of increases and/or decreases over a cumulative, four-year period (e.g. year 1 to year 4). Once all of the data had been coded and percent changes calculated, Black-led institutions, taking into account missing data, had 405 frequency and percent change comparisons to be analyzed and White-led institutions had 411 frequency and percent change comparisons to be analyzed.

Data Analysis: Research Question 1

The first analysis goal was to determine if there was an observed difference in the prevalence or frequency of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White presidents appointed to PWIs. To this end, descriptive statistics, specifically frequency tables, were performed in SPSS on the coded portion of the dataset for the purposes of summing the fluctuations of each variable within the financial hardship and student outcomes categories. For the third category, presence of a crisis, the actual number of crisis instances were simply summed. Totaled frequencies, or the total instances of observed adverse conditions/variables, were used to make comparisons between Black and White groups regarding the frequency of adverse conditions experienced over a four-year period.

Data Analysis: Research Question 2

The second analysis goal was to determine whether there were observed differences in the magnitude (i.e. large or small differences) of institutional losses and gains among Black and White groups. For example, did institutions, prior to the

appointments of Black presidents, experience a far greater decrease in enrollment over a four-year period than institutions who appointed White presidents, or vice versus? To this end, observations were made by examining both, year to year, and year to baseline comparisons of calculated percent changes. Lastly, the variation or range in scores (highest to lowest scores) were calculated and analyzed.

Overall, data analysis was descriptive in nature aiming to assess the presence, prevalence, and magnitude of adverse conditions. A discussion of the findings from the quantitative phase can be found in Chapter V.

Qualitative Research Design and Methodology

The second phase of the explanatory mixed methods design employed qualitative research methods. For this mixed methods design, the quantitative results were used to guide the qualitative phase (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Creswell and Clark (2011) noted that quantitative results are needed to identify which findings require further explanation in the qualitative strand. The quantitative results were used to help: (1) identify the selection of six participants to partake in the qualitative portion of the study; (2) refine an existing list of tentative interview questions; and (3) develop the semi-structured interview protocol.

The remainder of this section explores the: (1) research question for the qualitative phase; (2) researcher's experiences and assumptions; (3) selected qualitative methodology; and lastly, (4) the research design.

Research Question

The following research question guided the qualitative phase of this study:

1. What are the unique leadership experiences of African American presidents heading predominantly White institutions characterized by adverse conditions?

Researcher's Experiences and Assumptions

According to Patton (2002), in qualitative inquiry the researcher is described as “the instrument” (p. 566) and as such, the researcher is expected to provide information about themselves including their personal experiences, perspectives, or connections they bring to the study. This process, titled *epoche*, allows the researcher to bracket their “preconceived ideas about the phenomenon to [better] understand it through the voices of the informants” (Creswell, 1998, p. 54). In my role as the researcher, I brought to this study specific characteristics and experiences that are important to note as they relate to this study.

First, my experience as an African American is significant. As the participants in this study were also African American, there was a sense of connection and identification with the individuals being studied. Furthermore, I believe that the construct of race, even in a post-Civil Rights era, influences the way in which the world functions. It is my belief that race, ethnicity, and color pervade social systems to some degree and produce varied outcomes. People of color, as well as other minority groups, in the United States operate within systems that marginalize them, in part, because of their identification with a certain social group. The dynamics of privilege and oppression are assumed to surface in this study. However, I do not expect the Black experience to be singular, but rather varied. It was important that I, as the researcher, remained aware of this throughout the data collection process. My acknowledgement of difference is significant. However, I do assume there to be general similarities among Black participants in this study. In

addition, I assumed that my experience as an African American studying race-specific issues would create a common ground whereby open and honest dialogue could be facilitated between the researcher and participants.

Secondly, my experience as a woman is also significant, in that, it is markedly different from the experiences of Black males; having an associated set of distinct challenges and issues. The “*double jeopardy*” phenomenon that Black women experience within social systems—that is, the “social oppressions of being a minority in race and gender” (Kawahara & Bejarano, 2009, p. 61)—are assumed to manifest within this study. As a female, I believe that I have an understanding of the issues faced by Black women and am, in some way, connected to those challenges. Moreover, although the prominent focus of his study was race, it was expected that issues related to gender would emerge indirectly.

Thirdly, my interest in understanding the challenges and issues which African Americans face, particularly within higher education institutions, arose as a result of my position as a student and researcher of post-secondary contexts. The experiences that I have acquired in these roles have shaped my interest in examining the social issues faced by historically marginalized groups. As a student and researcher within this context for four years, I have been able to study various higher education topics as it relates to race, gender, and social class through a social justice lens. However, while cognizant of certain challenges, I do not assume to have an awareness of all issues facing the Black higher education community.

To attend to the above-mentioned experiences and assumptions of the researcher, I reflected on my personal subjectivity throughout the research process by keeping

detailed field notes of my thoughts, feelings, assumptions, and reactions to completed interviews prior to beginning a new interview session. The aim of this process as the investigator was to purposefully assume a stance of neutrality as it related to the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002).

Qualitative Methodology

Whereas quantitative results produce a general explanation about the relationship between variables in terms of quantity, amount, or frequency, qualitative data provides a more detailed understanding by attending to the voices of a small number of participants (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Creswell (1998) defined qualitative research as “an inquiry process . . . that explore[s] a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes with words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting” (p.15). In qualitative research, importance is placed on understanding how individuals make meaning of their social experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Limited research, both quantitative and qualitative, exists that examines African American college and university presidents at PWIs. As demonstrated in Chapter III, qualitative research exploring the experiences of Black presidents leading PWIs is scarce. Very little is known about race and higher education leadership, particularly as it concerns the glass cliff phenomenon. Thus, there is a need to capture the ways in which African American presidents make meaning of their leadership experiences in these unique contexts. This study intends to add to and build upon this line of research inquiry.

The qualitative methodology, or the strategies governing data collection and analysis (Jones et al., 2006), selected for this study was phenomenology. Phenomenology

is a qualitative methodological strategy that aims to gain “a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of . . . everyday experiences” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9)—that is, the process of focusing on the essence of one’s “lived experience” (Jones et al., 2006), not one’s “secondhand experience” (Patton, 2002, p. 104) as it relates to some phenomenon. A phenomenological approach asks, “what is this or that kind of experience like” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9)? It is a systematic way to “uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning structures, of lived experience” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10). Efforts to describe or interpret these internal meaning structures intend to elicit in-depth understanding and rich information about the phenomenon in question (Jones et al., 2006; Van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology is suited to this study as the goal was to explore and understand the lived experiences of Black presidents leading PWIs.

Research Design

Qualitative research designs provide overall direction, or a framework, for carrying out one’s study (Patton, 2002). This section discusses the (1) selection of participants, (2) data collection procedures, (3) data analysis, (4) trustworthiness, and (5) ethical considerations.

Selection and Recruitment of Participants. From the initial twenty Black presidents at PWIs identified in the quantitative phase of the study, a subset of six presidents, three males and three females, were selected to participate in the qualitative phase. In regards to sample size, Patton (2002) noted that although there are no set rules guiding the number of participants selected for qualitative studies, determining sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know. Jones et al., (2006) recommend a small number of participants for phenomenological investigations. Similarly, Creswell

(1998) suggested that interviews be conducted with no more than 10 individuals. Based on the above directives, and time and resource constraints, it was decided to interview six Black presidents.

For explanatory mixed methods design, Creswell and Clark (2011) recommended using the quantitative results to guide the selection of participants who would be best suited to explain the phenomenon. Using the quantitative data, the researcher assessed and identified ten of the twenty institutions, five male-led and five female-led, who experienced the most adverse conditions as it related to the three categories prior to the appointments of Black presidents. Ten institutions were identified as it was assumed that not every institution would respond to the invitation to participate or agree to participate in the study.

Upon receiving institutional IRB approval for the qualitative phase of this study, recruitment letters detailing the nature and details of the study and copies of the study's informed consent form were mailed directly to the ten identified presidents/institutions requesting their participation. A follow-up recruitment email was sent one week after mailing the formal recruitment letter. Prospective participants were again invited to participate in the study and asked to respond with their decision to participate. Exactly six presidents responded and agreed to participate in the study. One president advised that she was unable to participate due to time constraints and the remaining three never responded to the invitation. Individuals agreeing to participate in the study were then asked to identify a date and time that they would be available to partake in an interview and to complete a short demographic form.

Data Collection Procedures. For this study, interviews were the primary method of data collection. Phenomenological approaches typically involve the collection of in-depth interviews (Creswell, 1998). Interviewing, as noted by Patton (2002), allows the researcher to “enter into the other person’s perspective . . . [and] to gather their stories” (p. 341). As such, interviews were conducted as a means to understand the stories or perspectives of Black presidents at PWIs.

Participants who agreed to take part in the study engaged in an audio-recorded, telephone, semi-structured interview lasting between 40 to 60 minutes. Prior to the scheduled interview, participants were asked to complete and return via email a short demographic questionnaire which gathered information such as their age, gender, professional/educational background, and how they identified racially (see Appendix F). Interviewees provided their oral consent before interviews commenced.

A detailed interview guide helped to organize and structure the questions or topics to be discussed (Patton, 2002). The development of an interview protocol emerged during the data analysis of the quantitative phase (see Appendix G). The results from the quantitative phase helped to determine what questions were most relevant to ask. The interview protocol, consisting of 14 questions, was developed to focus on four general topics. The president’s (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; (3) experiences with race and gender; and (4) perspectives on minority leadership. The semi-structured nature of the interview provided the researcher with freedom to follow-up and further explore participant responses by asking additional probing questions as necessary. In addition, reflective notes regarding the researcher’s personal thoughts (e.g. speculation, feelings, ideas, and prejudices) were recorded prior to the beginning of each scheduled

interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992)—the researcher’s epoche process (see (Creswell, 1998).

Though it would have been ideal to speak with the participants for longer periods of time and/or on multiple occasions, time constraints did not allow for it. For the most part, interviews were approximately sixty minutes. Because of the demanding nature of their position, two of the interview sessions had to (understandably) conclude earlier than intended. In the event that the researcher could not finish the interview protocol, questions that were deemed most important to the goals of the study were asked.

Before beginning each interview, permission was asked to audio record the conversation. Following each interview, the recorded audio was transcribed by the researcher and the interview transcript was stored on a password-protected computer. Participants were given the opportunity to review their individual transcript for accuracy. The researcher mailed each participant a copy of their transcript utilizing sealed, confidential stamped envelopes enclosed within larger manila envelopes. These packets were addressed to each presidents’ respective executive assistant/chief of staff with proper instructions on forwarding the transcripts directly to participants. Moreover, the researcher alerted the contact person for each institution via email that the packets were in transit to their institution. Upon receipt, participants were allotted two weeks to alert the researcher of any modifications they wished to implement to their interview transcript prior to data analysis.

Data Analysis. The procedures of qualitative data analysis bring “order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p, 207). The analysis of data using a phenomenological approach is said to be deeply interpretive and

can provide meaning beyond what was stated during participant interviews (Jones et al., (2006). Crotty (1998) referred to this interpretive process as the ability of the interpreter to “uncover meanings and intentions that are . . . hidden in the text” (p. 91). The interpretation of phenomenological data is characterized by the unloosening of text (reduction of data) and the subsequent creation/refinement of categories, codes, and themes (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002).

Utilizing interview transcripts, the data were reviewed to develop a general understanding of the information (Creswell & Clark, 2011). As qualitative datasets tend to be massive, it was important to reduce or make sense of the data in a meaningful way (Creswell, 1994). To do so, data units were sorted into categories of information/topics and prescribed a code (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Once codes were assigned, similar codes were grouped into themes. These themes, uncovered through qualitative research design, are referred to by Van Manen (1990) as the internal meaning structures that describe participants’ lived experience. According to Jones et al., (2006), a theme is defined as “an element that occurs frequently in a text or describes a unique experience that gets at the . . . phenomenon under inquiry” (p. 89). Therefore, the emerging themes from data analysis told participants’ stories of how they experience and make meaning of the phenomenon of interest.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is equivalent to reliability and validity in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative research is expected to provide evidence of the trustworthiness or authenticity of the research findings (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified four criteria for establishing

trustworthiness: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability. A discussion of these criteria is provided below.

Credibility. The first criterion, credibility, refers to whether the interpretations formulated by the researcher are credible to the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are a number of ways to establish credibility. For this study, triangulation techniques were used as a method of establishing credibility. Triangulation is the process of gathering data from multiple sources and methods. In this study, triangulation was performed by collecting interview data from multiple participants compounded by a mixed-methods design that employed both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Transferability. Transferability is described as the degree to which research findings are applicable or useful in another context within the same population (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability can be established by providing thick description of the data. According to Whitt (1991), a thick description is “rich in details about the setting, its context, and its people” (p. 413). Thick or detailed descriptions of participants’ experiences were gathered to the extent to which these senior leaders felt open and comfortable enough in sharing their unique experiences as it related to complex and sometimes uncomfortable topics such as race and gender.

Dependability and Confirmability. For the third criterion, dependability, the researcher seeks ways to account for or take into consideration changes that occur over time in a study. Conversely, confirmability, the final criterion for establishing trustworthiness, refers to whether data can be validated by someone other than the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability and confirmability can be obtained simultaneously through the use of an audit trail. Audit trails are described by Lincoln and

Guba (1985, p. 319) as a record of materials assembled by the researcher. Materials such as raw data (e.g. audio recordings, transcriptions, interview notes), information about data synthesis (e.g. categories, codes, themes), process notes (e.g. researcher's reflections), and products resulting from analysis (e.g. qualitative summaries) are included in an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, Whitt (1991) noted that the materials compiled in an audit trial are reviewed by someone who is not involved with the research.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are important to reflect on when conducting research (Jones et al., 2006). Research ethics considered included, (1) confidentiality, (2) gaining informed consent, and (3) possible risks associated with participating in this study.

Confidentiality. Every effort was made to protect the confidentiality of research participants. As such, pseudonyms were provided for each participant and their corresponding institution. Audio recordings of the interviews were stored on a password-protected computer and will be disposed of after one year. Interview transcripts were also stored on a password-protected computer (printed interview transcripts will be kept in a locked file drawer owned by the researcher) and will be disposed of after three years.

Informed Consent. In addition to receiving a letter requesting their participation, participants were also mailed a copy of the IRB approved consent form for their review. In the follow-up email/invitation responses, participants agreed to take part in the study. Furthermore, prior to beginning the scheduled phone interview, the researcher provided a brief overview of the study and participants were verbally asked if they were still willing to participate. Since interviews were conducted via phone, oral consent provided by the participant served as their written consent. Oral consent was gained from participants

before beginning each interview. Permission was also obtained from participants to audio record interviews for subsequent transcription.

Possible risks. There were no foreseeable risks associated with this study.

Although, while reflecting on their lived experiences, it is likely that participants might be affected in some way. For instance, thinking about negative experiences could possibly elicit emotions such as sadness and/or anger. Following the oral review of the nature of the study, participants were made aware of their right to refuse to answer certain questions or withdraw from the study if they desired, without penalty or prejudice. A discussion of the findings from the qualitative phase can be found in Chapter VI.

Mixed Methods Interpretation

The final step in this explanatory mixed methods design was the integration of data. According to Creswell and Clark (2011), mixed methods interpretation is performed when both analyses have been completed to determine how the data attend to the mixed methods questions of the study. The specific mixed methods research questions guiding this final phase were:

1. In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative results?
2. What is the overall interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data?

The above mixed-methods research questions are key to the explanatory design as the purpose is to interpret how both quantitative and qualitative methods work together to explain the phenomenon of interest. A discussion of an overall interpretation of the combined data from the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study is presented at the end of Chapter VI. Final conclusions, implications for the field, and directions for future research are discussed in Chapter VII.

Summary

Taken together, an explanatory sequential mixed methodology was used to explore the study's dual research questions—that is, are organizational conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed at PWIs different than those experienced by White presidents? And, what are the unique experiences of racial minority presidents heading majority White institutions? To this end, two phases of data collection were implemented. First, a quantitative phase which employed an archival, descriptive non-experimental design was conducted. A qualitative phase followed, which used a phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences of Black presidents serving at PWIs. In the final phase of analysis, both strands of (quantitative and qualitative) data were combined to determine how they informed each other provided an overall interpretation of the data.

CHAPTER V - QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

“When you have mastered numbers, you will in fact no longer be reading numbers . . .

You will be reading meanings” (W.E.B DuBois, no date)

The quantitative phase of this mixed-methods study sought to answer the following specific and overarching research questions:

1. Are there observed differences in the prevalence/frequency of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White presidents appointed at PWIs?
2. Are there observed differences in the magnitude (i.e. large or small differences) of adverse conditions experienced by Black and White presidents appointed at PWIs?
3. (Overarching research question) Are organizational conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed at PWIs different than those experienced by White presidents?

In order to answer these questions, an archival, descriptive non-experimental quantitative research design was used and the findings are reported in this chapter. The quantitative phase of the study utilized pre-existing data and analyzed it in SPSS using descriptive statistics. Data in this study were collected from a variety of sources (i.e. the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and Internet searches) to assess the above-mentioned research questions.

Findings

Description of Institutions

There were 40 public, predominantly White post-secondary institutions included in this study. Twenty of these institutions were led by White males currently serving as

president; fifteen institutions were led by Black males currently serving as president; and five institutions were led by Black females currently serving as president. In regards to institutional characteristics, the colleges and universities examined in this study were diverse (see Table 1). A majority of these institutions were located in the country's Midwestern ($n = 15$) and the Southern ($n = 12$) region. Ten of the institutions were located in the Northeastern region and the remaining three institutions were situated in the West. In an effort to maintain anonymity for the qualitative phase of the study, the names of institutions are not provided.

Table 1

Institutional Characteristics

*# Included in this Study:	Classification and Category	Size and Setting
4	Doctoral Universities, Highest Research Activity	Large, primarily residential
2	Doctoral Universities, Highest Research Activity	Large, primarily nonresidential
10	Doctoral Universities, Higher Research Activity	Large, primarily residential
4	Master's Colleges & Universities, Larger Programs	Large, primarily residential
10	Master's Colleges & Universities, Larger Programs	Medium, primarily residential
2	Master's Colleges & Universities, Larger Programs	Medium, primarily nonresidential
2	Master's Colleges & Universities, Medium Programs	Medium, primarily residential

Table 1 (continued).

*# Included in this Study:	Classification and Category	Size and Setting
2	Master's Colleges & Universities, Small Programs	Medium, primarily residential
2	Baccalaureate Colleges, Diverse Fields	Small, primarily nonresidential
2	Baccalaureate Colleges, Arts & Sciences Focus	Small, highly residential

* Numbers are evenly divided between Black and White presidents

Prevalence of Adverse Conditions: Research Question 1

To address the study's first research question, descriptive statistics were performed on the data in order to sum fluctuations (increases and decreases) for the seven adverse variables associated with the financial hardship and student outcomes categories. To determine the frequency of the eighth adverse condition, presence of a crisis, documented instances of institutional crisis were simply totaled. Together, this yielded a total of eight observations of adverse conditions—tuition and fees, retention, revenue, state support, enrollment, graduation, endowment, and the presence of a crisis—to compare across a cumulative four-year period. Frequency tables were generated in SPSS to examine whether these adverse conditions were more prevalent at PWIs where Black presidents had been recently appointed than at PWIs where White presidents had been recently appointed.

The results from the frequency tables indicated that adverse conditions, as defined in this study, were experienced among both Black and White-led institutions. Overall, there were no strikingly noticeable differences between the Black and White-led PWIs. In

general, both groups experienced roughly the same frequency of adverse conditions, with minor exceptions.

In most comparison cases, the actual number of times that Black and White-led institutions experienced adverse conditions were either equal or very close (see Table 2). For example, among Black-led institutions there were 54 out of 60 documented instances of increases in tuition and fees. Similarly, among White-led institutions there were 53 out of 60 instances of increases in tuition and fees. So, although there was a difference, that difference was relatively miniscule. This trend or pattern is also similar for the retention, revenue, state support, graduation, and endowment variables. There were, however, a few differences between Black and White-led institutions worth noting. For example, as a group, Black-led institutions appeared to experience more instances of decreased student enrollment and institutional crisis than White-led institutions.

Table 2

Frequency of Adverse Conditions Across Time

Adverse Conditions	Black-led Institutions		White-led Institutions	
	# Instances	% Instances*	# Instances	% Instances*
Increased Tuition	54	90%	53	88%
Decreased Retention	21	38%	22	39%
Decreased Revenue	16	28%	17	28%
Decreased State Support	22	39%	23	38%
Decreased Enrollment	33	55%	22	37%

Table 2 (continued).

Adverse Conditions	Black-led Institutions		White-led Institutions	
	# Instances	% Instances*	# Instances	% Instances*
Decreased Graduation	19	32%	19	32%
Decreased Endowment	10	18%	9	17%
Presence of Crisis	26	n/a	20	n/a

* Valid percent values were used due to missing cases

Observed Differences in Magnitude: Research Question 2

Though the frequency data indicated that some differences exist, on the whole, it appeared that Black and White-led institutions experienced adverse conditions at roughly the same rate. Still, the researcher was interested in the nuances of this finding. Although Black and White-led institutions experienced adverse conditions at about the same frequency prior to the appointment of their new leaders, it was of interest to determine the extent to which instances of institutional losses and gains varied in magnitude or size (i.e. larger/smaller; more/less)—addressing the study’s second research question.

As such, using the raw data collected from the IPEDS database, percent changes were calculated from year to year, as well as over a cumulative, four-year period for each adverse variable and each institution. Descriptive statistics were then performed on the percent changes in SPSS to ascertain mean and standard deviation scores. Using these mean scores, the data were analyzed and compared to determine if there were any observable differences in magnitude between Black and White groups. Additionally, an examination of variation in individual mean scores ranked highest to lowest was performed in order to determine the extent to which group scores differed from each other. Again, greater losses and smaller gains served to signal organizational instability.

Conversely, smaller losses and greater gains served as an implication of organizational stability. From these comparisons, some differences were observed.

Percent Changes from Year to Year. For the tuition, revenue, and graduation variables, Black-led institutions appeared to have experienced, on average, the least favorable circumstances. For instance, from year 1 to year 2, Black-led institutions experienced smaller gains in revenue while White-led institutions experienced greater gains. A similar pattern exists from year 3 to year 4 (see Table 3). Although there were no average decreases in revenue for either group from year to year, White-led institutions appeared to fare better with higher averages of total revenue during the two periods specified above. The converse is true, however, for White-led institutions as it regards the state support and endowment variables. No strikingly noticeable differences were observed among both groups for the retention and enrollment variables. In essence, Black-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to three adverse variables (tuition, revenue, and graduation) whereas, White-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to two adverse variables (i.e. state support and endowment).

Table 3

Percent Change Scores, Year to Year

Adverse Conditions	Black-led Institutions		White-led Institutions	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Tuition, Year 1-2	6.35	6.85	5.49	3.79
Tuition, Year 2-3	6.73	7.13	3.70	4.50
Tuition, Year 3-4	4.57	2.97	4.82	4.98
Retention, Year 1-2	-.99	9.04	-.12	7.15
Retention, Year 2-3	1.40	11.60	2.04	3.80
Retention, Year 3-4	-.34	3.40	-.43	2.72
Revenue, Year 1-2	4.90	13.51	8.92	8.56
Revenue, Year 2-3	8.68	17.49	2.55	7.75
Revenue, Year 3-4	3.31	11.78	4.79	8.30
*State Support, Year 1-2	2.07	7.19	-.20	11.52
State Support, Year 2-3	2.59	8.61	.82	8.42
State Support, Year 3-4	1.86	7.69	1.74	10.37
Enrollment, Year 1-2	.32	3.48	.15	2.16
Enrollment, Year 2-3	1.29	6.12	1.69	2.78
Enrollment, Year 3-4	1.18	4.68	.64	3.81
Graduation, Year 1-2	.88	4.19	2.54	6.78
Graduation, Year 2-3	3.43	9.13	.96	6.59
Graduation, Year 3-4	-2.17	5.66	-.23	8.45

Table 3 (Continued).

Adverse Conditions	Black-led Institutions		White-led Institutions	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
*Endowment, Year 1-2	11.11	13.32	9.71	5.07
Endowment, Year 2-3	7.15	13.66	12.96	12.13
Endowment, Year 3-4	12.09	19.74	4.42	10.17

*Extreme cases/outliers were removed for these variables and percent changes were calculated excluding the extreme cases in an effort to avoid inflating the Mean and Standard Deviation scores.

*Black-led institutions had more extreme cases for the endowment (4) and state support (2) variables.

*White-led institutions had only one extreme case for the endowment variable.

Percent Changes Over Four-Years. When examining how these groups fared over a cumulative, four-year period, the differences in mean scores found were relatively small but notable (see Table 4). These cumulative data provide a reflective indication of the state or condition of the institutions just before the appointment of a new leader. The data indicate that the largest differences signaling organizational instability were observed for the tuition, state support, and endowment variables. Over a four-year period, institutions who had recently appointed Black presidents experienced, on average, a greater increase in tuition and fees than those institutions who had recently appointed White presidents.

Conversely, institutions hiring White leaders experienced smaller gains in state support and endowment than those institutions who had appointed Black leaders. Another small, yet, notable difference, is evidenced by a decrease in student retention over a four-year period prior to the appointment of Black leaders while institutions appointing White leaders experienced an increase in student retention. Lastly, while mean scores for the revenue, enrollment, and graduation variables were very close among both groups, Black-

led institutions appeared to experience smaller gains in revenue and graduation. The converse was true for White-led institutions who experienced smaller gains in enrollment.

Based solely on mean scores over a four-year period, it appeared that institutions appointing Black presidents experienced the least favorable circumstances for four of the seven adverse conditions (i.e. tuition, retention, revenue, and graduation) whereas institutions appointing White presidents experienced the least favorable circumstances for three of the seven adverse conditions (state support, enrollment, and endowment).

Table 4

Percent Change Scores, Over Four Years

Adverse Conditions	Black-led Institutions		White-led Institutions	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Tuition	18.86	13.09	14.72	8.98
Retention	-.56	3.03	1.27	5.55
Revenue	16.15	16.88	16.60	11.32
*Support	6.56	13.43	1.95	15.84
Enrollment	3.14	12.39	2.56	6.36
Graduation	1.79	8.41	2.80	8.24
*Endowment	34.18	31.39	29.20	17.99

*Extreme cases/outliers were removed for these variables and percent changes were calculated excluding the extreme cases in an effort to avoid inflating the Mean and Standard Deviation scores.

*Black-led institutions had more extreme cases for the endowment (4) and state support (2) variables.

*White-led institutions had only one extreme case for the endowment variable.

Variation in Mean Scores Across Variables, Over Four Years. The next assessment of the data, which also aimed to address the study's second research question,

included an examination of the variation of individual mean scores over a four-year period. A list of mean scores, ranked from highest to lowest, for each variable and each institution was constructed in SPSS. On the whole, the observed differences were minimal. However, Black led-institutions tended to be more adversely affected as it related to the tuition, retention, revenue, enrollment, and graduation variables; whereas, White-led institutions appeared to fare worse on the state support and endowment variables. A summary for each variable is provided below.

In line with previous analyses, Black-led institutions appeared to fare worse for the tuition and fees variable. For example, over a four-year period, more than half (11 out of 20 cases) of predominantly White institutions experienced an average increase in tuition and fees that was equal to or greater than 15% prior to the appointment of Black presidents. Conversely, only about a third (6 out of 20 cases) of PWIs appointing White presidents experienced an increase greater than 15%. Moreover, when examining the five highest scores, Black-led institutions appeared to experience the most change, with the highest increase in tuition and fees almost doubling from year 1 to year 4 (see table 5).

Table 5

Variation in Tuition, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 18.86$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 14.72$)
Highest Rank	45.98	30.70
	43.50	30.62
	40.18	27.92

Table 5 (continued).

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 18.86$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 14.72$)
	35.06	27.51
	25.66	21.10
	25.62	19.14
	20.04	14.26
	17.90	14.15
	16.01	12.85
	15.27	12.81
	15.24	12.11
	14.19	12.01
	11.95	11.57
	10.34	11.14
	9.58	10.77
	9.05	10.73
	7.96	10.08
	6.55	5.10
	5.94	.00
Lowest Rank	1.25	-.09

For the retention variable, there were minimal differences in magnitude observed. This was not alarming as total mean scores for both groups were fairly close (see Table

6). Nevertheless, these small differences seemed to adversely affect Black-led institutions more. For instance, almost half (9 out of 19 cases) of PWIs appointing Black presidents, experienced a decrease in student retention over a four-year period. However, less than a third (6 out of 20 cases) of institutions appointing White presidents experienced a decrease in retention. Further, when examining the five highest scores, gains in the average retention score for White-led institutions rose to double digit increases while the largest scores in average retention increases for Black-led institutions were relatively small, single-digit increases.

Table 6

Variation in Retention, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = -.56$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 1.27$)
Highest Rank	3.57	14.71
	3.45	9.72
	2.63	5.56
	1.39	5.48
	1.35	4.23
	1.35	2.56
	1.35	1.72
	1.32	1.16
	.00	1.16
	-1.08	1.12

Table 6 (continued).

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = -.56$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 1.27$)
	-1.28	.00
	-1.32	.00
	-1.32	.00
	-2.44	-1.09
	-2.74	-1.33
	-3.13	-1.37
	-5.56	-2.67
	-7.81	-4.35
Lowest Rank		-12.35

Again, as evidenced by the closeness of the total mean scores for both groups, minimal differences were also observed for the revenue variable. However, these observed differences appeared to be least favorable for Black-led institutions. When examining the five lowest scores, four institutions appointing Black leaders experienced a decline in revenue, with three of those institutions experiencing a decline of 5% or greater. In contrast, only one White-led institution experienced a decline in revenue but this decrease did not exceed 5% (see Table 7).

Table 7

Variation in Revenue, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 16.15$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 16.60$)
Highest Rank	52.25	36.83
	49.80	34.66
	36.57	31.36
	28.43	26.42
	21.57	23.50
	19.10	21.03
	18.70	20.30
	17.71	19.88
	17.20	19.68
	15.31	19.09
	15.13	18.76
	13.92	18.32
	10.86	17.59
	6.76	8.59
	2.43	7.13
	-.52	3.88
	-4.82	3.21
	-5.37	2.32

Table 7 (continued).

Rank	Black-led Institutions	White-led Institutions
	(Total $M = 16.15$)	(Total $M = 16.60$)
	-8.14	1.35
Lowest Rank		-1.82

Similar to previous analyses, institutions appointing White leaders fared worse in cuts in state funding. Almost half (8 out of 20 cases) of White-led institutions experienced a decrease in state support; whereas, only less than a third (5 out of 17 cases) of Black-led institutions experienced the same decline. When examining the five lowest scores, White-led institutions experienced more double-digit decreases in state funding, roughly 10% or greater whereas, Black-led institutions were more likely to experience smaller, single-digit decreases in state support (see Table 8).

Table 8

Variation in State Support, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	*Black-led Institutions	White-led Institutions
	(Total $M = 6.56$)	(Total $M = 1.95$)
Highest Rank	42.31	36.04
	21.32	31.66
	18.96	18.53
	17.07	16.00
	11.19	11.69
	8.55	7.55

Table 8 (continued).

Rank	*Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 6.56$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 1.95$)
	8.07	6.63
	5.70	4.95
	4.70	3.37
	2.56	2.85
	2.05	2.67
	1.43	.61
	-1.23	-4.17
	-1.40	-5.93
	-4.26	-7.72
	-7.71	-9.07
	-17.72	-18.30
		-18.57
		-19.76
Lowest Rank		-19.86

*Extreme cases/outliers were removed for this variable and percent changes were calculated excluding the extreme cases in an effort to avoid inflating the Mean and Standard Deviation scores.

*Black-led institutions had more extreme cases for the state support (2) variable.

*White-led institutions had no extreme cases for the state support variable.

For the enrollment variable, almost a third (6 out of 20 cases) of institutions appointing Black leaders had, on average, experienced a 5% or greater decrease in student enrollment, with the maximum decrease reaching double digit numbers.

However, only a tenth of (2 out of 20 cases) of White-led institutions experienced decreases in enrollment exceeding 5%. Conversely, when examining the three highest mean scores, White-led institutions experienced smaller gains in student enrollment. However, because decreased enrollment is more challenging to deal with from an administrative standpoint, it appeared that Black-led institutions were more adversely affected in this case (see Table 9).

Table 9

Variation in Enrollment, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	Black-led Institutions (<i>M</i> = 3.14)	White-led Institutions (<i>M</i> = 2.56)
Highest Rank	38.63	15.75
	28.10	13.90
	15.69	10.77
	9.03	7.88
	7.63	6.18
	3.34	5.67
	2.67	5.36
	2.50	4.98
	2.01	2.86
	1.78	1.49
	1.72	.64
	1.30	.48

Table 9 (continued).

Rank	Black-led Institutions	White-led Institutions
	($M = 3.14$)	($M = 2.56$)
	.11	-.28
	-4.27	-1.05
	-5.46	-1.18
	-5.60	-1.23
	-7.88	-1.72
	-8.76	-3.38
	-8.96	-7.10
Lowest Rank	-10.69	-8.78

Very minimal differences were observed for the graduation variable. More than a third (7 out of 20 cases) of institutions appointing Black leaders experienced a decline of 1% or greater in graduation rates over a four-year period. Conversely, less than a third (4 out of 20) of White-led institutions experienced a decline greater than 1% (see Table 10).

Table 10

Variation in Graduation, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	Black-led Institutions	White-led Institutions
	(Total $M = 1.79$)	(Total $M = 2.80$)
Highest Rank	23.81	21.28
	13.79	15.91
	11.11	10.64

Table 10 (continued).

Rank	Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 1.79$)	White-led Institutions (Total $M = 2.80$)
	6.41	7.50
	5.77	6.90
	5.66	5.36
	4.26	4.65
	2.60	4.55
	1.75	4.00
	1.69	3.75
	1.45	3.57
	.00	2.50
	.00	2.00
	-1.67	1.89
	-1.96	.00
	-2.27	.00
	-5.41	-5.77
	-6.06	-9.52
	-12.50	-9.80
Lowest Rank	-12.50	-13.33

When examining the endowment variable, conclusions were similar to previous analyses. White-led institutions appeared to fare worse in endowment gains. When examining the five highest scores, Black-led institutions experienced, in four out of five

cases, endowment gains greater than 60%. White-led institutions did not experience any increases in endowment exceeding 60% (see Table 11).

Table 11

Variation in Endowment, Rank of Individual Mean Scores Over Four Years

Rank	*Black-led Institutions (Total $M = 34.18$)	*White-led Institutions (Total $M = 29.20$)
Highest Rank	86.83	57.08
	72.33	56.87
	70.37	54.89
	67.31	51.05
	47.12	39.68
	42.00	32.05
	37.43	31.50
	23.33	30.88
	16.27	25.12
	14.08	24.23
	11.76	23.18
	11.29	23.15
	-7.03	18.64
	-14.56	16.15
		8.28
		6.57
Lowest Rank		-2.86

*Extreme cases/outliers were removed for this variable and percent changes were calculated excluding the extreme cases in an effort to avoid inflating the Mean and Standard Deviation scores.

*Black-led institutions had more extreme cases for the endowment (4) variable.

*White-led institutions had one extreme case for the endowment variable.

The above analyses, examining the total and individual mean scores of adverse conditions over a cumulative, four-year period, were performed to determine whether there were any observable differences in magnitude between Black and White groups. The examination concluded that there were differences but they were relatively small. Thus, these small differences, when also considering the small sample size, would not have likely yielded a statistically significant finding even if subjected to such analyses.

Summary

Overall observations indicated that Black and White-led institutions experienced roughly the same prevalence/frequency and magnitude in relation to the eight examined adverse conditions. However, small, yet, notable differences were observed. In regards to the study's first research question regarding prevalence, both Black and White-led institutions experienced about the same frequency of adverse conditions with the exception of two instances. There were noticeable differences for two variables (decreased student enrollment and institutional crisis) related to the frequency analysis which appeared to adversely impact Black-led institutions more. No such differences were found for White-led institutions.

In regards to the study's second research question, related to the magnitude or size of differences between both groups, results indicated that there were differences, but on the whole, these differences were minimal. Differences in magnitude were examined using year to year mean scores; mean scores over a cumulative, four-year period; and

individual mean scores over a cumulative, four-year period ranked from highest to lowest. Taken together, these results indicated that Black-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to six out of the eight adverse conditions (tuition, retention, revenue, graduation, enrollment, and crises); whereas, White-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to only two out of the eight adverse conditions (i.e. state support and endowment).

Moreover, it is important to note, that the goal of the quantitative phase of this study was to determine if there were observable differences in adverse conditions experienced between groups. These differences were found, and although small, they indicate that institutions appointing Black presidents experienced more instances that were less than favorable and would likely adversely impact the stability of the organization. This served as an indication that Black presidents might, inadvertently, be appointed under different organizational conditions than White presidents at PWIs. Additional research, with larger sample sizes, is needed to support this conclusion.

The next chapter will summarize the results from the qualitative phase of the study which aimed to move beyond the numerical data found in the quantitative phase and explore the lived experiences of racial minorities heading majority White institutions. As Creswell and Clark (2011) wrote, quantitative methods alone are insufficient in constructing the essence of leaders' experiences. The qualitative phase was important to the goals of the study as it provided personal, rich narrative data from a subset of these Black leaders—an element that the quantitative data could not provide. Of interest to the researcher was gaining a better understanding of the experiences of African American presidents leading in majority White contexts that are characterized by adverse conditions

while also exploring its intersectionality with race and gender. Such narratives, are practically absent from current higher education scholarship and this study seeks to add these voices to the literature.

CHAPTER VI – QUALITATIVE RESULTS

“ . . . I think being a college president at a majority institution, that is in crisis, is an incredibly hard job” (President Rosalind, Arcadia College, personal communication, 2017).

Based on the findings from the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase of this mixed-methods study sought to answer the following research question:

1. What are the leadership experiences of African American presidents heading predominantly White institutions characterized by adverse conditions?

The results are reported in this chapter. Because only small differences were found in the quantitative phase of the study, the qualitative phase focused less on questions aimed at understanding the glass cliff phenomenon and more on the individual experiences of each president leading these institutions faced with adverse conditions. Particular attention was given to the influence of race and gender on participants' leadership experiences. First, a collective description of the sample's demographic characteristics is provided. The remainder of the chapter identifies the major themes that emerged from data analysis. The themes are presented in such a way that they align with the four general topics discussed during participant interviews. The president's (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; (3) experiences with race and gender; and (4) perspectives on minority leadership (see Table 1 for an overview of each category and corresponding themes). These findings were explored in conjunction with the study's two supporting conceptual frameworks, Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT).

Table 1

Major Qualitative Findings

Categories and Themes

I. Career Path

- A. The Importance of the Pipeline
- B. Exposure to Opportunities
- C. Frustration with Previous Position

II. Perceptions of Participants' Leadership

- A. Collaboration and Orientation to Teams
- B. Leading by Example
- C. Accessible and Approachable
- D. Coaching/Supporting (Situational Leadership Theory)
- E. Influence of Observational Learning on Leadership Development
- F. Influence of First-Hand Experience on Leadership Development
- G. Influence of Mentorship Experiences on Leadership Development
- H. Consistent Leadership

III. Leadership Experiences with Race and Gender

- A. Variation in the Impact of Race on Professional Journey
 - a. Affected by Race and Gender
 - b. Slowing Process
 - c. Inability to Attribute Race as a Sole Factor
 - d. Not Negatively Affected
- B. Race as an Impediment
- C. Differential Treatment and Standards
 - a. Being the Only Black Face
 - b. Inspecting and Questioning
 - c. Greater Expectations
 - d. Efforts not Celebrated
- D. Impact of Race on Decision Making
- E. Being Black and Female
- F. Variation in Experiences as a Minority Leader at a Majority Institution
 - a. Providing a Model
 - b. Familiarity as an Insider

Table 1 (continued).

Major Qualitative Findings

Categories and Themes

- c. Race not a Buffer
- d. Adjusted to Environment
- e. An Incredibly Hard Job

- G. On Being a First
 - a. Greater Appreciation
 - b. Responsibility to Others
 - c. Pressure to Perform Well

IV. Perspectives on Minority Leadership

- A. Pipeline Problem
 - B. Uneasiness Towards Difference
 - C. Being Left Out and Fearful
-

Description of Participants

Six African American, three males and three females, currently serving presidents at predominantly White institutions participated in this study. Qualitative studies for which the method of inquiry is interview-based typically begin with a report of their findings by including “short portraits of each participant” (Merriam, 2009, p. 246). However, in an effort to protect the confidentiality of those who participated, a summary of the sample’s demographic characteristics was reported collectively rather than in the form of separate, biographical sketches.

Group Demographic Characteristics

All six presidents self-described racially as African American. They ranged in age from mid-fifties to late-sixties. The average age of this sample of presidents was 63. Each possessed nearly 30 or more years of professional experience in higher education, with the most years of service reaching a total of 43 years. Of the six presidents, four were the

first African American to serve in the capacity of CEO at their institution—one of which was also the first woman to serve as president of her institution. The remaining two presidents had either been the second or third Black leader to serve at their institution. Each president was preceded in office by a White, male leader. Lastly, the time spent serving in their current leadership role ranged from three to ten years.

The six institutions that participants served at were located in the Southern (1), Midwestern (2), and Northeastern (3) regions. These institutions' PWI status ranged from 52% to 77%. Again, all institutions were public, 4-year but varied in size and classification. The majority of the presidents served at master's colleges/universities (4), one served at a doctoral university, and the other at a baccalaureate college. Institutional sizes ranged from small to large. These presidents led colleges and universities with enrollments ranging from around 1,800 to roughly 27,000 students.

As previously stated, these six presidents were invited to participate in the qualitative phase of the study because, prior to their appointments, their respective institutions were found to experience the most adverse conditions out of all 20 Black-led institutions discussed in Chapter V. In no particular order, Table 2 reports the most notable adverse conditions experienced over a four-year period by each institution prior to the appointment of an African American president who was later interviewed for this study. Table 3 provides a profile of the pseudonyms given to each president and their respective institution.

Table 2

<i>Adverse Conditions Experienced at Participants' Institutions</i>	
Institution/President #1	26% increase in tuition & fees 5% decrease in graduation rates 2 cases of institutional crisis
Institution/President #2	9% decrease in enrollment 8% decrease in revenue 6% increase in tuition & fees 2% decrease in graduation rates 4 cases of institutional crisis
Institution/President #3	18% increase in tuition and fees 18% decrease in state support 13% decrease in graduation rates 9% decrease in enrollment 1 case of institutional crisis
Institution/President #4	26% increase in tuition & fees 7% decrease in endowment 6% decrease in enrollment 1 case of institutional crisis
Institution/President #5	9% increase in tuition & fees 8% decrease in enrollment 2 cases of institutional crisis
Institution/President #6	16% increase in tuition & fees 11% decrease in enrollment 1 case of institutional crisis

Note: This table depicts the notable adverse conditions, as defined by this study, that institutions experienced over a four-year period just prior to the appointment of the six Black presidents interviewed in the qualitative phase of the study. The information is not listed in any particular or significant order.

Table 3

<i>Participant and Institution Pseudonyms</i>	
President Reginald	State University
President James	Reed University
President Kenneth	Haven University
President Joy	Keys College
President Cynthia	Millers University
President Rosalind	Arcadia College

Findings

In this section, major themes that emerged during analysis will be “introduced, explained, and supported by data from the interviews with participants” (Merriam, 2009, p. 248). The findings are presented in such a way that they align with the four general topics discussed during participant interviews. The president’s (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; (3) experiences with race and gender; and (4) perspectives on minority leadership.

African American Presidents’ Career Path

Three major themes emerged when discussing participants’ career path to the presidency: (1) the importance of progressing through the academic and leadership pipeline; (2) being afforded opportunities; and (3) frustrations with a previous position.

“I had a very strong portfolio:” The Importance of the Pipeline. All six presidents achieved educational and career accomplishments that were highly remarkable. Three of the participants in this study self-identified as first-generation college students. In terms of educational attainment, all of the participants held

advanced/professional degrees mostly from major universities in the natural sciences, social sciences, and medicine (master's—one; doctoral—four; medical—one). The participants traversed what would be considered a very traditional academic career pathway to senior higher education administrative positions (Socolow, 1978). Most of the participants reported beginning their professional career in higher education by serving in the capacity of an instructor or faculty member. One participant, however, began by serving in an administrative role. On the whole, participants moved up the academic ranks from instructor, to assistant professor, to associate professor, to full professor. Some examples of administrative titles that participants held throughout their career included department chair; director of a program; associate dean and/or dean of a college/medical school; associate dean and/or dean of graduate studies; vice president of research and graduate studies; chief diversity officer; executive assistant to the president; provost and vice president for academic affairs; and interim/acting president. The institutions that participants previously served at were primarily public and/or private, 4-year, PWIs and/or HBCUs.

For a majority of the participants, the higher education position held prior to assuming their current role as president was that of provost. Two participants in the sample had not served as a provost. Additionally, there were two participants in the sample who had previously held multiple university presidencies/chancellorships prior to assuming their current role—one of which was currently serving in their third presidency.

“I’ve always been open to opportunities:” Exposure to Opportunity. The data revealed that being exposed to leadership opportunities were important to establishing interest in pursuing senior level higher education positions. Many of the participants

spoke about opportunities they were provided to, (1) be around those in key leadership positions and/or (2) to lead as being the spark for their interest in the presidency. These opportunities tended to manifest themselves in a number of ways for participants. For example, President Joy, at Keys College, recollected on both her involvement in a prominent leadership fellowship and her experience serving as provost as reasons for pursuing the presidency. When asked about her interest in being president, she stated:

Well, I had been a TOPS (pseudonym) fellow . . . And so, it was during that year that you're exposed to a wide range of institutions and a wide range of possibilities to lead . . . So, when I came back from my fellowship I began to move through various ranks in administration. But it was during that year [as a fellow] . . . that I was exposed broadly to presidents and presidencies and different institutions and what it's like to lead in different institutions. So, my early interest in perhaps pursuing a presidency really was stimulated by that year fellowship . . . although I . . . was most keenly interested in the provost position. So, sitting in the provost position . . . I realized that yes, I loved being a provost but that I really was interested also in thinking about being a president.

President Kenneth, at Haven University, who initially had aspirations of being a high school teacher, echoed similar sentiments. He had also participated in the TOPS fellowship program. He acknowledged that individuals in the academe and experiences serving in leadership roles ultimately influenced his desire to become president. He explained that:

. . . when I was in my undergraduate program, I met an African American male professor . . . who said you need to do a Master's degree . . . So, I went on to

Industrial State University (pseudonym). And then I met another African American male professor there who taught me and he said you should pursue a Ph.D. So, that's how I got into working at a university. However, I think it's because of being around presidents and being in key leadership roles and by doing the TOPS Fellowship . . . gave me more of a desire to pursue being a president. And . . . if you can be a provost, you can be a president. So, I had that desire and I applied.

President Cynthia, at Millers University, also spoke about being open to accepting leadership opportunities that were presented to her as a factor in her career advancement. She noted:

If someone would have asked me when I was a student in college, did I have the aspirations of being a university president, the answer to that would have been no. It wasn't anything I ever thought of. But I've always been open to opportunities. And as opportunities presented themselves I always, you know, accepted those opportunities to always operate outside of my comfort zone.

A sub-theme that emerged within this larger theme of "*opportunity*" was that participants spoke about it as a way to build networks and establish a "*good reputation*" for future leadership opportunities. For instance, when discussing the recruitment process for her current position, President Joy noted:

. . . since I had been in the [university] system before . . . they knew me. And so, I think that I was lucky. I had a good reputation, they reached out to me and they knew quite a bit about me and they encouraged me to be a part of the process. So, that's how I came to . . . be interested in Keys College.

President Cynthia, who was committed to doing her best work, recollected on how taking advantage of both permanent and temporary opportunities benefited her. She stated:

. . . I had an opportunity to come to the university here. And whatever position that I had, I always strive to give it my best. If it was the permanent position, my best, and when I was in a temporary position . . . I took it very seriously and as a result of that, it helped me and it helped the university.

Likewise, President Kenneth noted that individuals tended to nominate him for various searches because they were familiar with his character and work ethic. He had the following to say about the presidential search process that occurred prior to him accepting his current role:

Well during that time, I was in about five searches. I was invited to and nominated at various places by individuals who knew me and my character and my work . . . So, I was a finalist in five searches including the one here at Haven University . . . and I was offered two presidencies at the same time.

Lastly, President James, at Reed University, shared a similar experience acknowledging that his reputation of doing good work helped to create additional leadership opportunities throughout his career journey. He noted:

. . . I established a reputation of being a good [department] chair and was picked to be the dean of the science school. And I did that for a few years . . . And so, an opportunity came for me to go to Tidal University (pseudonym) to be dean of the science school there.

“I really was so incredibly unhappy:” Frustrations with Previous Position. When asked about their interest in working at their current institution, there were two presidents who reported frustration, unhappiness, and challenges in their previous roles as factors in pursuing their current position. President Rosalind had the following to say:

So, first off you should know that I never had any intention of becoming a college president or [going] into administration. The way I got interested in Arcadia College, in particular, is just because I was a dean at a majority institution . . . and I felt that I was constantly questioning decisions made at the really high levels of the administration. And . . . one of my fellow colleagues at that institution had started looking for presidencies. And he came across the Arcadia College prospectus and told me I needed to look at it because he thought it was me. And when I read it, I realized it was so me. And that’s why I applied for this position.

President James shared similar feelings, stating:

Yeah, so in terms of the interest . . . so after I had been at STAR (pseudonym) for a little bit, and well, didn’t really like it to be honest with you. I mean I loved STAR from a scientific standpoint and the intellectual stimulation and all that. But . . . [it had] its challenges . . . I mean, it just wasn’t fun from a budgetary standpoint because there were so many restrictions and everything took so long to get passed.

Overall, participants in this study spoke about how progressing through both the academic and leadership pipeline, the availability of opportunities, doing good work, and challenges in their previous roles were major determinants that led them to their current position. Another important theme that emerged was that half of the participants

recounted never having career aspirations of becoming a college president. This is an important finding when thinking about preparing the pool of racial minority presidents.

African American Presidents' Perceptions of Their Leadership

When discussing the topic of leadership with participants, there were a number of similarities found in how presidents reflected on (1) their individual style of leadership; (2) the development of their style of leadership; and (3) perceptions of their leadership response during periods of institutional stability and instability. The findings are discussed below. Finally, the overall findings of this section are discussed in relation to the Situational Leadership Theoretical (SLT) framework.

Leadership Style, Behaviors, and Characteristics. When describing their individual style of leadership, the participants identified an array of leadership styles, behaviors, and characteristics which ranged from a combination of eight to fourteen leadership descriptors. Moreover, participants reported employing a number of the same leadership attributes. Collectively, at least half or more than half of the participants personally described their individual style of leadership as including the following attributes: (1) collaborative; (2) listening; (3) supportive; (4) knowledgeable/competent; (5) valuing excellence; (6) team oriented; (7) open/honest; (8) valuing input; (9) trusting; (10) leading by example; (11) accessible/approachable; and (12) valuing accountability (see Table 4). A discussion of how participants talked in depth about their leadership style, behaviors, and characteristics are presented next.

Table 4

<i>Participants Commonly Reported Leadership Attributes</i>
Collaborative
Team-Oriented
Values Excellence
Listening
Communicating
Supportive
Knowledgeable/Competent
Open/Honest
Seeks/Values Input
Trusting
Leading by Example
Accessible/Approachable
Values Accountability

“I believe in working with a team:” Collaboration and Orientation to Teams

All six participants spoke about employing a collaborative and inclusive style of leadership and their appreciation for shared governance when working with their team to problem-solve, set goals, strategically plan, and make major institutional decisions. For example, President Joy explained:

I believe in working with a team. I have a very collaborative team approach. I work carefully with the members of my cabinet. So, I meet with them once a week, as a group, and we really wrestle with a lot of the tougher institutional wide

problems as a group. So, I rely on them to bring a strong perspective from their own vantage point . . . to the table. So, in general, my style of sort of wrestling with moving the institution is quite collaborative.

President Reginald described how his professional experiences in the academe gave rise to his engagement in a collaborative style of leadership. He explained:

. . . as you think about my career ladder, by the time I became a president . . . I had really climbed the ladder. I had touched pretty much all bases in the academe, except student affairs. I've come from the faculty, and through the educational process. And through being a faculty member, collegiality is something that I learned to embrace and understand. And I think that it gave rise to a very style of leadership that is collaborative, cooperative, [and] clear. I have five vice presidents, they make up my cabinet. And . . . when I have cabinet meetings with them, and we close the door . . . my style has been to tell my cabinet that, when you come in and you sit at the table, we're there to give our very best to each other so that I can give my very best to the university, and the community at large. That's my style.

President Rosalind also spoke about how she enjoys working with others that share strengths similar to those she possesses. She explained:

Yeah, so, I really like having people around me that have strengths that are complimentary to mine. So, I always spend time thinking about my leadership team. I like for all of us to meet together, talk about the various issues and problem solve together, and to be very open with each other, provide good,

constructive criticism. I hold people to a very high standard but I try to be incredibly supportive of them . . . I try to be open, honest, and supportive.

As another example, President Kenneth spoke about his belief in shared governance when making major decisions. He explained:

Well, I like to say that I believe in the collaborative type of leadership. The participatory style where I involve as many individuals as possible. I have a leadership team. And I work with that leadership team, and we make . . . major decisions . . . I believe in . . . building consensus.

Likewise, President Cynthia, who also expressed her belief in shared governance, stated:

My individual style of leadership . . . I believe in involving everyone with that because it takes everyone to make something happen . . . So, I'm one who, in making decisions, I like to hear from everyone to gain all of that input. And then once I have all that input, it provides me the opportunity to make the best decision in the best interest of the university and the students that we serve.

When speaking about their appreciation for collaboration as leaders, two sub-themes emerged within the data. First, a subset of participants voiced their awareness of and value for the immense accountability related to their role as president when discussing their use of a team-oriented approach in decision-making processes. So, although these individuals believed in an inclusive style of leadership, they seemed to be very aware of the fact that they were solely held accountable for decisions made, not their team. Thus, it appeared, for these participants, that the final decision-making process was influenced by both collaboration and an awareness of and value for accountability, with

the latter likely being the dominant influencer. Only the male participants made statements to this effect. For instance, President Kenneth, who was clear in acknowledging his practice of inclusive leadership, continued by stating:

I believe in shared governance as much as possible. But at the end of the day, the buck stops here. The president has to make the final decision and I try to make sure that I make a well-informed decision.

President Reginald echoed a similar sentiment by explaining:

One thing I make clear as a president . . . and I don't do this to be a bad ass, excuse my language, but in cabinets there's only one vote. We don't take votes in cabinet. I listen, my VPs listen to me, and then I make the decision. And I'm the one held accountable for it . . . I have to be accountable to my board of trustees for advancing the university . . . The board of trustees . . . have one employee, and that's me. And they've delegated the authority to run the university to me.

A second sub-theme that emerged among participants when discussing their engagement in a collaborative style of leadership, was an acknowledgement of one's need to be trusting and supportive when seeking the input and advice of their leadership team. President James, who also indirectly spoke of an awareness of and value for accountability in making final decisions, had the following to say about the need for exhibiting confidence in one's team when seeking input. He stated:

And that's part of what I do, is I meet with people who I delegate with on a routine basis every week. And during these meetings, you know, I ask for advice and show trust in my decision team. We have a cabinet meeting every week and during cabinet meetings I ask for advice and we discuss things that are major

decisions. I don't make them by myself. I will always make the final decision but I believe in getting input and listening to people.

President Rosalind had the following to say about the need for support and having confidence in one's team:

And as a leader, you should be able to spend enough time with your people to see what their strengths are. And you play to their strengths so that they feel confident in what they're doing and then just let them do their job. If you let them know that you support them and you believe in their ability, they will, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, do it. So, I just want people to be free to do what they think they can do to help us achieve our goals and objectives.

Finally, President Cynthia shared a similar perspective when employing a team-oriented leadership approach and seeking input from others. She explained:

. . . I think it's important to support and hear from your cabinet members as a president. And they need to realize that their input and their information is valued because if it's valued then they're going to give you everything and more that is needed to be successful . . . [you have to be] willing to allow them to do the work that they were hired to do and not micro-manage that piece. If you hired them, you have to have the confidence in their capabilities and . . . let them do that because if they believe that their input is valued, you will get more from them . . . you have to have a trusting relationship because without trust nothing else matters.

"I don't expect more from others than I expect of myself:" Leading by Example

In addition to identifying as collaborative leaders, another prominent theme that

emerged when discussing participants' leadership style was that they believed in leading by example and modeling appropriate leadership traits. Three participants spoke specifically about this. For instance, President Cynthia stated: "I believe in excellence in leadership . . . And so, I don't expect more from others than I expect of myself and everyone knows and realizes that." Likewise, when describing her style of leadership, President Joy stated:

I would also say that I would characterize my leadership style as leading by example, that is, that I try to demonstrate the traits that I expect all of my community to demonstrate. So, I'm visible, I'm, like I said, collaborative, I listen to people, I'm a part of the campus community. So, you know, I try to lead really by example.

Directly tied to this idea of leading by example was a cognizance among presidents that their competence and expertise qualified them to serve as models of appropriate leadership to others. This is evidenced when President Joy further explained that her ability to model appropriate leadership behaviors is directly tied to her possessing an "*authentic understanding*" or knowledge of various leadership roles as a result of her previous experience in such roles. She explained:

And because I have had over 30 years of experience in higher education I know so well the positions on campus. So, my leadership style represents an authentic understanding of what I'm asking you to do. For instance, we've just instituted a mandatory orientation on campus . . . We did not have a mandatory orientation, we had, you know, people could or could not. But since I have this deep understanding of faculty world, because that's where I come from, then I can be

very authentic in talking about what I have done and what I know is best case, both from the literature [and] also from my personal experience. So, leading by example is also a very important part of my style.

President James, echoed a similar sentiment, stating:

I think another [leadership trait] is that I've always led by example. I never ask people to do more than what I would do myself. So, you know, I've worked really hard because I don't want . . . to ask faculty, for example, to work hard and I'm not working hard. So, even throughout my entire administrative career, you know, I was a faculty person too, and I've still published . . . that was very helpful because . . . when you have the ability to . . . say "you know what, I know exactly what you're talking about, I did that too" it's a little different than not being a part of the academe. So, I've always continued to try to do my part and be involved in the academe. And then people see that, in terms of the people I work with, my cabinet and stuff, you know, there's not a single person that works harder than I do because, you know, like I said, I believe in leading by example.

President Reginald indirectly spoke about how his experience in the academe allows him to lead confidently as president and when dealing with his colleagues. He had the following to say about interacting with his cabinet.

. . . when we're talking about university stuff and talking about issues that we'd have to address, I talk to them as colleagues, you know. One thing that helps me is that, I've held most of the positions that these folks are now holding. So, nothing is foreign to me. I didn't get this job by skipping over a job or going up four rungs and skipping those other three . . . So, I'm confident in that.

“I don’t need anybody to kiss a ring:” Being Accessible and Approachable

One final theme that emerged in the data when discussing the participants’ leadership attributes related to them being accessible and approachable to constituents of their campus community. Three participants spoke about this. President Joy, for example, stated, “You know, I’ve been told by people that oh you’re so approachable, I can really talk to you, you know, we’re not afraid to email you or call.”

Similarly, President Cynthia discussed having an open-door policy with her team when making institutional decisions. She noted:

And I want them to be comfortable to share what their input is . . . And to have that open-door policy where they feel that they can come and tell me the good, the bad and the ugly. And . . . I always tell individuals please do not tell me what you think I want to hear, tell me what I need to know. And they are supported in that . . . And so, individuals are comfortable in sharing that with me and as a result of that we work well together.

Lastly, President Reginald, when thinking about what he felt made his style of leadership unique, spoke about his interactions with people and how he has been described by others as accessible. He recollected:

I’m told oftentimes that I am accessible, people appreciate that. I don’t have, and I mean this in a positive, I really don’t have the air or try to project the air of like the imperial president, you know. They—and I’ve worked with colleagues who are otherwise very, very good but, —they project an air of, I won’t say of superiority, or maybe I will. You know, that being the president of a university . . . there’s something kind of royal about it or imperialistic. And I

never have that feeling and that results probably in the way that I interact with people. I was saying last night, I was at a very important dinner and a major cash donor, and I was in this big room . . . at a private country club and I was the only African American there. I find myself in that position a lot . . . here. And for the first ten or fifteen minutes people who know me or know of me they kept coming up to the dinner table and that was fine—and I know some presidents who simply would not have allowed that to happen. And as I was telling my dinner partners last evening . . . people give you . . . a lot of deference if you're the president. I just remind them that I'm a state employee, I work for a public institution. It's just my job, and I like it, I like it a lot, I value it. I understand people respecting it but I don't need anybody to kiss a ring or anything like that.

Leadership Development. In addition to identifying their leadership style, behaviors, and characteristics, participants were also queried about how they developed their particular style of leadership. Responses to this inquiry were mixed but some notable themes emerged. On the whole, the participants discussed, in varying combinations, how observational learning, first-hand experience, and memorable mentorship experiences, either in the form of leadership focused fellowships or individual relationships fostered with mentors, were impactful in developing their current style of leadership.

"I learned from several presidents:" Observational Learning

Two presidents reflected on leaders for whom they had previously worked with

when discussing factors that were influential in their leadership development. In essence, for these participants, previous leaders served as models of appropriate and inappropriate leadership. President Reginald had the following to say:

Well, you know, I had the great opportunity to work for a number of presidents. Two were women and maybe two or three were men. And from each of them, I learned generally two things: the kind of president that I wanted to be, in looking at how they handled certain situations and the kind of president I didn't want to be. And so, I learned from several presidents with different styles, different approaches and things. And I just took pieces from those different people and I guess consciously or unconsciously developed my style.

Likewise, President Cynthia spoke about how her value for input and use of inclusive and supportive styles of management mirror the kind of leadership she experienced when rising through the ranks. Since these models of leadership proved to be successful in helping to hone her leadership skills, she strives to employ those same techniques with individuals she mentors and now leads. She explained:

. . . the reason I believe I have this type of leadership style is because some of the individuals that I've worked with were always open to hearing what I had to say and they were very supportive of that. And I found that it allowed me to really grow in that role and be comfortable with myself and in my decision making. And then, I believe that if others were allowed that same opportunity, it would bring out the best in those individuals.

President Rosalind expressed ambiguity when thinking about how her leadership style developed. However, she did seem to echo a similar sentiment as President

Reginald, in that, she understood her leadership personality in terms of being a motivator and engager, as opposed to a micro-manager, because of the presidents she had worked with in the past. When asked about the development of her leadership style, she stated:

You know, I don't know. And the reason I say that is, because if I look at where I was when I was at Carey (pseudonym), the president there, he's very much a hands-on kind of person. In his cabinet meetings, he would be running that show. And even at Southern (pseudonym), that president was very much a micromanager and that's just not my personality. Because I think people need to shine . . . as a leader you . . . play to their strengths . . . and then just let them do their job . . . So, if I think about people that I've worked for who have some of that, it would be John Smith (pseudonym) . . . He was pretty much the same way . . . You have to be able to motivate people by engaging them in whatever way it takes, then just let them do their job.

"You learn as you go along the way:" First-Hand Experience

Presidents James and Kenneth both shared similar perspectives and credited on the job experience as a factor in how they currently lead. President James, when reflecting on his thirty-year career in the academe, acknowledged that he has learned from both the mistakes and successes he has had throughout his career and that this experience makes him a confident leader. He discussed:

I've been at this for a long time now . . . [since] I first became dean of a major science school, not a minority science school . . . And I sometimes cringe at the mistakes that I made and the naiveté that I had at the time. Somehow, I did well, you know, I had a very successful deanship and successful tenure as VP there. But

I look back and I say, did I really do this or, did I really do that or, did I really think this . . . And I just wonder how I ever made it because, you know, you pick up things during your career that you learn from. And I'm sure I'm a totally different leader now than I was thirty-years ago just because I've learned a whole lot more during that time. Now obviously there were some things thirty years ago that I was doing right because I didn't fail. But when I think about it, I sometimes wonder how I got by because I know so much more now than back then and have handled so many more situations. I feel like now it's just not a situation that comes up that I don't feel confident in dealing with.

President Kenneth, echoed a similar sentiment, stating:

But I think the style was basically developed because of all of the positions in which I served. You learn as you go along the way. You can learn from all of those case scenarios that you have. But at the same time, you really don't learn until you actually get out there in the field and start working. People can tell you all they want to tell you but once you get out there you'll see what it really is like.

"They both added a lot in helping me:" Mentorship Experiences

When asked about memorable mentorship experiences that participants had, most were able to recount either leadership fellowships or programs that were particularly helpful throughout their career and/or specific individuals who served as or currently serve as mentors to them. Although not an initial research question, half of the participants spoke about their involvement in multiple leadership fellowships/programs, some of which were minority focused. It appeared that the participants considered these experiences to be generally positive and impactful during their career, more so, in terms

of the people they met and the relationships that they were able to build. President Joy had the following to say about her fellowship experiences:

So, the TOPS fellowship program . . . certainly was a great mentoring process in a general sense. And that is, that we had access to a number of key people during those years but they didn't so much follow after the program, you know, it was an intense year. And before that, when I was even younger in my career, I was a part of a Strong's (pseudonym) leadership program . . . and actually, some of the people that I was mentored by in those years I continued to seek support from even later in my career.

As it pertains to relationship building, President Rosalind, who initially did not have an interest or the adequate time to dedicate to participating in a leadership program because of life responsibilities, explained that:

When I was at Carey, the president recognized something in me and he and his VPAA (Vice President for Academic Affairs) nominated me and I got chosen to participate in the LEADS Program (pseudonym) . . . It lasted a month and I can honestly say I don't remember what I may have learned there. And it seemed to me that it was more about the relationships that you built in that cohort than actually trying to remember the stuff . . . So, yeah, I've been to those things but I've always come out thinking . . . what is most valuable is the relationships you build with people.

Only a few of the participants specifically named mentors who had been instrumental in influencing their careers. The two individuals that President Kenneth named as his mentors were also the presidents that he shadowed when he was as a fellow

in the TOPS program. He stated that they both “added a lot in helping” him. Additionally, President Kenneth credited one of those mentors as being responsible for bringing him “up through the ranks” at a university he served at for a number of years. Moreover, President Rosalind named three mentors who served as role models throughout her career, one of which was also a mentor to President Kenneth. She described two of her mentors as “engaging” presidents, a leadership style/personality she previously identified with. The other was a VP of Academic Affairs who mentored her in how to “judge . . . family responsibilities and . . . career [responsibilities] . . . she was very good at helping to model that.”

Lastly, President Cynthia had the following to say about her mentors:

. . . when I was a faculty member, there was an associate dean . . . and also the provost at that time. And they saw strengths in me at that point in time I really hadn’t seen. And they were willing to invest time and energy to help me hone in on those skills to be a leader. And at that point in time, I had no thoughts of even moving into management. I was very satisfied serving as a faculty member. But, they were very supportive and they assigned responsibilities to me that I was able to be very successful at. And so, I’ve used those same things throughout my career.

One of the presidents, in particular, shared an experience unique to the findings of this study as it pertained to mentorship and leadership development. Although President Joy considered her involvement in the TOPS fellowship program a “great mentoring process” in general, she self-described as someone who had not experienced the strong

type of mentorship that she provides to others or has seen provided to majority social groups. She noted that she had to find her own way. She explained:

I am a strong mentor to a number of people on campus and off campus and I really value mentorship. But I have not, myself, experienced a great deal of the kind of mentorship that I involve myself in. And I think that, I partly am a strong mentor because I think that it's unfortunate that many women and people of color do not have the same kind of mentorship that I have seen some of my colleagues that are from the majority and male area have . . . So, I am not a good example of someone that can point to individuals that sort of opened doors or mentored me. I found my own way, more or less, and took value of the programs that I was a part of. And really, if I talk to colleagues, that's not an unusual story.

President Joy's thoughts on what was most important in influencing and helping to move others forward in their career consisted of two elements: (1) mentoring and (2) championing. She noted:

There are two parts that are very important to helping people move forward. One, is the mentorship, that is, someone that you can speak and that they can listen and kind of provide insight, that's really good. And the other thing, are people that champion you. So, that is . . . when someone sees an opportunity or a position they really move you forward. And over the years I have just wanted to fill the void of being a mentor and champion for people around me because I think that in 2017 we still see a disproportionate number of people who are underrepresented, not being mentored, and certainly not being championed. And

so, there's some rigid systems that still are in place that prevent people from moving through.

During data analysis, it was evident that President Joy's discussion of mentorship was directly related to her lived experience. It is an experience that is also consistent with reports in the literature regarding mentorship, specifically for women of color, who are "typically more isolated, without mentors or a network of support" (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010, p. 172). Her understanding of mentorship and the added element of championing was unique to the findings of this study, in that, no other participant discussed it in this way.

Perceptions of Response During Institutional Stability and Instability. In the quantitative phase of this study, the researcher was interested in understanding the prevalence of adverse conditions experienced by predominantly White institutions appointing Black presidents compared to PWIs appointing White presidents (see Chapter V). Another subsequent research goal of this study was to gain an understanding of how minority presidents navigated unique majority contexts inundated with adverse conditions. The institutions where participants were currently serving had experienced some degree of institutional turmoil prior to their appointments (see Table 2). In an attempt to understand general leadership approaches employed by African American presidents in these contexts, participants were asked about their perceived response as a leader during periods of organizational stability and instability.

"My response is very similar regardless:" Consistent Leadership

At the time of the interview, five of the six participants reported that their institution was currently facing some form of crisis, primarily related to finances. When

queried about whether they responded similarly or differently during times of institutional stability and instability, the majority of participants did not make a distinction between their style of leadership employed. For the most part, they believed that their leadership style remained the same whether in periods of crisis or steadiness. For instance, President Joy stated that her response was “very similar regardless” of changes in institutional stability. President James was unique, in that, he felt that leadership in times of crisis and steadiness were two different things and that both required “a different kind of decision making.” However, as a group, four factors tended to influence how participants stated they responded during periods of stability and instability: (1) utilization of their team; (2) the importance of the strategic plan; (3) prior experience dealing with a crisis situation; and (4) a desire to create hope among constituents.

The importance of having a strong team appeared to be a recurring motif when discussing the participants’ leadership experiences. Specifically, when dealing with periods of crisis, four presidents spoke about how they involved their team during the process. For example, President Joy, who discussed employing a systematic approach in handling challenges, also mentioned how she utilizes her team in the process. She explained:

I challenge my cabinet to help me look at the whole system and to both think about ways to be more efficient, to reorganize, or to judge inefficiencies through maybe technology as well as looking systemically about where we can shrink the need for resources.

Additionally, President Rosalind spoke about the importance of working with a

motivated and committed team when trying to find solutions to challenges faced by the institution. She stated:

I become energized by that [i.e. periods of instability] . . . I really slip into problem solving mode and working with my team and other stakeholders to try to come up with solutions to whatever the challenges are . . . We're in a challenge now and, I mean, my team is absolutely motivated . . . And so, then for me, even building my team, I always look at what's your commitment to the type of institution that we are . . . And those things are just important.

President Reginald also emphasized the need for working with a competent team that you trust (a theme that emerged earlier in the analysis) during crisis periods. He explained:

When you have smart people sitting at the table with you and you trust them, you come to the table and say, okay, how do we do this. And each gets an opportunity [to offer ideas] . . . But smart people that you trust are invaluable because . . . no president, no one person, sees all dimensions of every crisis. You just need to know that you don't know everything and you have to trust the people who help you advance the university.

When President Reginald was asked whether his response was similar during periods of stability, he stressed the importance of the strategic plan, which was also common among other participants. He had the following to say:

Well, you know, what has always guided me and therefore my cabinet, is the strategic plan. When we have budget cuts, or when things are stable, or even when things are getting better . . . I always turn to the strategic plan to remind me

what the board of trustees and the members of this university community agreed upon that's important going forward. And I always have that as my guide. We don't throw our strategic plan away in a crisis, in fact, I look to it even more. So, that's really what guides my . . . the programs that we develop or eliminate. It's the strategic plan.

President Cynthia also spoke about the importance of strategic planning and getting input from others when anticipating periods of instability. Having had to recently present her plan of action for how her institution proposes to deal with increased tuition and decreased enrollment, she stated:

Earlier this week . . . I was presenting my action plan to the board of governors about . . . how we (Millers University) are going to sustain ourselves with all the cuts and decreases in enrollments and what are those plans. So, I struggle with that as a university president always. And looking to see where our strengths are, and how we remain a vibrant and viable university, and putting our strategic plan together and our action plan. So, yeah . . . you struggle with all of those things. But it's a responsibility that every president has and you give it your best. You remain open and transparent with everyone and you listen and gather all the data and input from others to help you through it.

President Kenneth offered a comparable response about the importance of planning for impending tough periods.

Well, when you have those kinds of things . . . actually we've had all of that right here in our state. I don't know if you know about our state . . . we just got a budget after not having a budget in our state . . . So, I've had a decrease in

enrollment, I've had to increase tuition, we've had furloughs, layoffs, and all those kinds of things. And so, you just have to come up with a plan, your strategic plan, and how you're planning different things and coming up with a way of how to deal with some of those things. For example, we . . . wanted to make sure that our cost was affordable. So, what we did during those crises, we reduced tuition . . . We were the only institution in the state that did that. And we had a steady freshman enrollment because of that whereas everybody else was down in double digits we were only down . . . in single digits in terms of our enrollment. So, it's about coming up with . . . how you're going to maneuver your way through during those tough times. It's key to plan and have a—even when we had to veer away from our strategic plan and then come up with a supplemental strategic plan—a plan that focuses on exactly what we're dealing with at that time—no one expected us to not get a budget . . . But we had to plan.

Apart from working alongside a team and referring to one's strategic plan, other participants felt as though having dealt with a major crisis previously prepared them for and gave them the confidence to appropriately deal with impending crisis situations.

President James perceived himself as leading well during crisis as he reflected on a time when he served as a department chair of an ailing program. He had the following to say:

In terms of my own personal assessment, I will say that I've been in both situations. That's the reason why I was selected to be the chair of the science program . . . When I came . . . they were going to be site visited . . . and if they didn't pass, the program was going to be discontinued. And so, I took a chance and put it together. And so, we passed and ended up having a great department.

So, I think I tend to do well in situations where there has to be drastic change and major decisions made. I've been in a lot of those kinds of situations starting with that very first job I just mentioned.

President Rosalind, who stated that she becomes energized during crisis periods, also recounted a time when she had to help lead her institution through a natural disaster. This experience provided her a level of confidence that she felt could guide her through any crisis situation. She explained:

So, for me . . . when I was at Carey, (Hurricane) Marie happened. No one can prepare for that level of disaster. And all of us administrators were scattered all over the country. And once we figured out where each other was and a way to communicate then we had weekly meetings from wherever we were. And when they opened that city back up . . . the electricity wasn't on so you could not meet inside the city. We would meet in the suburbs . . . once a month or so to do planning and to do problem solving and make those hard decisions. And getting through that, everything else to me just seems like a piece of cake.

In addition to relying on one's team, strategic plan, and previous experience dealing with challenging situations, other participants stressed the importance of creating a sense of hope for constituents when responding to periods of turmoil. For instance, President Rosalind stated that she endeavors "to give them [i.e. team and stakeholders] hope . . . that we can get through those challenges." Similarly, President Cynthia stated:

I have to always help them understand that our best days are ahead of us and I truly believe that it's not just comments that I'm saying. I truly believe that and so, I have to make sure that that comes across very clear in any of my messaging

to our faculty, or our staff, or our administration, or our students, or any of our constituents.

Situational Leadership Theory and Perceptions of Leadership

Situational leadership theory (SLT) was used as a conceptual framework to better understand racial minority leadership style. The theory is best understood in terms of how leaders adapt their leadership style when engaging with their subordinates who vary in regards to competence and commitment. According to SLT, leadership style is comprised of both directive behaviors (task-oriented) and supportive behaviors (relational-oriented). The type of style that a leader possesses is determined based on one's level of engagement (i.e. high, low) in both directive and supportive behaviors—producing four categories of leadership styles: (1) Directing, (2) Coaching, (3) Supporting and (4) Delegating (see Chapter III). These leadership styles are best understood in terms of a leaders' ability to adapt their style in accordance to the varying development levels (i.e. competence and commitment) of their subordinates. As understanding subordinate characteristics was not a goal of this research, interview questions were solely aimed at understanding the participants' perceptions of their leadership style. Their responses are framed utilizing the situational leadership theoretical framework.

When discussing perceptions of their leadership, participants frequently discussed their style in terms of their team or cabinet. It was evident that collaboration with a team was significant in how presidents approached their work. During the interview participants were asked to gauge their level of engagement (i.e. high, low, or about the same) in both directive and supportive behaviors to determine which one of the four categories best described their style of leadership. In line with the SLT, participants in

this sample were more likely to employ either a coaching or supporting style of leadership as opposed to a directing or delegating style. The coaching and supporting style in SLT are similar in that they both are characterized by high engagement in supportive behaviors by the leader. A common leadership trait among participants in this study was that they stressed the importance of supporting their team/cabinet

From the data, participants (one participant was not asked this question due to time constraints) perceived that they engaged in supportive behaviors, (1) equally as much as they engaged in directive behaviors, (2) slightly more than they engaged in directive behaviors, or (3) more than they engaged in directive behaviors. For instance, President Reginald indicated that he engaged slightly more in supportive behaviors by stating, “I think in directive I would say, on a scale of one to ten, I would be 8 and in terms of being supportive, I’m ten.” President Joy stated, “I do both . . . But in my day-to-day interactions or week-to-week interactions, there’s a great deal of supportive aspects that go on.”

When referencing the Situational Leadership diagram and the descriptions of each leadership style (see Figure 1) in relation to the data as a whole, differentiating between which participants used a coaching or supporting style became clearer. Guided by the SLT, interview data indicated that Presidents Reginald and James were more likely to be categorized as employing a coaching leadership style. They indicated that they engaged in both directive and supportive behaviors but were clear in emphasizing their responsibility in having to “make the final decision.” Although both Presidents Cynthia and Joy indicated that they engaged in both directive and supportive behaviors, they differed from Presidents Reginald and James, in that, they didn’t make statements about

having the final say. Based on their responses, Presidents Cynthia and Joy would likely be categorized as employing either a coaching or supportive style or some combination of the two.

Figure 1. Situational Leadership: The Four Leadership Styles

Directing Style	Coaching Style	Supporting Style	Delegating Style
High Directive Low Supportive	High Directive High Supportive	Low Directive High Supportive	Low Directive Low Supportive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on goal achievement • Gives instructions • Supervises carefully • Less time on supportive behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on goal achievement • Focus on giving encouragement and soliciting input • Leader makes final decision on how goals are accomplished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less time on goal achievement • Focus on supportive behaviors • Gives subordinates control • Available to facilitate problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less time on goal achievement • Less time on supportive behaviors • Subordinates take responsibility of task • Leader refrains from intervening

Recreated using Northouse, 2013, pp. 100-102

Conversely, President Rosalind, who described herself as “incredibly supportive” of others, was unique, in that, she was the only participant who stated that she rarely engaged in directive behaviors. Her perceptions about her leadership style corresponded with the supporting style, in that, she focused less on goal setting and giving directions. When asked about her use of directive behaviors when working with her team, she had the following to say:

Not me . . . I am very much a big picture person and, you know, we’ll talk about whatever that picture is. And we talk about where we want to be at, at the end of

the day. And I don't care how you get us there. So, I'm not the detailed person. I like to be able to tell people, you know, we should come to some kind of consensus as to where it is we want to go or what we want to be and then let them handle their business and do their part to help us get there.

Overall, participants' perceptions of their leadership consisted of several elements. Participants tended to employ a coaching/supportive style of leadership according to the situational leadership framework. Moreover, when discussing their perceived leadership style, behaviors, and characteristics, three major themes emerged. Participants reported having an orientation to teams and engaging in a collaborative style of leadership; leading by example; and being accessible and approachable as leader. In addition, participants were most likely to state that their style of leadership was developed as a result of observing other presidents for whom they worked with; personal experiences serving in leadership roles; and influential mentorship experiences. Lastly, during periods of organizational stability and instability, participants indicated that they were more likely to respond in a consistent manner, regardless of the circumstance. Their reliance on a strong team, strategic planning, prior experience during crisis periods, and an ability to create hope were all important factors in being able to respond in a consistent manner.

African American Presidents' Experiences with Race and Gender

The following section discusses how participants described their experiences with race, gender, and being minorities heading majority White institutions. There were a number of themes that emerged for this category during data analysis. Some of the participants shared similar experiences while there were some participants whose

experiences were unique to their individual journey in the academe. The results are discussed in detail below.

It is important to note that the interview protocol had to be modified to either accommodate participants who needed to conclude the interview earlier than scheduled or because time had lapsed. In an effort to be accommodating and respectful of participants' time, every question was not asked. It was determined by the researcher which questions were most relevant to ask each participant.

Variation in the Impact of Race on Professional Journey. When asked about whether race (gender was discussed either organically or secondary with female presidents) had impacted the participants throughout their career journey, the majority were cognizant that it had however, in varying degrees. Presidents Joy, Kenneth, and Rosalind displayed a certainty in their responses that race had indeed been a factor during their career journey. A discussion of those responses is offered in the following section.

President Reginald differed slightly in his response, in that, he discussed an awareness that race had influenced his journey; however, he was also clear in expressing a sense of ambiguity in terms of how large of an impact race has likely had throughout his career. This inability to approximate the extent to which race influences one's experience is likely due to, as President Reginald indirectly stated, the subtle and covert nature of racial bias and racism. He explained:

Well, you know, one thing . . . constant throughout my career has been my race, you know, that hasn't changed at all. Some things that I'm aware that my race has had something to do with maybe how I was mentored or not. And there are probably impacts that my race has had that I don't know. Because of people, you

know, when they leave me and go to other situations, I don't know what they say or how they feel.

In addition to his perspective of being unable to fully know what others are feeling, President Reginald also expressed an inability to definitively attribute race as the sole reason for certain events occurring throughout his career. He reasoned that other demographics factors besides race could likely be taken into account but never fully confirmed. So, although President Reginald was confident that race impacted him in some ways, he was (1) uncertain of the full extent to which it had due to bias he was not privy to; and (2) careful to consider other demographic factors that could have also likely explained why situations happened in the manner that they did.

The experiences of the remaining two participants were particularly unique from the other four presidents. Presidents James and Cynthia reported that their race had played a minimal role during their professional journey. Due to time constraints, President James was asked to discuss his experience with race generally. Overall, he did not feel as though race had much of an influence on his career path, with the exception of two instances. Towards the beginning of his career, President James was asked to lead a troubled program whose constituents were predominantly Black. In this case, he did feel as though being African American played a role in the decision to hire him and that he was “a more natural fit in that environment.” He explained:

When they looked for someone who could come and take over, I think that the fact that I was African American played a big role. I was well trained but African American. And I think that played a role in the dean and the president at the

time of the institution wanting for me to come in and take over this troubled program.

Conversely, President James spoke of one particular experience in which he felt his race was partially an issue. When reflecting on his professional journey, he recollected:

I do feel a little different about the University of Brown (pseudonym) and I think that that's where the issue comes in. So, the person who recruited me was . . . president of the university . . . system. A great guy, and again, really thought in terms of meritocracy and really liked me a lot and the fact that, you know, I wasn't overtly political, certainly was not overtly Republican, if anything, maybe more a Democrat, was not an issue with him at all. And so, race I don't think really ever played into it with him whatsoever. But we got a new president who was . . . very traditional . . . And his comfort level really was having people like him around him. And [I] . . . decided that it was just going to be a difficult environment for [me] to flourish and so, [I] . . . decided to leave. And I will say that, for me, part of it was racial. He was careful enough not be overt about it but it was certainly, part of it, racial . . . But, you know, that's only been the one exception throughout my entire career where I felt that . . . I don't feel it here (Haven University) at all . . . It's a very diverse university, the city is predominantly African American. So, I mean, it's very natural to have an African American president here.

Lastly, President Cynthia, expressed a general understanding that race can be influential but did not specifically indicate that she had been impacted by race or gender

throughout her career. When queried, she stated, “I know there are times when individuals totally are affected by race and gender but I’ve never wanted that to interfere with me moving forward with what I wanted to do.”

President Cynthia was clear in noting that she did not let issues of race and gender negatively affect her, serve as an excuse, or impact her ability to achieve her goals, a skill that she learned from her father. She further explained:

I was never going to let anyone define who I was. I would define who I was. And to always see me as that person first, not as that female, not as that person of color. But who I was and what I offered and brought to the table. I never allowed it to be an excuse for me and I never wanted to let anyone keep me from doing something because of that. And as a result, I can honestly say, is it out there, absolutely, but I don’t let it affect me in a negative way. I don’t have the luxury of allowing it to affect me in a negative way.

Although acknowledging the existence of racial issues in the academe, it was difficult for President Cynthia to recollect experiences in which she was impacted because of her racial background. She noted:

It’s there, yes, but for me to go and say here’s an incident that I know was clearly that, I don’t have the time to focus on it. But because I’ve seen it, you know, not necessarily of me, and I’ve witnessed it, you know, it’s there. I’d be very naïve to say that it doesn’t exist. I’ve just not personally allowed it to affect me such that if you ask me to pinpoint, pick out one of those times, that’s hard for me to do.

Participants were also asked if they had experienced racist attitudes or behaviors in their current role as president. Responses varied here as well. President Cynthia, who

was clear in noting that she did not allow issues pertaining to race and gender to affect her, stated that there were some individuals at Millers University who were not supportive of her being president. However, similar to President Reginald, she expressed an inability to definitively ascribed that instance to be a result of her race or gender. She explained:

It's never stopped me but even when I was applying for the position here, you know, there were many people who were supportive of my leadership and wanting me to be the president and there were those who were not. Now, was that because I was an African American, was that because I was a female, was that because . . . I had been here too long and they wanted someone new. It could be a mix of all of those things. And rather than me trying to focus on which one rose to the top or some not wanting me to be in this role, I didn't have the time or energy to give it that. But you better believe, I'm sure, it was some of the following because in this area there aren't a lot of African Americans . . . So, I guess, but . . . again, it's their problem, it's not mine. They've got to deal with it, not me . . . I'm not catching that ball . . . And I guess that's the attitude I've taken with it . . . I focus on making this university the best it can be . . . I have got to get it done, regardless of being a person of color, regardless of being a female. And those are both very important to me. And I am very, very proud of who I am.

President Reginald spoke generally about his experiences with racism since coming to State University. He felt that as a person of color, racism is something he's experienced his entire life and thus, also experiences in his professional life. He explained:

. . . when I first came here, from time to time, I don't wear a suit all the time . . . on weekends . . . I've been followed around the mall. And they don't know I'm the president. If they knew I was the president, I don't think they would. But all they see is a Black guy, a good looking Black guy, but still a Black guy. I've experienced that my entire life, I mean . . . people of color on a daily basis probably there is something, whether you notice it or not. I don't play golf and so that leaves me out of things. People say, well you need to learn to play golf because that's where the decisions are made. Well, that's not me. And I think that as African Americans, whatever our style is or our cultural approaches to things, they are just as legitimate as playing golf. So, you know, let's meet on the basketball court and let's make some decisions there. And I just put that as an example.

Moreover, he appeared to adopt a similar attitude as President Cynthia, in that, he did not focus on things beyond his control, such as racism, but rather focused on doing the job he was hired to do. He explained:

I've had a very rich and rewarding career. I'm sure race played a part in it from time to time and no doubt my race has probably played a bigger part than I know. But throughout my career I just stayed focused on what I was supposed to be doing and trying to do it to the best of my ability and, as I said before, those are the things I can control. I can't control somebody's racism and I don't do that.

When asking President Kenneth if he had experienced racist attitudes or behaviors in his current role, he responded that he had. However, he did not wish to elaborate but

did state that when dealing with such he believes “in addressing the issues and bring[ing] them to the forefront.”

“I think it has held me back:” Race as an Impediment. For the participants who did feel as though race was certainly an issue throughout their career, some were able to specify exactly how they felt race had influenced their professionally journey. Both presidents Joy and Kenneth felt as though their race had slowed or hindered their progress in getting to where they currently are. For example, President Joy explained:

Oh, well, I think the interaction of being a woman and an African American has slowed the process of being a president. So, I’ve had colleagues that have a very similar background and it’s just sort of [happened] quickly. So, I think it slows the process.

Similarly, President Kenneth noted, “Well, sometimes I think it has held me back . . . I think that in many instances it hindered me from moving forward quicker than I did.” President Reginald also discussed an experience that was indicative of a “*slowing*” process. However, he spoke of how such attempts never stopped him from doing what he felt he was capable of doing. This confidence allowed him to be successful in progressing up the administrative ranks despite advice from his White, male superiors who suggested he wasn’t ready or that he needed to wait. Although President Reginald understood that his race may have contributed to these individuals not encouraging his desires to advance, he was clear in reiterating his inability to definitively attribute that experience to race due to an awareness that he could “never really know what’s in the hearts and minds of people.” He stated:

I was thinking about when I thought I was ready to advance from like a dean to a VP . . . The guy that I reported to said I wasn't ready, he said I think you oughta stay a couple more years. Well I had made my mind up that, you know, I knew I could do what he was doing and I felt I could do it better. So, I listened to him but that didn't stop me from applying to become VP . . . and I got that job. I was in that job for [some] years and I had a male president that I reported to. And when I . . . felt I was ready to move on to be the Provost . . . he thought I needed another couple . . . years. And I appreciated that and I applied and I got the job. And I was in that position for [some] years. And that's when I had a female president and I talked to her and I said, I've been in this [position] for [some] years, I've learned a lot from you, I've had a lot of very positive experiences, I think I'm ready to be a president. And she said, I think you are too. And I applied for a presidency and I got it. So, I mean, was race an issue with those White males who did not encourage me at the time I thought I was ready, I don't know. One of the VPs that discouraged me or didn't encourage me, he was Mormon. So, I don't know.

Differential Treatment and Standards. A majority of participants were also able to speak about experiences related to how they felt their race has produced or produces difference; either in the form of, (1) the situations they are likely to find themselves in; (2) the way they are treated; (3) the standards they are held to; and/or (4) not having their accomplishments celebrated. A number of examples as discussed by participants are provided in this section.

"I'm always in audiences that are all White:" Being the Only Black Face

Unfortunately, as literature informs, elite positions of leadership (i.e. CEO,

university president) lack adequate racial representation (Zweigenhaft & Domhoff, 2006). Thus, it was not surprising that some participants reported often being the only Black person or person of color when performing responsibilities related to their role. President Reginald understood this as part of his reality when considering the geographical region his institution is located in. He had the following to say:

I will tell you . . . I'm always in audiences that are all White. It was that way last night. I give speeches to rotary clubs and chambers and all kinds of groups . . . here . . . and sometimes when I'm giving—because I'm passionate about my university and what it means and, you know, I'm proud of how it's developed—and sometimes, I wonder when I'm giving those speeches, do people know that I'm the only African American in the room or the only person of color in the room. Because I'm always keenly aware. I don't dwell on it because if I did I'd, you know, geesh I'd take up a lot of time.

Furthermore, President Reginald spoke about the lack of racial diversity when being evaluated by an all-White governing board.

I don't have any people of color on my governing board. So, imagine how that feels every year when I'm being evaluated, you know, I have my little Black face up there and all these White people. I said to the governor because he appoints . . . I said to members of the board of governors, they appoint . . . I've spoken to members . . . of my board of trustees individually . . . and said, you know, look—we did have an African American on [some] years ago— . . . we're getting dangerously close to having an all-White board and nothing has happened.

President Kenneth briefly spoke about not being affected or bothered by certain situations related to his race such as, being the only Black person in a setting. He explained:

I know who I am when I walk into a room, what I say, and how I carry myself, I'm going to demand attention even if I'm the only Black person there. It does not bother me that way.

"The major thing that I've noticed is an over-scrutiny:" Inspecting and Questioning

Many of the participants who believed that race influenced their professional journey, also felt that this influence tended to manifest itself in the form being over-scrutinized and constantly questioned. For instance, President Joy noted:

I think that being an underrepresented voice gives you a greater scrutiny and greater suspect that you can represent everyone. And so, absolutely, I think, the major thing that I've noticed is that, not a disrespect, but . . . an over-scrutiny, an over, you know, consideration.

When asked if she could provide an example of how she has dealt with being over-scrutinized, President Joy offered the following scenario.

Sure, before I was appointed here (Keys College), I had been in other presidential searches. I remember one search I was in . . . I was provost at the time and somebody had nominated me, they were very keen on me. I went to the interview. I mean, I thought it went really, really well, you know, pretty much said everything except that, you know, you have this position. And so, I was trying to wrap my head around making the transition . . . So, I had no idea what turned them but . . . I get a call from the consultant . . . and she had only said, I just want

to let you know they decided to go another direction. I mean, I was shocked. I was absolutely shocked because of the reception. And so, I talked a little bit, I told them, you know, I'm not going to sue anybody, it's not about that, but can you give me a sense because I . . . have such a good sense of people . . . And she goes, well, you know, I think that the chair of the board of trustees just got a little nervous and that, you know, he just introduced some nervousness into it and so they hired a White male . . . So, there you go (laughs). So, yeah, I mean, I definitely know from a lived experience . . . of just like this really seems like a perfect fit and then all of a sudden, you know, it turns. And every time I did not get a position . . . the person that was hired, was always a White male, every time . . . So, I think it's quite clear (laughs), in my mind . . . Because I've been on a college campus so many years, I've seen searches turn . . . people . . . question . . . anyone who looks different, has a different background, I mean, they just question them in ways, I don't mean necessarily in front of the person, but you know, in the committee. It's just there's a sense of unease like, I just don't know that that person can really talk to our constituents, as if anybody really embodies all constituents.

This notion of questioning anyone who looks different was central to some of the responses of other participants. When speaking about the singular instance in his career that he felt race was an issue, President James described his superior as someone who "just felt comfortable with people who were like him."

President Kenneth offered the following rejoinder:

. . . everybody doesn't want a minority president. Some people have deeply

rooted issues that they have to deal with themselves and they don't know how to handle that. And so, some people don't know how to deal with bringing on [people] who look different from them or who may think different from them.

President Kenneth, who also felt that everything was "scrutinized to the tee, all the time," described an experience, similar to President Joy's, in which he felt confident that he would be offered a position and ultimately was not. This was only one of many situations that President Kenneth felt as though his race served as a hindrance to his advancement. He discussed:

I have plenty situations, I'm just trying to think of one. Well, in one situation, I went down to the wire, there were two of us. I went down to the wire for a presidency. And my school is much larger, I have about 15,000 students, two campuses. They hired somebody with a much smaller school than mine, much smaller. And to me I'm like geesh it's clear. And I'll just be quite frank with you, it was an old White man who didn't have but 8,000 students.

Moreover, participants spoke about having their decision-making abilities and intellect questioned by others. When discussing his interactions with his board of trustees, President Reginald described how his board "publicly second guess[es] his management decisions and, you know, . . . not [in] a constructive way." He had the following to say:

I will tell you here at State University, I think members of . . . the governing board . . . bring their racialism history to the table sometimes in dealing with me, yes. But I tell you, I grew up in a segregated state. The White members of my board also grew up in segregated states (laughs). So, it's not like, you know, we're all part of the same kind of dynamic. They were just on the other side. And

I know some of them, because I know they're past, I know some of them were on the wrong side of that history. And it comes across sometimes in what they say and how they say things.

Similarly, President Rosalind, who felt as though her experiences with race and gender in the academe has resulted in her being "very guarded" and "on the defensive," had the following to say regarding being scrutinized and questioned.

You know, I find that I'm very guarded . . . every little thing comes under scrutiny. And that you spend a lot of unconscious time, it may be conscious, I know, thinking about people's perceptions of your ability and your intellect and finding yourself on the defensive a lot because people are going to question that and your integrity all the time . . . But I think I always have something to prove because of my race and my gender. And that gets tiring sometimes.

When asked if she had an example of when her ability and intellect as a leader had been questioned, she explained:

I try my best not to put down my current institution but it just seems like every decision I make here, the faculty, and even some of the staff constantly question me, why I made a decision, and they don't think I know what I'm doing. When I got here, they were doing an institutional assessment . . . And, well, I asked to see the . . . report, and I eventually got it. See, that tells you one thing, I eventually got it. I read it and I was appalled and I told them, I said, you cannot turn this kind of report in . . . And they all questioned it . . . well, there was one vocal one who questioned whether or not I knew what the heck I was talking about. And when an external assessment . . . team came . . . and wrote up their

report, everything that I had told the faculty was in that report. And we were reprimanded. And when I told them that we were going to have to do x, y, and z . . . they did not even believe that. So . . . I had one or two meetings with the faculty about this problem and they would say they didn't need to do anything. In the process . . . I hired a new provost. It was a White male . . . it took hiring a provost that then the faculty eventually started to settle in and do what was necessary . . . And so, it's always this questioning about whether or not I know what I'm talking about. It's really beginning to grit on my nerves.

President Joy shared a similar instance of being challenged and questioned by a member of her board of trustees regarding her ability to handle a difficult situation. She noted:

So, a couple of years ago there was a negative article . . . [reported] about our campus . . . And so, one of the trustees was very challenging in the meeting about what was going on . . . I laid out what we were originally doing and why we were doing it. And I did really feel that I got a much greater pushback than I would have if I had been, you know, not Black and not a woman. So, the thing is, it's really hard to parse out how much of that is sexism and how much of that is racism. But certainly, I really felt that there was much more, you know, questioning and, you know, well do you need us to step in, the kind of stuff that I don't think that a White male would have received.

"You got to be, as they say, twice as good:" Greater Expectations

Participants also spoke about how they felt as though they were held to different standards as persons of color. When initially asked how her race has affected her

professional journey, President Rosalind immediately responded, “I feel like I’m held to a higher standard than most especially being here at this majority institution.”

President Kenneth shared a similar sentiment, stating that he feels like he is held to a higher standard “all the time.” Even though he viewed this differential treatment as unfair, he considered it “as a challenge to help him be better and help him to be great.” He had the following to say when describing how he is held to a different standard.

Well, even when I first became president, with the evaluations and things and the goals. My goals were so much different and detailed than my predecessor because I asked him. He said, I didn’t have to do all that. Yes, you are. I am . . . And I don’t know, I mean that’s just how it is. You got to be, as they say, twice as good, three times and four times as good.

Likewise, when asked if she felt that she was held to a different standard, President Joy replied:

Oh yeah, absolutely (laughs). I think that much more is expected. And so, there’s no room for you doing the average—there’s just no room for it. That if . . . I’m going to succeed, it’s because I go so beyond what would be expected . . . So, yeah . . . the bar is higher . . . and, you know, I like to jump high bars, so, that’s fine. But I’m clear that the expectation, you know, it is much higher. So, even in terms of when you are presenting or so forth, I know that my presentation has to have all the bells and whistles, you know. So, there is a much higher bar because the tendency is to always be looking for fault . . . My grandmother used to tell me that, you know, you have to run twice as fast to go half as far. And I think that that’s still very much the case.

When asked if she could offer an example of a time when she felt that the bar was set higher, she provided an example of when she first began her tenure at Keys College and was expected to almost immediately fix the issues that the institution had been facing. She explained:

My first year, and like, I was getting questions within two months or three months about, you know, how are you going to change the enrollment pattern because they were seeing a slightly decline in enrollment. So, I mean, I was still figuring out who's on my team (laughs). And so . . . there was lots of issues . . . so people were really, sort of, you're here . . . solve the 30-year problems that we have (laughs). So, I got a lot of questions like that, you know. As I said, I like to fix things, my expectations for myself are so high, you know, so I was able to show progress on things much quicker just because that's kind of my style. But . . . I'm in a good position to be able to compare because . . . I know a lot of other people [i.e. colleagues in the university system] and the challenges that they have. And I know how gently and minuscule people are asked to perform in some of my other campuses.

"Certain people don't want to give you the credit:" Efforts not Celebrated

A final sub-theme that emerged, as it related to being treated differently, was that some participants described instances where they felt deserving efforts were not celebrated. For instance, President Kenneth explained:

And there are situations that I have to deal with even here with certain people in terms of giving me the credit for what I deserve. You know, they'll say oh such and such is running the school or this person . . . and these are people I've trained,

who I mentor, and who I've helped. But certain people don't want to give you the credit. But I go on anyway. I know who I am. I grew up in the South. I grew up in the racist, competitive South so, I know how to handle the situations.

Despite this, President Kenneth was clear in stating that he is supported by individuals from all races. He explained.

And I also have to say on a good side . . . there are people who are good from all races, who are good people, who are open and honest, and have integrity, values, good morals, and those people support me as well, from both sides of the house.

When sharing how she handles individuals who question her ability and intellect, President Rosalind reiterated her feeling of "always having something to prove" by stating that she lets "the end result speak for itself." She further added, "sometimes they come up and say thanks, and sometimes they don't."

Lastly, President Reginald discussed a highly successful fundraising campaign that he spearheaded at State University but only received minimal accolades from his governing board. He noted:

. . . we had a multi-million [dollar] campaign that we started a few years ago.

That campaign ends soon . . . just in a couple of weeks, we'll have [raised over a hundred] million dollars . . . in that period. And to me . . . that's a testament that the folks who are watching this institution they are exciting about investing in it because they like what we do, they see the promise of a future, and they're willing to invest in that . . . Yeah, and I will say this, if I was a White president, my board . . . would be all over me with kudos. You know, they've probably

mentioned it a little bit and, you know, I've noticed that but that's alright. State University has [several] million dollars it didn't have a few years ago.

"I'm sure it has:" Impact of Race on Decision-Making. Three of the study's participants felt that their racial background, to some extent, played a role in the way in which they make decisions. For instance, President Reginald noted:

If you ask me (laughs) has my race, has it had any impact on how I make decisions, I'm sure it has. I mean I didn't go to school with any White kids until I was in ninth grade. And at the time there were not many African Americans going to integrated schools in my county. My mom put me in that school. And I never had an African American teacher after that. So, I'm sure that had impact because after school was over, you know, I went back to my segregated community. I went to Black churches, I mean, it was just different . . . I have to believe . . . that either probably consciously and subconsciously that had an impact, not just on how I make decisions, but on how I see the world.

When reflecting on the diversity of his cabinet in relation to the diversity of the community his institution is located in, President Reginald stated, "I try to make a statement in what I do and how I do it." He further spoke about his efforts to correct the interactions between the males and females in his cabinet that he formed when he arrived at State University. He explained:

Oh yeah, I picked them [i.e. cabinet members] all. The African American woman and the White woman . . . didn't have vice presidential status when I got here. I noticed the interaction with the males at the table because the women were not VPs. It appeared, not appeared, I'm pretty perceptive, that they tended to be more

dismissive of what they said. And I just needed to correct that. And so, I gave them some additional duties and I gave them the vice president title and they deserve it.

Likewise, President Cynthia felt that being a woman and person of color has influenced her decision making in some ways, specifically, as it related to ensuring that individuals are treated fairly. When asked if her race and gender influences how she makes decisions, she replied:

In some ways, I would have to say yes because being a person of color and a female, you know what that means . . . so, you have a little more understanding and appreciation of what individuals can and do go through. I want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly as a result of that . . . when I was the dean . . . [and] persons of color were being hired and when females were being hired . . . I wanted to make sure that when those salaries were being set that they were being treated fairly in that regard. And I made sure that that was going to happen because that doesn't always happen . . . I'm very mindful of all of that. So, it does affect my decision making but in a very positive way. But it doesn't mean that because you are female or a person of color that you're gonna get a pass on it, absolutely not. We're all treated the same and fairly and that is very important to me and anyone who knows me, knows that that is something that stands out, yes.

Lastly, President Joy felt that all pieces of her identity, including her race and gender, influences the way in which she makes decisions as president. She discussed:

Well, I think that everything about my background influences how I work with people, and how I interact with people, and how I make decisions. So, I am from a

very small town and . . . I was really raised to know everybody, you know, no one knows a stranger. That you paid attention to every member of your community. And so, I think that sort of basic way I was raised, really influences some of my community building that I do on campus and off. And then being an African American, of course, you know, that also brings a strong sense of community. Being a woman also brings sort of a social skill to your interactions . . . So, I think . . . It's all my pieces that are kind of mixed. It's not just about being an African American but it's coming from a small town, being very community minded as a person, you know, being a woman, being Black, all of those create a style which makes me somewhat unique in terms of my colleagues.

"It's really hard to parse out:" Being Black and Female. Similar to the above response, President Joy frequently spoke of her intersecting identities throughout the interview. She appeared cognizant that both race and gender had played a role throughout her professional journey. Earlier during the interview, she noted that she felt as though the dual identities of being a woman of color had slowed the process for her. However, she was unsure of exactly which, racism or sexism, was the greater issue. Speaking on what is described as "*double jeopardy*" in literature related to women of color, she stated:

But, you know, when you come in a package of both, it's kind of, you know, difficult to parse out which is the greater of the issue when you have both . . . I just think that what happens is that there are such stereotypes [and] negativity around both gender and race that when they come together it gives more people reasons to look at you and over scrutinize who you are. I mean, I still can go in places because, you know, I sort of like to be open, accessible . . . and I can still

go in places and start talking to someone and they'll start talking this, that, and the other. And then they'll say, well what do you do, and I'll tell them. And they will just gloss over [it]. They can't even hear the president, they cannot even hear it. And then they'll start talking about oh, they know somebody from Keys College. And then they'll say, tell me again what do you do. And then all of sudden they go, oh. I mean, it's like they can't even process the fact that I am the president. I laugh, I always laugh and I say well, you know, we come in different packages you know, so (laughs). It is just amazing. There used to be some articles, maybe ten years ago, that talked about a certain type, like what you'd expect the president to look like, you know. And I think that still is very much the case. That there's the expectation that the president is a tall White gray-haired male. And so, I'm neither tall, nor White, nor totally gray, nor male.

Similarly, President Rosalind felt that she always had something to prove because of her race and gender. She also spoke in terms of how being female influences the way in which she leads. She explained:

I think that I am more compassionate and empathetic . . . So, I'm one who assesses a situation and can come to a decision, relatively quickly . . . But if I identify a problem, I don't go for the jugular. I try to find a compassionate, humane way to deal with certain situations. Because I think that sometimes people forget about humanity and they just want to get the job done. And I think that women have a greater tendency to try to take this more humane approach in solving some of these problems than men do. And I know that, at least for myself, it's been my experience that a lot of men they just walk in with this air of

confidence, like they just know everything. I don't do that, even if I might be the expert on something in the room, you would never know it when I first walk in there because I am not going to be talking first and showboating and putting on airs—that's not something I do. So, I think that that's part of being a female leader that is different from a lot of the men.

Variation in Experiences as a Minority Leader at a Majority Institution. When asked about their experiences being a racial minority leading at a majority White institution, participants spoke about their experiences quite differently and from varying perspectives. Responses were unique based on a number of things such as campus diversity, familiarity with the university, familiarity with being a member of a minority group, the state of the institution, and having adjusted to the environment. For instance, President Joy spoke very positively about her experiences leading a majority White institution and that she found the work to be rewarding, specifically as it related to being able to provide a model for other women and individuals of color. She stated:

Well, I think we have a very diverse campus. So, I actually find it quite wonderful to be able to provide a model for our students that come from diverse backgrounds that a woman of color can lead this institution. So, I find it very exciting and my students, I mean, my Black and Hispanic students in particular, get just such a charge out of the fact that a woman, a Black woman, is leading the institution. So, it's really wonderful actually. It's quite wonderful to have that model. I mean, in all my years as a college student and actually through all my years in the academe . . . all those presidents were always White men. I had never worked with a president that was not a White man. So, I know I offer a model and

a promise for our students, and our faculty and staff of color, that allows them to see that there are ways to maneuver and so forth and move ahead.

President Cynthia, who had served at her current institution in various capacities over a number of years, offered a different perspective. She explained that she does not have an outsider's viewpoint and thus, felt that her experience was unique. She noted the following regarding how her familiarity with the institution and individuals within the campus community impacts her experience as a racial minority heading a majority White institution.

You know, mine is going to be a little different and that's because . . . I've been here for [a number of] years. So many times a new leader will come into the university and they don't know individuals there and they have to learn the landscape and the layout of the university. Mine is a little different because I have the history . . . of being here . . . So, I understand the culture of the university here . . . I don't have that same piece as if I came from the outside . . . I've been very well received in the community—the university community, outside the community . . . So, those are some of the things I think help maybe because of my longstanding here at the university and in the community. So, some of that maybe a little different than others who moved into that role from the outside.

Additionally, President Reginald spoke about how being a racial minority leader at a majority White institution is reminiscent of his experiences growing up during the era of segregation. He stated:

Well, you know, (laughs) if I go back to when I was in the ninth grade and I was the only African American in all of my classes, you know, and I've had a

variation of that throughout my education, educational career, both as a faculty member and as an administrator.

Moreover, he didn't feel that his minority status shielded him from acts of racism that also occur on other campuses of higher education. Lastly, he noted that Black individuals, particularly Black students, don't give him a pass and, in a sense, expect more from him. He explained:

Here, at my campus over the last sixth months, it's happening all across the country, there have been racial epithets drawn on the walls here, and the "n" word has been scrawled on things. I've had the Black students have a little demonstration on campus about how do we address these things. So, being an African American president at a predominantly White institution that doesn't buffer me from a lot of things that other presidents at other schools are having to deal with as well. You know, the African American students . . . I don't get a pass from them. I mean they were pissed off that I, excuse the language again please, that in their minds, I didn't send the message out to the campus quickly enough with those racial epithets.

President Kenneth's perspective centered on him having adjusted to being a racial minority leader at a PWI and not being bothered by it. Similar to an earlier theme discussed, President Kenneth recollected on how he was constantly questioned when he first started at Haven University but not really having to deal with the questioning anymore.

You know, I think I've gotten so used to it [that] it doesn't even bother me at all. I think when I first started, you have people questioning you. I remember when I

first went on an alumni event. I'm over there and you got a group of White guys sitting over talking and looking. So, I decided to go over and talk to them and introduce myself. And you would have thought I was at another interview, you know. And they questioned me and kept asking me questions and I answered the questions. Then I said well, ya'll tell me about yourselves, you know, what made you come to our university and what are you doing now, and then I said, let's take a picture. And I see them now, nobody asks me all those questions now unless they're people who just really don't know who I am, they may ask.

Lastly, President Rosalind offered a perspective that was most in line with the focus of this study. Even though she enjoys her job, President Rosalind discussed how being a racial minority leader at a majority White institution in crisis was a difficult task to undertake. Similar to President Reginald, she spoke about the loneliness associated with being president which was reminiscent of her experience in the academe as a woman of color. She noted:

You know, most days I really love my job. I love the work I do. And then there are other days when it just wears on me. Because sometimes it's hard to figure out who your allies are. And at a majority institution, they're not many minority faculty, right. And so, coming through the sciences and getting a PhD at [a PWI], it gave me a resolve and a resilience that I rely on tremendously because being a college president is a lonely job. But I think being a college president at a majority institution that is in crisis is an incredibly hard job.

"I have a responsibility to clear the path." *On Being a First.* The participants who were the first African American to serve in their current position were queried about

what that meant to them. President Kenneth discussed having a greater appreciation for being a first after meeting with both Black and White university alumni. He stated:

You know it really didn't dawn on me until I started meeting some of the Black alumni from the university. When they talk about when they were here, how it was, and how they had to deal with racial issues, it makes me appreciate it even more because, you know, we're in a different era now . . . I sit and listen to stories from White folk and Black folk. One thing that really got me is, one of the first alumni events I went to . . . and they were all in a group talking to me, these are all White folks talking to me, and said, when we were in college we were friends with the coloreds. And I'm like what, and my mouth was like opened. And they just kept on talking and the coloreds were such and such. I'm like what?

(laughs) . . . and they're so sincere . . . I don't even think they were racists at all but they were old and I'm like, do you not know you don't call people coloreds. It was funny, I laughed (laughs). I called the previous president I said . . . did they say that to you? He said, no they never said that to me (laughs) . . . I could tell you plenty of stories, but, you know, those are things you just deal with.

Two of the female participants shared similar responses. President Cynthia viewed her being the first female and first African American in her position as historic and a responsibility, in that, she feels compelled to perform her job well so that others can follow in her footsteps. She explained:

. . . to be the first African American and female . . . wow . . . when I walk into my office each day . . . I walk by the hall where all of the portraits of the former presidents hang. And I sometimes stop and say, you know, one day my . . .

portrait will appear on these walls having served as the president of this outstanding university . . . I've made a mark in the history of this university and . . . with that . . . responsibility comes accountability. So, for me, it means that this position isn't just for me. It's for all those young African American women, those African American males, and even for those non-persons of color . . . So, there's a large, I'll say, responsibility on my shoulders so that this university will see fit to want to hire more persons of color, African Americans, and women because of what I've done in this role and not to let it end with me . . . I didn't get here on my own . . . I have a responsibility to do this job well, to clear the path so that others . . . will be in this role.

Although President Cynthia did not feel as though fulfilling this responsibility engendered a certain degree of pressure, President Rosalind described her experience as a first as such. Similar to President Cynthia, she also believed it was her mission to perform her job well so that individuals "don't think twice about hiring another person of color." She stated:

I feel a tremendous sense of not wanting to screw it up for the next one. So, that's pressure. That's the only way I can describe it. I mean, I go in the library and there are presidents from the 1900s all the way up through the last president. They all have their portraits up in the library and you're right, they're all White people. Half of them are female though so that's a positive . . . so, I can't say that it's a sense of pride, it's a sense of I'm here now and I'm gonna show them, like, what they've been missing in a leader . . . But, you know, my maternal grandmother was my most supreme mentor . . . And when I was growing up . . . she would call

me sister, she said, you know sister, we're depending on you. And that's the way I've been all my life. Thinking that people are depending on me to do what is right and to do my absolute best. I cannot screw this up. So, it's satisfying knowing that I've gotten to this point in my life when people didn't think it was possible . . . But now I have to do such a good job that they wouldn't think twice about, you know, going and hiring another person of color. Well, that's my mission. So, we'll see.

In general, participants discussed the influence of race and gender on their unique professional and leadership experiences to varying extents. However, many of the participants shared commonalities. They shared stories regarding how race and gender has influenced their professional journey, produced different experiences and outcomes for them, and influenced how they make decisions as leaders.

Perspectives on Minority Leadership

In concluding the interview, participants were asked, as time permitted, to provide their thoughts on the underlying reason(s) for the lack of diversity pervading the office of the presidency at predominantly White institutions. Participants offered very different perspectives which included the pipeline problem, uneasiness with difference, and being left out and fearful.

"We have a lot of work to do:" Addressing the Pipeline Problem. President Joy offered a very holistic and systemic perspective that was very much in accord with literature on the college presidency and racial minority leadership. To remedy the lack of diversity in the college presidency, she suggested resolving issues in the academic pipeline that present themselves early on. She had the following to say:

Well, in today's world . . . the majority of presidents come from the provost position . . . So, you have to then track back and see the roots to bring you to a provost position. So, we know that African Americans are underrepresented in assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. And in order to be a provost, you have to get through all of that and then you have to be a dean as well. So, the problems early on, the racism that occurs, and the lack of promoting people at the early stages really makes the pool even smaller to get through . . . what's considered the classic background . . . I have known hardly any person of color who's taken an uncharacteristic route . . . The fact that we have such a hard time going through all of the various levels to get in this position, for someone to over-scrutinize you . . . it's just like there's so much work to be done. So, we need to do the work in terms of getting more PhD students completing their PhDs, getting them in the pipeline, right, and I believe . . . in mentorship and champion . . . So, it's a very hard, multi-level issue and . . . you're hitting racism and sexism at each one of them. So, you have to combat it at each place . . . And so, you can't just say, well, okay now we're going to be more open to candidates of color for the presidency. And oh, I'm just so sorry that the pool is so small and therefore, what can we do that there is only one person [of color] in the pool and the person is not a good fit . . . You got to go back and you got to look at what's happening at the earlier years and what's discouraging people from getting doctorates, and what's discouraging them from going into the academe, and then what's preventing them from getting tenure to promoted, and then what's preventing them from then becoming the department chair . . . So, you've got to

work all those different elements in order to see a real change. So, I'm hopeful . . . but right now, we've got so many gates that are locked that we need to unlock . . . We have a lot of work to be done.

"Being afraid of the unknown:" Fostering Comfort Levels for Diversity. President Kenneth was clear in reiterating that the lack of diversity in elite positions of higher education stem from an uneasiness towards difference. Fostering a genuine comfort level for diversity appeared to be a remedy offered by President Kenneth. He explained:

Well, like I said, there are some people who just have challenges in choosing people who don't look like them and they gotta be comfortable, when they hire a minority, they gotta be comfortable with that minority. Because it's . . . being afraid of the unknown. Also, and I've learned, that people will go with the people they know, more so than those that they don't know, or more so with the people that look like them.

"Make them tell us no:" Ambition, Persistence, and Resilience. Lastly, President Cynthia felt that being left out and afraid sometime leaves racial minorities out of key positions of authority within higher education institutions. Her remedy for this was focused on encouraging ambition, persistence, and resilience among persons of color. When asked her perspective on the reason for the low number of racial minorities leading PWIs, she stated:

Sometimes I think because others want it and we're left out. But we can't be afraid to go ahead and apply for those positions and make them tell us no. And not be afraid to go for it because if you don't go for it, it's easy to say . . . well, no one really applied. Well then, find out why and then let's go places where we can

get them into our pool and don't just accept that as an answer. So, we have to apply even though we may not get it. It doesn't mean you don't apply and go for it. And we can't take the easy way out of saying, well, you know what, that's never gonna happen here. If you don't go for it, it won't. So, you have to be willing to put yourself out there even if it means you don't get that position. You have to go for it. So, that's responsibility on both sides. Don't give them an easy way out of saying, nobody applied, there's nobody here. Don't give that easy reason, don't allow that easy reason to exist.

Critical Race Theory and Participants' Experiences with Race

Critical race theory (CRT) was used in this study as a conceptual framework to better understand and critically explore subtle racial inequities and the leadership experiences of African American presidents heading predominantly White institutions (see Chapter III). Of interest to this study, were the CRT tenets related to storytelling, the permanence of racism, interest convergence, and intersectionality. As an underrepresented group in higher education leadership, specifically at majority White institutions, African American participants in the qualitative phase of this study were able to provide their unique narrative and tell their stories of how race has influenced their professional journey in the academe. According to Delgado (1989), narratives told by people of color help to counter the ways in which the majority speak about issues related to race and racism (i.e. that racism or sexism is not a reality or the avowal of color-blindness). On the whole, participants were open and comfortable in sharing their perspectives related to race and gender. Participant storytelling provided this study with rich and in-depth information on the voices of racial minority leaders in higher education.

Published literature confirms that inequities exist for minorities in organizational leadership and power structures. Findings from the qualitative phase of this study bolster existing literature as a majority of participants agreed that race and gender had, to some extent, played a role, consciously or unconsciously, throughout their professional journey. These findings also lend support to the CRT tenet that “racism is normal and ordinary, not aberrant” (permanence of racism) with racism being conceptualized as unfair treatment, superior/inferior ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, and stereotypes (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 4). A majority of the participants discussed how they felt they were treated differently, held to higher standards, and over-scrutinized and questioned regarding their abilities as leaders. Other participants even described race and gender as an impediment throughout their career.

Furthermore, the interest convergence tenant in the CRT framework, which states that “because racism advances the interests of . . . Whites, there is little incentive to eradicate it,” was partially supported (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 4). Since participants felt that race had produced different, and sometimes negative, experiences and outcomes for them, according to the theory, White people have indirectly benefitted from their plight. For instance, President Joy discussed how she felt that her race and gender slowed her down when compared to colleagues with similar backgrounds who have moved more quickly into the office of the president. President Kenneth echoed a similar sentiment stating that “everybody doesn’t want a minority president” and he felt that his race hindered him from moving forward quicker than he did. Moreover, President Reginald offered an example of having and being evaluated by an all-White governing board. Despite his efforts to make his board aware of an issue that concerned him, he

stated that his board had taken no steps to address his concern—likely because members of his board were not directly affected by it.

Conversely, two participants were queried, as time permitted, about whether they felt their race was a factor in being selected president of their institution which was found to be characterized by documented instances of adverse conditions at the time of their appointment. The rationale here was that, according to CRT's interest convergence tenet, less desirable leadership roles are reserved for racial minority leaders while the more desirable leadership roles remain accessible for majority groups. However, President Reginald did not feel as though his race impacted the hiring decision. When asked if he had ever gotten the sense that he was an affirmative action hire, President Reginald was clear in noting that he was hired based on his previous merits and because he was the most qualified person. He stated:

No. Because they know. Like I said the [search] process is very, very public. And so, everyone had an opportunity to either sit in that room or watch it as it was being streamed to the campus community. And I got this job because I was the best of the three finalists. And again, it was gratifying that one of 'em was a White female who was the past president of [a prominent university]. So, I think they all know (laughs). They know my CV, they know my experience, they know my career.

Similarly, President Joy felt that she was hired because she was overqualified but did not dismiss the notion that race could have potentially played a role in her selection as president of Keys College. She explained:

I think that race always plays a role, you know, now whether it's positive or negative . . . I think that I was . . . so so so overqualified for a presidency that, you know, it would be hard [not to offer the position]. I mean, I've . . . had this huge career, I've been a provost before . . . So, I think it played a role but because of what I brought to the position it was hard for . . . and because I had already been in the [university] system . . . But it's definitely in the room and I think anyone who thinks it's not in the room is extremely naïve, extremely naïve.

Lastly, the topic of intersectionality was assumed to emerge throughout the course of the interview when female participants discussed their experiences with race. As anticipated, all of the female participants organically spoke about their experiences with gender without being queried. It was clear that the female participants' racial identity was not separate from their gender identity, supporting CRT's tenet that "no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 10). One of the participants did not feel as though she was affected by her race and gender and the remaining two participants did feel as though their multiple identities influenced their professional journey.

Summary

Taken together, the findings of the qualitative data provide rich descriptions of how participants perceive their leadership experiences, in general, and through a lens of race and gender. Several themes emerged during the data analysis and were categorized based on four main categories: the president's (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; (3) experiences with race and gender; and (4) perspectives on minority leadership. As it related to the participants' career paths, navigating the academic

pipeline, having access to opportunities, performing well in their roles, and frustrations with their previous job were all factors that led them to their current position.

As leaders, all of the participants seemed to embody a collaborative and inclusive style of leadership. According to the Situational Leadership Theoretical framework, participants were either likely to employ a coaching or supporting leadership style when working with their team. Other leadership attributes that were typical of participants in this sample was that they tended to lead by example and be accessible and approachable. Presidents in this study credited valuable mentorship experiences, experiences serving in leadership roles, and observing other leaders as being key to their leadership development. Moreover, during periods of institutional stability and instability, participants were most likely to respond similarly and consistently regardless of the circumstance.

Lastly, participants in the sample reported that both race and gender were influential aspects, although to varying extents, throughout their professional journey. A number of themes emerged when discussing the participants' minority status. For instance, race and gender were described among most participants as an impediment; a factor in being treated differently and held to higher standards; and as having an influence on decision making. Participants also discussed their unique experience as racial minority leaders at majority White institutions in varying ways, ranging from positive to challenging experiences. Participants' perspectives on the state of minority leadership in the academe reinforced that there is still a need to remedy the academic and leadership pipeline and also to enhance initiatives aimed at fostering a greater appreciation for diversity when making hiring and selection decisions. Critical Race Theory tenets related

to the storytelling, permanence of racism, and intersectionality were all supported by the data.

The findings of both the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study lend themselves to various implications for institutions of higher education and its constituents. These implications will be discussed further in the final chapter. The following section briefly discusses the integration of both quantitative and qualitative results and how they work together to explain the overall aims of this study.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The final reporting of findings for this explanatory mixed methods study consisted of mixing or integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. According to Creswell and Clark (2011), mixed methods interpretation is performed when both analyses have been completed to determine how the data attend to the mixed methods questions of the study. The two mixed methods research questions guiding this integration process are listed below and are addressed in the next section.

1. In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative results?
2. What is the overall interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data?

To review, the quantitative results of the study revealed that Black and White-led institutions tended to experience about the same frequency and magnitude of adverse conditions. However, small, yet, notable differences were observed between Black and White-led institutions, in that, institutions appointing Black presidents experienced more instances that were less than favorable and would likely adversely impact the stability of the organization. These differences suggested the possibility of glass cliff conditions and

that Black presidents might, inadvertently, be appointed under different organizational conditions than White presidents at PWIs.

Qualitative Data Supporting Quantitative Data

There were two main ways in which the qualitative findings helped to explain the initial quantitative findings. First, interview results helped to confirm a familiarity in dealing with institutional adversity among currently serving presidents. While quantitative findings revealed that African American presidents in the sample ($n = 20$) initially dealt with varying levels of adverse conditions at the time of their appointment, further interview data collection indicated that adverse conditions continued to persist for a subset of the study's sample ($n = 6$) well after they had been appointed. Specifically, five of the six participants stated that they were currently facing varying levels of institutional challenges at the time of the interview. For instance, President Reginald noted that he had to lead his "institution through budget cuts" and that they were "having a budget cut coming up." Similarly, President Kenneth stated that he's experienced not "having a budget for two years . . . a decrease in enrollment [and] increase [in] tuition . . . furloughs, layoffs, and all those kinds of things." Moreover, President Rosalind summed up her experience with race and leadership at a majority White institution faced with challenges by stating: "I think being a college president at a majority institution, that is in crisis, is an incredibly hard job."

A second way that the qualitative data helped to bolster the quantitative data is that interviews allowed participants to share their approaches to leading during periods of instability. A majority of participants identified with utilizing a consistent form of leadership during periods of institutional instability and stability by stating their response

would likely be the same in both situations. In fact, many of the participants conveyed a certain level of confidence when faced with institutional challenges. For example, half of the participants self-described, both directly and indirectly, as performing well during periods of organizational instability or crisis and having a knack for solving problems. President James, when recollecting on a time he was asked to lead a troubled program, perceived himself as doing “well in situations where there has to be drastic change and major decisions made.” Furthermore, President Joy spoke about how she likes “to jump high bars” and “to fix things.” Lastly, President Rosalind explained how she becomes “energized” by periods of institutional instability and slips into “problem solving mode.” She also discussed how she relies on her resilience and resolve as president to find a “solution to every problem” no “matter how bad things get.” Such data lends support to the notion that minority leaders possess leadership qualities that are suited to deal with organizational crises and challenges (i.e. think manager-think male paradigm vs. think crisis-think female/racial minority paradigm) (for reference see Bruckmüller et al., 2010; Cook et al., 2014c; Gartzia et al., 2012; Haslam et al., 2008; Ryan et al., 2011).

One thing to note, however, is an understanding that institutional instability and challenges are typical within colleges and universities (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). However, some leadership opportunities are simply better than others—that is, those that have less challenges to deal with. Attempting to quantify and observe differences in how Black and White presidents are faced with adverse conditions during their tenure is challenging as it is believed to be a subtle form of difference. However, analyzing such data is a method by which to try and understand the types of leadership

opportunities that administrators of color are offered and eventually obtain, particularly at majority White institutions.

Overall Interpretation of Dual Methodologies

Essentially, both methodologies aided in enhancing the study's research goals which consisted of gaining a better understanding of the unique and lived leadership experiences of racial minorities heading majority White institutions characterized by documented instances of adverse conditions. One aim of the study was to quantify and the other purpose was to understand. As Creswell and Clark (2011) suggested, quantitative methods alone were insufficient in addressing the study's research goals. Thus, both methodologies were necessary to achieving the aims of the research.

Taken together, the overall results of this study indicate that an association with minority status continues to influence and produce differences for persons of color and women in the workplace even after shattering the glass ceiling. Whether differences found occurred intentionally or unintentionally was neither captured by nor the focus of this study. From the data, the influence of race and gender on participants' leadership experiences appeared to produce both positive and negative effects. What is most concerning for post-secondary institutions to consider and remedy, however, is the negative impact that minority status can engender.

Additionally, the integrated findings offer rich, narrative data as it pertains to specific leadership styles, behaviors, and characteristics employed by African American college and university presidents. These findings are potentially noteworthy as such perspectives are practically absent from the leadership literature which often tends to focus on either, (1) differences between male and female leadership (Eagly & Chin,

2010) or (2) Black leadership as it pertains to politics/the Civil Rights Era and its intersection with religion (Walters & Smith, 1999; Williams, 1996). A discussion of how participants' perceptions of their leadership attributes relate to majority/general leadership attributes is offered in the final chapter.

As scant research exists exploring the topic of racial minority leadership in higher education settings, this study serves as a relevant contribution to the leadership scholarship, specifically relating to African American college and university presidents. It provides a means by which to examine the leadership opportunities that are offered and accepted by racial minority presidents. Furthermore, this study captures the voices of African American leaders as it regards their career path, leadership attributes, and experiences with race and gender in the academe. The final chapter offers the reader overall conclusions, implications for the field, and directions for future research.

CHAPTER VII – DISCUSSION

“Because the job [of the president] has many distinct challenges . . . developing a more diverse pool of senior leaders should be a priority for the entire higher education community” (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017, p. 61).

Introduction

This chapter offers an overview of the study and a discussion of its findings. Available extant literature pertaining to minority leadership is used to situate the study’s findings. The limitations of the study are also discussed. Moreover, implications for higher education practice and directions for future research are presented.

Survey data on American college and university presidents confirm the underrepresentation of Black individuals serving in the college and university presidency, especially when examining majority-serving institutions such as PWIs (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). For the small number of Black leaders who eventually obtain these elite roles and break through the well-known glass ceiling, of interest to this study, was gaining an understanding of the organizational conditions surrounding their appointments at PWIs in comparison to White leaders. Glass cliff studies have found supporting evidence that minority leaders are promoted to precarious or adverse leadership positions more often than their White male counterpart (Cook & Glass, 2013; Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Through a lens of race and leadership theory, the glass cliff concept provided a basis by which to critically examine and better understand subtle structural workplace inequities experienced by Black presidents in the academe.

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methodology and

implemented two phases of data collection. The initial quantitative phase utilized an archival, descriptive non-experimental research design whereas the subsequent qualitative phase employed a phenomenological research approach. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Are there observed differences in the prevalence and magnitude of adverse conditions experienced by Black presidents appointed to lead at PWIs when compared to White presidents?
2. What are the unique leadership experiences of African American presidents heading predominantly White institutions characterized by adverse conditions?

Discussion of Findings

Before presenting a discussion of the study's major findings, it is important to reiterate that scant literature exists examining the nature of Black leadership, in general, and specifically within higher education settings. General studies on Black leadership have often focused on its association with politics/Civil Rights and religion (Walters & Smith, 1999; Williams, 1996). Scholarship regarding leaders of color is limited and oftentimes does not disaggregate racial minority groups to reflect an individualized account of their experiences. Additionally, Jackson (2001a) noted that when attempting to review the literature on African American administrators at PWIs, one soon finds that very little is available. Moreover, there is a dearth of empirical data specifically exploring the lived experiences of African American presidents serving in majority White contexts (see Chapters II and III for review). Known studies specifically related to Black presidents at majority White institutions that were found consisted mainly of dissertation studies (Bridges, 2003; Bush, 1999; Robinson, 1996) and one biographical narrative of

African American presidents who had previously served at PWIs (Farris, 1999; King, 1999; Nelms, 1999). In addition to literature that exists, the results of this study will also be compared with recent survey data from the American Council on Education (ACE) president's report (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017, p. 61). The below discussion of the study's major findings focuses on the glass cliff phenomenon and African American presidents' (1) career path; (2) perceptions of their leadership; and (3) experiences with race and gender.

Glass Cliff. The quantitative phase of this study was conceptualized using the glass cliff framework which posits that women and racial minorities are promoted to adverse leadership positions more often than White males. Although frequency and magnitude data were roughly the same between the Black-led and White-led institutions, small, yet, nuanced differences were observed within the data. The cumulative results revealed that Black-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to six of the eight adverse conditions (tuition, retention, revenue, graduation, enrollment, and crises); whereas, White-led institutions experienced the least favorable circumstances as it related to only two of the eight adverse conditions (i.e. state support and endowment). As the data were descriptive in nature and not experimental, this study does not confirm the presence of glass cliff conditions. However, the observable differences noticed suggest that Black presidents at PWIs examined in this study were, in fact, appointed under different organizational conditions than White presidents at PWIs. Thus, pointing to the possibility of a glass cliff.

Scholarship related to the glass cliff is lacking, in that, it focuses largely on the phenomenon's impact on women leaders. However, the findings in this study do lend

support to the few glass cliff studies that have considered the racial and ethnic identities of leaders (Cook & Glass, 2014; Kulich, Ryan, & Haslam, 2014). Ryan and Haslam (2007) hypothesized that challenges of the glass cliff experienced by women leaders could also be extended and applied to members of other minority groups, such as racial and ethnic groups. This study provides some support for their hypothesis.

Career Path. First, it is important to note that the researchers' inability to identify more than 25 predominantly White institutions headed by Black individuals, following a national search, bolsters data collected in the most recent American Council on Education's publication. Their survey, which collected data from 1,546 college and university presidents, indicated that women and racial/ethnic minorities continue to be underrepresented in the office of the presidency (Gagliardi et al., 2017). Furthermore, they concluded that, despite small gains in minority representation, racial diversification of higher education's elite positions of leadership is occurring at a slow pace. This slow pace of change in racial diversification is indicative of the relatively small number of Black presidents that were located for this study. As it stands, the demographic profile of the typical college or university president remains to be White and male.

In the qualitative portion of this study, participants spoke about their career path to the presidency, perceptions of their leadership, and experiences with race and gender. Themes that emerged as factors that led them to their current role as president included, (1) the importance of the academic pipeline, (2) exposure to opportunities, and (3) frustrations with their previous job. The sample of presidents that were interviewed provided relevant information related to their career path to compare against profile data provided by the ACE report. Similar to other presidents, the majority of participants in

this study traversed a traditional academic affairs route to the presidency. All of the participants garnered faculty experience and held senior executive positions within academic affairs, which is the most common pathway to the presidency (Gagliardi et al., 2017; Socolow, 1978). Navigating a traditional academic route was particularly important in participants getting to the top. President Joy summed this idea up by stating:

I have known hardly any person of color who's taken an uncharacteristic route. So, I think it would be even harder for you as a Black woman or as a Black man to be one of those individuals that came from a route that's not classic, not through the regular academics . . . I don't know one African American dean of the school of business, there may be some out there, but I have not met any, or to be in the world of business, that someone's going to snob you up to be in this position . . . if you're talking about predominantly White, traditionally White institutions, I think that's an even heavier lift.

As indicated previously, African Americans historically entered the higher education workforce primarily serving in racialized roles such as, directors of TRIO programs, affirmative action officers, director of minority student affairs, and so forth (Jackson, 2001). However, these occupations are not considered as the “mainstream of administration (academic affairs), and rarely do persons in these positions get considered for top-level positions such as president or provost” (Jackson, 2001, p. 94). Thus, as President Joy explained, it is important for African Americans who aspire to become university heads to intentionally traverse the traditional route through academic affairs despite barriers that exist (for reference on barriers see Gardner, Barrett, & Pearson, 2014).

Lastly, one major finding emerged as being especially influential when discussing participants' pathway to the top. The data underscored the immense importance of being exposed to or presented with opportunities to participate in leadership activities and gain relevant administrative experience as a factor influencing one's career path. Many of the participants spoke about opportunities they were provided to, (1) be around those in key leadership positions and/or (2) to lead as being the spark for their interest in the presidency. Thus, opportunity and relevant leadership experiences were two very significant factors in regards to the career paths of participants in this study.

Wagner (2006) explained, however, that limited opportunities is still perceived to be a large challenge confronting young African American leaders, both in the private and public sector. Literature confirms that African American administrators are provided limited opportunities for advancement to display their leadership skills (Gardner, Barrett, & Pearson, 2014; Guillory, 2001). Furthermore, Kotter (1990) explained the criticality of being exposed to opportunities and learning experiences for leadership development. He stated:

Leaders almost always have had the opportunities during their twenties and thirties to actually try to lead, to take a risk, and to learn from both triumphs and failures. Such learning seems essential in developing a wide range of leadership skills and perspectives. (p. 109)

In this study, President James echoed this sentiment regarding the importance of experiencing successes and mistakes during his early years of leadership. He explained:

I sometimes cringe at the mistakes that I made and the naiveté that I had at the time. Somehow, I did well . . . I'm sure I'm a totally different leader now than I

was thirty years ago just because I've learned a whole lot more during that time . . . But when I think about it, I sometimes wonder how I got by because I know so much more now than back then and have handled so many more situations. I feel like now it's just not a situation that comes up that I don't feel confident in dealing with.

This association between opportunity and leadership experience, as it pertains to administrators of color, particularly African Americans aspiring to become college and university presidents, have important implications for higher education settings which are discussed later.

Perceptions of Leadership. During the study, participants discussed their leadership in terms of both their perceived style and the development of their style. Themes that emerged within this section included, (1) being collaborative and team oriented; (2) utilizing a coaching/supporting style of leadership as defined by SLT; (3) leading by example; (4) being accessible and approachable; (5) the importance of mentorship experiences, observation of other leaders, and first-hand experience in leadership development; and (6) employing consistent leadership during periods of organizational stability and instability. Two major findings will be discussed in relation to extant literature.

Collectively, the presidents described their leadership style, behaviors, and characteristics in multiple and similar ways. All six participants spoke of how their style of leadership was collaborative, inclusive and participatory. Additionally, participants discussed their orientation towards working with teams and use of supportive approaches when working with others.

No known studies exist specifically detailing or describing leadership traits that are unique to persons of color. Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) noted that few studies explore the intersectionality of race, gender, and other aspects of identity. As indicated prior, most studies related to the diversity of leaders have mainly focused on gender differences between male and female leaders. In this study, the two most commonly identified leadership styles among both male and female participants (i.e. collaboration and team approaches) were most closely aligned with empirical research on female approaches to leadership (Astin & Leland, 1991; Switzer, 2006). Moreover, participants identified with the coaching/supporting category of leadership within the Situational Leadership Theoretical framework. According to the SLT theory, both coaching and supporting categories of leadership entail a high level of engagement in supportive behaviors (Northouse, 2013). Being supportive or relational-oriented is also indicative of a feminine associated leadership trait (Jablonski, 1996; Switzer, 2006).

Conversely, participants' identification with also employing directive or task-oriented behaviors point to the use of traits associated with male leadership (Eagly & Johannesen, 2001; Korabik, 1990). Additionally, one female president spoke about how she perceived herself as being a "decisive" leader and all three of the male presidents identified as being autocratic yet democratic. Both decisiveness and autocracy are traits within the literature that are descriptive of male leadership (Eagly & Johannesen, 2001; Switzer, 2006). Taken together, it appeared that participants' leadership approaches were most reflective of a combination of both male and female leadership characteristics or, an androgynous style of leadership. Androgynous leadership consists of utilizing both

masculine and feminine leadership traits (Korabik, 1990). This concept has gained widespread acceptance.

Based on these findings, it is argued that successful and effective leaders, regardless of differences in identity, likely share similar leadership styles, traits, and characteristics. This idea was best described by President Reginald who stated, “I don’t know if my leadership style . . . [has] any unique components because the components that may define my leadership style you’ll probably find in varying degrees in every successful leader.” Likewise, Korabik (1990) explained that individuals who hold similar leadership roles and perform similar responsibilities are not likely to differ in regards to personality, leadership style, motivation, or effectiveness.

Participants also shared similarities in regards to the development of their leadership style. As mentioned earlier, experiences to observe other leaders and engage in leadership responsibilities were very instrumental in participants’ leadership development. In regards to mentorship, most of the participants acknowledged the influence that mentorship played in their development as leaders. Participation in leadership programs and/or establishing relationships with mentees was how participants described their mentorship experiences. Half of the participants acknowledged participating in leadership fellowships/programs and only half (two of which had also participated in leadership fellowships/programs) specifically named mentors who had influenced their development as leaders. President Joy was vocal in noting that she was “not a good example” of someone who had been mentored. President Reginald also explained that his race likely played a role in “how he was mentored or not.”

Available literature from the 1990s indicate that a lack of mentoring and

networking was one of several challenges faced by African Americans in higher education (Holmes, 2004). A lack of mentoring and support has also been associated with an inability to retain people of color within institutions of higher education (Jones, 2001). Scholars often identify mentoring as an important method in helping to increase the racial representation of administrators of color in post-secondary contexts (Jones, 2001). However, the findings of this study indicate that lack of or poor mentorship does not prevent participants, such as Presidents Joy or Reginald, from obtaining senior leadership roles. So, although the right kind of mentoring is beneficial, it may not be necessary to one's professional advancement goals. Whether the mentorship provided to participants was congruent with mentorship provided to White leaders was not addressed in this study but is a fruitful area of further research.

Experiences with Race and Gender. Participants were also asked to share their experiences with race and gender in the academe both generally and as it pertained to their current role as president. Overall findings from this discussion concluded that (1) race was influential for most participants throughout their professional journey; (2) most participants acknowledged being treated differently or held to different standards; (3) race influenced decision making to varying extents; (4) gender compounded the effects of race for most of the female participants; and (5) participants described their experiences as racial minority leaders at majority White institutions quite differently. Major findings related to the influence of race and gender on the leadership experiences of participants are discussed below.

Most participants expressed that race had influenced their professional journey in varying ways. Some of the participants spoke about how they felt their race had slowed

them down and contributed to them being questioned and over-scrutinized in regards to their ability to lead. Other participants noted feeling as though they were held to higher standards than White leaders. Additionally, some of the participants discussed how they had not received appropriate recognition for significant accomplishments made at their institutions. Lastly, other participants spoke about the influence of their race in making decisions that were fair. Other scholars have noted the influence of race in the experiences of African American administrators at predominantly White institutions. For example, they report that African American administrators within majority settings experience both institutional and individual racism, having their views ignored and their authority challenged, being resisted in their role, being held to higher standards than others, and being excluded from informal networks (Gardner et al., 2014; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Rolle, Davies, & Banning, 2000).

Although aspects related to gender were not a primary aim of this study, it was expected to emerge as a salient factor during qualitative data collection and analysis. As anticipated, two of the three female participants mentioned how gender compounded the issues they faced in the academe. Having this dual burden related to one's association with multiple identities (i.e. race and gender) is congruent with scholarship regarding "*double jeopardy*" (Kawahara & Bejarano, 2009) or "*racialized sexism*" (Bell & Nkomo, 2001) that women of color face within organizations. For President Joy, in particular, she found it rather difficult to determine or "hard to parse out" the extent to which race and gender affect her and which of the two play a greater role in experiences she encounters as a minority leader.

Limitations of the Study

As with most research, this study has its own set of limitations that should be taken into account when reviewing and interpreting findings. These limitations are provided below.

Sample Size. One large limitation, particularly as it pertained to the quantitative portion of the study, was sample size. Due to the low number of Black people leading predominantly White institutions, it was understood at the onset of the research design that locating these leaders would be challenging. For consistency, the only institutions observed were public, 4-year PWIs which served to further narrow the selection pool. Unfortunately, increasing sample size within the parameters set for this study was outside the control of the researcher. The search process yielded only 20 currently serving Black presidents at PWIs for which data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System could be accessed. At the onset of the study, it was hoped to locate between 40 and 50 currently serving Black presidents at PWIs so that a sufficient amount of data could be analyzed. However, the researcher was restricted to analyzing the data that was available. In the event that sample size or sample parameters are broadened, stronger conclusions could likely be drawn about the topic of interest. Sample size was less of an issue with the qualitative portion of the study as the anticipated number of participants ($n = 6$) agreed to participate.

Time Constraints and Absence of Face-to-Face Interaction. For the qualitative portion of the study, there were two main limitations. Taking into consideration the demanding nature of the role of college and university presidents and participant fatigue, interviews were scheduled for only sixty-minute intervals. However, for some

participants, the interview protocol had to be adapted to accommodate time constraints such as, time lapsing or because participants needed to conclude the interview early due to other obligations. Following data collection, it was concluded that 90-minute interview sessions or, multiple, shorter interviews might have better served the interests of this study. The effects of constraints on time presented challenges, although minimal, during data analysis.

Additionally, participants were given the option to select between engaging in a video or phone interview. All of the participants opted to take part in a phone interview. Thus, disadvantages related to phone communication arose. For instance, rapport building was affected and the researcher was unable to visibly assess non-verbal forms of communication such as, body language and facial expressions. Nonetheless, all of the participants were very welcoming and willing to assist in the goals of the study.

Generalizability and Transferability. Purposeful sampling was intentionally employed. Participant inclusion for this study was limited to currently serving, Black presidents at public, 4-year predominantly White institutions. As such, findings from both the quantitative and qualitative phases should be interpreted with caution. The results might not necessarily be representative of the perspectives and experiences of other racial minority groups of administrators or Black presidents serving at other institutional types, such as HBCUs.

Implications for Higher Education Practice

This study lends itself to a number of practical considerations for institutions of higher education who are committed to diversity and inclusion. Of those to be discussed

include, attending to the pipeline problem, cultivating and creating leadership opportunity, and addressing forms of institutional bias.

Intentionally Attending to the Pipeline Problem. As post-secondary institutions become more diverse, there is an awareness that individuals working within these contexts should also be proportionally represented. The underrepresentation of people of color in key positions of higher education senior leadership is alarming. Thus, any efforts to increase racial representation in the academe must begin with a consideration of how to correct the pipeline problem for minorities. Preparing young professionals of color to ensure they are equipped and poised to carry out leadership functions should be a priority of colleges and universities. Since earning an advanced degree and traversing the traditional academic pathway (i.e. faculty then administration) is characteristic of the pathway to the college and university presidency (Gagliardi et al., 2017), initial efforts to remedy issues with the pipeline should focus on the educational and professional challenges that people of color experience early on in their careers.

As President Joy noted, the pipeline problem for women and individuals of color is a “multi-level issue”, usually beginning at the post-secondary level, that is riddled with additional challenges of racism and sexism. Similarly, Shorter (2014) noted that Black students in her study conceptualized the pipeline as “an academic path laden with hurdles” rather than a means by which to frame one’s career. Participants noted not having any faculty models who looked like them and being unaware that the professoriate was a career option as reasons they chose not to enter the academe (Shorter, 2014). Therefore, critically assessing both individual and institutional factors contributing to the low number of individuals of color earning doctorates and deliberately working to

counter those challenges is necessary. For women and people of color who eventually enter the professoriate, understanding individual and institutional factors that hinder them from obtaining tenure or being promoted to administrative roles is also warranted.

Moreover, understanding leadership aspirations among women and people of color earning advanced degrees or beginning their professional careers might also be promising in helping to address pipeline issues. Several presidents in this study noted that they did not initially have aspirations of becoming a college president. Little is known about the aspirations of those who eventually become college and university presidents. However, when surveying 1,600 college and university senior administrators, Umbach (2003) found that most of the respondents did not have aspirations of becoming a president. Interestingly, his data indicated a relationship between race and presidential aspirations. He found that African American participants were significantly more likely than White participants to aspire to the presidency (Umbach, 2003). This finding has important implications for higher education practice and preparing the future generation of college and university leaders.

Lastly, when considering the significance of mentorship and role modeling on leadership achievement (Carozza, 2002; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Madsen, 2012; Switzer, 2006), it is important to remedy the inadequate mentorship and lack of role models often described (even in this study) among minorities (Carozza, 2002; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Holmes, 2004; Jones, 2001). For example, Branch (2001) recommended that PWIs aggressively recruit African American graduate students so that they can be encouraged into the pipeline by other faculty of color. However, as Holmes (2004) noted, the small number of African American senior-level faculty and administrators that African

American students are likely to encounter in graduate programs “precludes many mentor-protege relationships of the same race” (p. 31). Therefore, it is important that White faculty recognize their privilege associated with being the dominant group in the professoriate and make efforts to support and encourage students of color who lack faculty of color role models through the pipeline. Though sharing similar characteristics, such as race, are important in developing mentor relationships (Leon, Dougherty, & Maitland, 1997; Thomas, 1990), students in Lee’s (1999) study reported that race was a secondary factor. Institutions and higher education agencies who boast of their commitment to diversity should actively demonstrate it by creating opportunities and experiences that move young aspiring leaders of color through the pipeline.

Creating Opportunity. Before researchers can fully understand the experiences of Black college and university presidents at PWIs, their representation in the academe must first increase. Therefore, developing and nurturing a pool of minority executive leaders should be a key focus of colleges and universities (Gagliardi et al., 2017). As revealed in this study, being exposed to and having the chance to participate in leadership experiences were very important in the career path of the presidents interviewed. As such, there is a need to shift the rhetoric from providing access to creating additional opportunity. Institutions of higher education, particularly traditionally White institutions, have made great strides in being less exclusionary and more accessible to minority groups. However, access does not necessarily translate into opportunity as some barriers and challenges remain for women and individuals of color even after gaining entry into the higher education workforce.

As such, intentional planning and forethought should be given to creating

initiatives and programs that produce relevant and useful leadership opportunities for individuals of color to engage in and be successful. Such initiatives and programming should be institution-specific with the goal of (1) impacting marginalized groups currently serving at the institution and/or (2) attracting members of underrepresented groups to the institution. Guillory (2001) recommended cultivating leadership potential among African American administrators at PWIs by simply providing them with opportunities to lead. Furthermore, Jackson (2001) noted that colleges and universities should “support and endorse the professional aspirations of African American administrators” and reward their efforts with “promotions and new and expanding responsibilities” (p.105).

Additionally, Jackson (2001) recommended that institutions implement the following to help retain African American administrators at PWIs: (1) provide an orientation and mentoring program for junior and senior African American administrators; (2) endorse the ACE Fellowship program for individuals who have aspirations of serving in senior leadership positions; and (3) develop an institution-specific career enhancement internship program for African American administrators. A promising and hopeful finding of the ACE president’s study was that 45% of presidents surveyed indicated having initiatives in place to attract women and racial/ethnic minorities (Gagliardi et al., 2017).

Efforts embracing, encouraging, and committing to opportunity growth for minorities must begin at high levels of institutional management and be shared by the campus community. Cox (1993) posited that leadership requires:

. . . champions of the cause of diversity who will take strong personal stands on the need for change, role-model the behaviors required for change, and assist with the work of moving the organization forward . . . the support and genuine commitment of top management is especially crucial” (p. 230).

Thus, support and commitment should be provided from top levels of management and implementation of initiatives aimed at creating and fostering leadership opportunities for minorities should be departmental/office specific. Individual campus departments and offices should purposefully work to attract and nurture talent from diverse groups. Cox (1993) recommended the implementation of mentoring programs, diverse committees, targeted career development programs, institutional sponsored social events, and support groups as a means to eliminate or reduce barriers to entry and participation. Lastly, the onus to increase minority representation in key positions of leadership should not lie solely with minority groups. It is essential that women and people of color have allies from the majority group who are willing to help champion diversification efforts.

Addressing Racial and Gender Bias. Branch (2001) noted that, in addition to other challenges, African Americans have to deal with subtle forms of discrimination in the workplace. The subtle nature of race and racism did appear to influence the experiences of African American presidents in this study to varying degrees. From the small differences in adverse conditions that were found among Black and White presidents appointed to PWIs, to the ways in which participants spoke about their experiences with race in the academe, it is believed that subtle forms of racism occur within post-secondary work spaces. An awareness that race produces negative or different experiences for people of color in 21st century higher education warrants

attention and further investigation. The influence of race should not be ignored by individuals in colleges and universities, especially those in positions of authority, regardless of whether it directly impacts them. Directly addressing forms of individual and institutional biases when noticed is one method for remedying issues related to race in the academe. When speaking about how he deals with individuals who subtly challenge his authority, President Kenneth stated that he addresses “the issue openly. I don’t have to beat around the bush. I don’t, I just say it.”

Another form of institutional bias embedded in the selection or hiring process is described by Cox (1993) as the “similar to me” phenomenon. Cox (1993) noted that selection decisions are largely influenced by the degree to which the decision maker views the candidate as being similar to him/herself. A number of the participants spoke about this phenomenon in the study. Specifically, when asked his perspective on the reasons for the low number of Black presidents leading PWIs, President Kenneth responded that there are “some people who just have challenges in choosing people who don’t look like them.” President James talked about this concept in terms of individuals having a comfort level with “people who [are] like [them].” Lastly, President Joy noted how people can “question people, anyone who looks different, [or] has a different background.” Being aware of and reducing such bias that might occur during the hiring process is necessary. Gagliardi et al., (2017) reported that presidents surveyed were cognizant of the need to diversify higher education and the leadership pipeline by reducing and eliminating gender and racial bias. In an effort to reduce bias in management systems, Cox (1993) suggested that organizations perform culture and

systems audit and utilize diversity task forces and special committees that monitor organizational policy and practices.

Directions for Future Research

More Research on the Glass Cliff, Race, and Leadership. Research extending the quantitative portion of this study is warranted. The differences found point to the possibility of glass cliff conditions experienced by racial minority leaders at majority White institutions. To address issues with sample size, investigating other racial minority groups and White women collectively is an option. Cook and Glass (2014a) did so in their glass cliff focused study which analyzed data from their sample of “*occupational minorities*”—that is, White women as well as men and women of color. Also, more rigorous data analysis techniques, besides the descriptive statistics utilized in this study, should be employed for future studies.

More Research on Administrators of Color. Limited empirical research exists that examine administrators of color within post-secondary settings. Much of the literature on the topic is outdated, dating back to the 1990s, yet cited frequently in 21st century scholarship. Under the assumption that some progress has been made in regards to race, leadership, and the academe, present-day research should attempt to capture and gauge such advancements. Moreover, considering the large role that mentoring plays in professional advancement, future research should focus on understanding the nature and quality of mentorship experiences received by African American administrators and areas for improvement. Furthermore, there is a need to understand the experiences of other administrators of color who do not identify racially as being Black. Additionally, more research is warranted as it relates to tracking what occurs after racial minorities break

through the glass ceiling. This study attempts to provide information related to post-glass ceiling experiences but further research is needed. Lastly, to address the pipeline problem, future research should aim to, as President Joy explained, identify factors that discourage minorities from entering and continuing in the professoriate.

Addressing Bias in the Academe. Although difficult, attempts to empirically measure racial and gender biases within institutions and among individuals responsible for making hiring decisions are needed. The “similar to me” phenomenon that emerged as a topic of discussion among participants in this study suggest that hiring decisions may be influenced by mechanisms that are not overtly discernable. Future empirical research should attempt to measure the extent to which racial and gender biases affect the hiring outcomes of minority individuals at predominantly White institutions.

Strategies for African American presidents at PWIs. In his work, Guillory (2001) provided strategies for African American administrators navigating the complex terrain at PWIs. This information proves beneficial for individuals who are currently in the administrative pipeline and have aspirations of becoming a college or university president. Nelms’ (1999) work is similar, in that, it provides personal narratives of African American presidents who had previously served at PWIs. Accounts of personal experiences and strategies on how to be successful as racial minority leaders serving in majority White contexts from presidents who have since retired, are valuable pieces of information that should be available to individuals who share similar professional aspirations.

Conclusion

This study has offered a unique perspective to the leadership literature as it

pertains to race and higher education leadership conceptualized through the glass cliff framework. Conclusions of the research indicate that small differences exist in regards to the type of leadership appointments that Black and White presidents are offered and ultimately accept at predominantly White institutions. Furthermore, the study fills a large gap in the leadership literature as it relates to both race and gender. Data were collected from African American presidents at PWIs regarding their career path, leadership attributes, and experiences with race and gender in the academe. Overall, most participants traversed a traditional academic route to the presidency, perceived their leadership style to be collaborative and supportive, and felt that race, as well as gender, had influenced their professional journey to varying extents.

Many advancements have been made in the educational and employment attainment of Blacks in the United States. The participants in this study represent professionals and scholars who have overcome the many barriers said to exist within systems of higher education. These individuals provide a model for aspiring students, faculty, and administrators of color. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement. President Joy summed it up best when referencing the recent American Council on Education's report which indicated a slow change in diversifying the college and university presidency. She stated, "there's still much work to be done." Understanding that the work is never truly done should motivate and encourage social justice scholars, faculty, staff, and administrators to uphold their written commitments of diversity and accept the challenge of ensuring that institutions of higher education reach parity among all forms of difference.

APPENDIX A – DESCRIPTION OF IPEDS VARIABLES

1. *Published in-state tuition and fees*: the price of attendance for full-time, first-time undergraduate students for the full academic year
2. *Total all revenues and other additions*: the sum of all revenues and other additions to net assets
3. *State appropriations*: the amounts received by the institution through acts of a state legislative body, except grants and contracts and capital appropriations
4. *Value of endowment assets at the end of the fiscal year*: the gross investments of endowment funds, term endowment funds, and funds functioning as endowment for the institution and any of its foundations and other affiliated organizations
5. *Full-time retention rate*: the percent of the (fall full-time cohort from the prior year minus exclusions from the fall full-time cohort) that re-enrolled at the institution as either full- or part-time the following year (note: IPEDS did not collect retention information prior to 2003)
6. *Fall enrollment*: the grand total of men and women enrolled for credit
7. *Graduation rate data, 150% time to complete*: the grand total of men and women in cohort

APPENDIX B – IRB APPROVAL LETTER



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.5997 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/research/institutional.review.board

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 17052301

PROJECT TITLE: A Qualitative Exploration of Black College and University Presidents Leadership Experiences at Predominantly White Institutions

PROJECT TYPE: New Project

RESEARCHER(S): Melandie McGee

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education and Psychology

DEPARTMENT: Educational Research and Administration

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: N/A

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 05/25/2017 to 05/24/2018

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.

Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX C – FORMAL RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear [President's Name Here],

I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview for a research study. This project aims to qualitatively explore the leadership experiences of Black college and university presidents/chancellors who head majority-serving or predominantly White institutions. Additionally, this study seeks to contribute to the sparse scholarship on administrators of color by (1) examining specific leadership styles/behaviors/traits employed by Black presidents/chancellors in these unique contexts, as well as, (2) gaining an understanding of the influence that race and gender has on their leadership experiences. This study will inform my dissertation research for my doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM).

In order to be respectful of your time, the interview for this study will take approximately 1 hour and will be scheduled at a time and date of your choice, via telephone or video. Interviews for this project will be conducted from June to July of 2017. (Note: If you are willing to participate but the interview time frame does not work with your schedule, please advise as I am willing to adjust according to your availability).

This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Southern Mississippi's Institutional Review Board which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. I have enclosed the informed consent form that will provide you with a more detailed description of this study and information pertaining to my role in ensuring participants' confidentiality and anonymity.

As a follow up to this letter, I will contact you via e-mail to inquire of your willingness to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (601) xxx-xxxx, or at melandie.mcgee@usm.edu. Additionally, you may contact the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Eric Platt, at (601) xxx-xxxx, or eric.platt@usm.edu.

Sincerely,

Melanie McGee, Doctoral Candidate

Encl. Informed Consent Form

APPENDIX D – FOLLOW UP RECRUITMENT EMAIL

SUBJECT LINE: Follow up: Research Study on Black College and University Presidents/Chancellors

Dear [President's Name Here],

My name is Melandie McGee and I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Administration program at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am writing this email as a follow-up to a recent letter (attached) that I sent to invite you to participate in an interview for my dissertation study. The study aims to qualitatively explore the leadership experiences of Black college and university presidents/chancellors who head majority-serving or predominantly White institutions.

The interviews for this project will be conducted from June to July of 2017 of 2017. (Note: If you are willing to participate but the interview time frame does not work with your schedule, please advise as I am willing to adjust according to your availability). In order to be respectful of your time, the interviews will last approximately 1 hour and will be scheduled at a time and date of your choice, via telephone or video.

If you are willing to participate in an interview, will you please provide me with the name and e-mail address/phone number for the person I should contact to schedule an interview appointment with you? Also, please let me know if you prefer a video or telephone interview.

For your convenience, in the attached letter that was mailed, you will find the informed consent form for this project. The form provides a more detailed description of this study and information pertaining to my role in ensuring participants' confidentiality and anonymity. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 601-xxx-xxxx, or at melandie.mcgee@usm.edu. Additionally, you may contact the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Eric Platt, at 601-xxx-xxxx, or eric.platt@usm.edu.

Sincerely,

Melandie McGee, Doctoral Candidate
Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Research and Administration
The University of Southern Mississippi
Email: melandie.mcgee@usm.edu
Phone: 601-xxx-xxxx

APPENDIX E – APPROVED ORAL CONSENT FORM



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SIGNED CONSENT

SIGNED CONSENT PROCEDURES
<p>This document must be completed and signed by each potential research participant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information detailed in the Oral Presentation must be discussed with all potential research participants before signing this form. Signed copies of this form should be provided to all participants. The witness to consent may be either a third party, such as a translator, or the Principal Investigator if he or she is able to ensure that all of the participants' questions have been adequately addressed. <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Last Edited February 28th, 2017</p>

Today's date:		
PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project Title: A Qualitative Exploration of Black College and University Presidents Leadership Experiences at Predominantly White Institutions		
Principal Investigator: Melandie McGee	Phone: 601-xxx-xxxx	USM Email: melandie.mcgee@usm.edu
College: Education and Psychology	Department: Educational Research and Administration	
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH		
<p>Participant's Name:</p> <p>Consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purpose, including any experimental procedures, were explained. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.</p> <p>The opportunity to ask questions regarding the research and procedures was given. Participation in the project is completely voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. All personal information is strictly confidential, and no names will be disclosed. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided if that information may affect my willingness to continue participation in the project.</p> <p>Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided above. This project and consent procedures have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-5997, irb@usm.edu.</p>		
<p>_____</p> <p>Research Participant</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Witness</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>	

APPENDIX F – DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

1. How do you identify racially/ethnically?

2. What is your gender?

____ Male ____ Female ____ Other (Please identify) _____

3. Age: _____

4. Highest degree earned: _____

5. Academic discipline in highest degree:

6. How many total years of professional/career experience do you have in higher education?

7. Besides your current position, what other types of institutions have you previously served at? (e.g. public/private; 2-year/4-year; small/medium large; PWIs/MSIs).

8. What was the position you held prior to assuming your current position?

9. What other positions have you held during your tenure working in higher education?
(e.g. Instructor, Professor, Academic Dean, Provost, etc.)

10. Are you the first Black to serve in your current leadership role?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Not Sure

APPENDIX G – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. By sharing your experiences with me, I can better understand the leadership experiences of racial minority leaders at majority-serving institutions. The interview questions are open-ended, and I would like for you to tell me only what you are comfortable sharing. Your participation is completely voluntary, and during any point of the interview you may refuse to answer certain questions or withdraw from the study without penalty or prejudice. No potential risks have been foreseen and every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. With that being said, are you still willing to move forward?

- Confirm oral consent. Do you have any questions before we begin?
- Lastly, I would like to audio record our phone interview so that I can transcribe it into written form for data analysis. Will this be okay?

(Background/Career Path)

1. Could you tell me a little about yourself such as where you're from, your educational and professional background, etc.?
2. How did you come to be interested in being president of this institution? (Probing Questions: How were you recruited—were you solicited to apply? Can you describe the search process?)

(Perceptions of Leadership)

3. How would you describe your individual style of leadership? (Probing Question: Your engagement in directive and/or supportive behaviors?)
4. How did you develop your current style of leadership? (Probing Question: Can you speak to any mentorship experiences that were particularly salient?)
5. As a leader, how do you respond to periods of organizational instability such as increased tuition, decreased enrollment or retention, or an institutional crisis? (Probing Questions: Do you respond similarly or differently during periods of organizational stability? If differently, how so and why?)

(Race and Leadership)

6. How, if at all, has your race influenced (positive or negative) your advancement to the presidency?

- 7 Has your racial background influenced the way you make decisions as a leader, if so, how?
- 8 Has your authority as president been questioned or challenged?
- 9 What is it like being a minority leader at a majority-serving institution?
- 10 In your opinion, do you think that you are held to a different standard as an African American president/chancellor than your White counterpart and if so, in what ways?
- 11 What does it mean to you to be the first African American leader of a predominantly White institution?
- 12 Have you experienced what you consider racist attitudes or behaviors by members of your administration or staff and if so, in what contexts?

(Intersections of race, gender, and leadership)

- 13 As a woman of color, how has both gender and race influenced, if at all, your current leadership experience?

(Wrap-up)

- 14 In your estimation, what is the underlying reason(s) for the low number of Blacks leading PWIs?

Post-Interview Wrap-up:

- Thank participant again
- Explain that I will be in contact to follow-up

APPENDIX H – COVER LETTER/INTERVIEW FOLLOW UP

Dear [Executive Assistant's Name Here],

My name is Melandie McGee and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi. We spoke via email earlier this year. As part of my dissertation research, President (insert name here) recently participated in an interview with me regarding my study. The contents in this folder are only meant for President (insert name here). The sealed transcript of our interview, which is included in the separate stamped **confidential** envelope, is only for his/her review and is confidential. If you would, please forward the envelope directly to President (insert name here). I appreciate your assistance in this matter.

If you are unable to deliver these documents to President (insert name here), please contact me via one of the methods below.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email, melandie.mcgee@usm.edu, or via phone, 601-xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Melandie McGee
Doctoral Candidate
University of Southern Mississippi

APPENDIX I – INTERVIEW FOLLOW UP LETTER

Hello [President's Name Here],

I would like to thank you again for your willingness to speak with me so openly and candidly in regards to my dissertation research about the experiences of minority presidents at majority-serving institutions. Your contribution was informative, insightful, and very much appreciated. I really enjoyed speaking with you.

I want to touch base and let you know that I have finished transcribing our (insert date here) interview. The transcript is included in this envelope. If you would like, feel free to review the transcript for its accuracy. This transcript is a word for word depiction of the interview. Please try not to get distracted by things such as sentence structure. I am most interested in whether you feel that it is an accurate representation of your experiences and if there is more information that you want to have included.

Please make note of any errors that you might find when reviewing the transcript. If there is any section you would like removed, please note this as well. Finally, feel free to provide any additional information or clarification on any topic you wish. In the event that you do have changes or additions, please let me know at your earliest convenience. You may list the changes in a Word document and email it to me at the email address listed below. Or you can give me a call at the phone number listed below and let me know what changes/additions you would like for me to make.

Please advise me of any edits to the transcript you may have by 8/25/17. If there are no requested changes, you can email me to let me know or simply not respond. However, if I don't hear back by the above date, I will assume that you are comfortable with the accuracy of the transcript.

Lastly, your transcript will only be seen by me and will only be used by me for data analysis. It will **not** be included in the appendices of my dissertation. Moreover, every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality. Pseudonyms for your name and institution will be created as well as for any other identifying information (e.g. names of other people or places you have mentioned will be provided pseudonyms or will not be mentioned at all).

I want to thank you once again for participating in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at, melandie.mcgee@usm.edu, or via phone at, 601-xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Melandie McGee
University of Southern Mississippi

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