

ILLUMINATING THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF COLOR VOICE THROUGH
THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCES: CONTEXTUALIZING MENTORING &
RESILIENCE

by

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DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate this work to the Almighty God and my Heavenly Father. Your omnipresent guidance, unconditional love, protection, and wisdom reminds me that all things are possible with you. It is awe inspiring to witness your transformative work in and through me. I am immensely thankful and grateful for my family who have molded me into the scholar I am becoming. Intentionally this work is dedicated to my indefatigable Black brothers: Jhon Jedediah Diyell Coe, Roderick Barnes, Gerard Van Garlic, Jarrett Leon Lampkin, Michael McCord Jr., and Garfield Colin Yuille for being authentic reflections of God's love and light through whom motivate me to ascend to my highest and best self... I am because you are. My sisters... Kesha T. Drakeford, Tanya Hollins, Dr. S. Rene Jones and Veronica Scott are the perspicacious strong women who encourage, love, support and challenge me always. Gabrielle and Rafa Rios-Fraticelli my immediate family who grew out of friendship. Thank you for being true blessings and deeply influencing my life.

For the evolving scholars of color always remember Lorraine Hansberry's quote, "I wish to live because life has within it that which is good, that which is beautiful, and that which is love, Therefore, since I have known all of these things, I have found them to be reason enough—I wish to live. Moreover, because this is so, I wish others to live for generations and generations and generations and generations." -To Be Young Gifted and Black.

Embrace that all things are possible... keep disrupting dominant narratives.

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological qualitative research study sought to examine the lived experiences of eight full-time faculty and staff of color at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The study's design illuminated the voice of the faculty and staff of color by providing in-depth insight to how mentoring experiences have affected the development of resilience among full-time faculty and staff of color and differentiating how intersectional identities of faculty and staff members of color have impacted the development of resilience or the mentoring they have received. Hence, this study contributed to the existing body of literature

The research question guiding this study was: How do faculty and staff of color at a Central Texas HSI utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist in their careers, given the intersectionality of their identities? Data collection sources for this study included two 60-to 90-minute individual interviews with eight full-time faculty and staff members employed at an HSI, archival data, a researcher's journal, and field notes. Taylor-Powell and Renner's (2003) phenomenological data analysis method was employed as a data analysis methodology.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION (BACKGROUND)

Understanding the way student affairs professionals experience the campus racial climate is important because they are often responsible for promoting diversity on college campuses and developing policies and programs that enhance the involvement and success of diverse students. (Garcia, 2016, p. 20)

As a first generation college student who hailed from New York City, I had big dreams and aspirations to improve my own and my family's financial standing from lower socio-economic status to a more comfortable one. During my senior year of high school, I distinctly remember White students being encouraged by White guidance counselors to apply to prestigious colleges and universities. On the other hand, I was encouraged by these same staff members to attend vocational school. Also, I recall staff of color encouraging me to attend a historically Black college or university (HBCU). Neither of my parents had attended college, but emphatically encouraged me to become employed, join the military or go to college. Among my peers there was no discussion of going to college, but instead a focus on working after high school. Intrinsicly, I knew that there was a better option for me. After completing high school, I took a job working near home and attended a church trip to Rochester, New York. During this weekend trip, I discovered the State University of New York (SUNY), College at Brockport. Subsequently, I researched the school, applied and was accepted.

My college career began with taking four classes during the pre-college summer enrichment preparation program prior to my first fall semester at SUNY Brockport in 1988. Being a young adult of color in upstate New York, far away from everything that

was familiar, was truly challenging. However, the staff of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) assisted me in successfully developing skills to navigate the complex terrain of higher education. The summer program staff would provide different seminars on effective study techniques as well as being a successful student. Although, most useful were the sessions where we would process and share what we were feeling and experiencing in the summer program. This enabled me to begin my journey of self-reflection.

Other individuals were significant to my trajectory outside of the Brockport summer enrichment program. My first residence director (RD) was a Black man who was completing a master's degree in public administration and was always encouraging me and others in our academic pursuits. He later became my mentor and went on to complete a doctorate in Higher Education Administration. Faculty played an integral and transformative role in my undergraduate experience as well. My first Black professor played a significant role in my academic development. I took an institutional racism course and began to think critically and better understand marginalization and institutional racism in America. This professor supported and challenged me and became another mentor. Subsequently, I traveled on a study abroad trip with him to Ghana, West Africa, during the spring semester of my first year of college. Over the course of my college career, I excelled academically because I had good role models, staff support, studied long hours, worked hard, and sought tutoring assistance before falling behind. Outside of the classroom, I experienced institutional racism and bigotry from people with limited exposure to people who were different from themselves.

These college experiences provided much needed wisdom and insight about myself and others. Although there were real challenges in my undergraduate experience, I learned that it was crucial to be in service to others. The ability to help others to connect with their own resilience was key. This is what faculty and staff helped me do, build my resilience. This resulted in me undertaking numerous student leadership roles to assist others in successfully navigating college. This path continued as I have now worked at a total of nine colleges and universities over the last twenty-five years, providing me firsthand insight as an adult educator and student affairs practitioner. My first professional role outside of my undergraduate/graduate institution was as the inaugural director of diversity programming and assistant director of residential living at a private highly selective liberal arts institution in Towson, Maryland. Initially, I was informed that my role was to support Black students because they were experiencing significant problems both inside and outside of the classroom. I was one of three total faculty and staff members of color at the school. After successful implementation of intentional programs and support systems for students of color, I was praised for their success. Black students and other students of color had made significant connections with me and I served as a role model and mentor to several of them.

However, when things around diversity did not go well, I was blamed. At this juncture, I began to understand that responsibility for diversity was being placed solely on my shoulders. Hence, other marginalized student populations (Asians, LGBTQIA, students with disabilities, etc.) voiced their concerns about this as well as their concerns for the lack of support they experienced from my role. As a result, I enlisted the support of other multicultural student affairs professionals around the state. This culminated in

the founding of the Maryland Consortium of Multicultural Educators. Through this organization I gained valuable mentoring relationships with student affairs professionals with more experience, who aided me in developing an organized and strategic approach to responding to the challenges that I faced at my school. This resulted in me successfully proposing, initiating and developing an institutional diversity task force that had buy-in and representation from all areas of campus. The task force was able to positively and significantly get the college to embrace diversity such that it became everyone's responsibility. During this time, my fellow faculty and staff of color would commiserate on the isolation and institutional racism we experienced regularly.

Later while working at mid-sized and large predominantly White institutions (PWIs), I experienced common themes of marginalization. Even when I worked at an HBCU, Lincoln University, I experienced challenges and triumphs, but found solace in being able to mentor colleagues and students while developing resilience. The aforementioned life-altering transformative experiences have created a fervor in me to continue working as a student affairs practitioner who seeks to help people develop to their highest and best selves and overcome obstacles. My previously mentioned experiences have assisted me in developing resilience to successfully navigate several professional higher education environments, particularly through the mentoring I have received and benefited from over the years. It is through the development of resilience from mentorship that I seek to explore further in my dissertation study.

Statement of the Problem

Although faculty and staff of color serve in integral roles throughout university communities, there is a scarcity of research conducted that centers on their lived

experiences (Alfred & Chlup, 2010; Benitez, 1998; Berrian, 2006; Clark-Holland, 2014; Damasco, & Hodges, 2012; Dawson, 2013; Delgado-Romero, Manlove, Manlove, & Hernandez, 2007; Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada & Galindo, 2009). Faculty and staff of color have had both a positive and significant impact on the retention of students, faculty and staff of color in postsecondary schools (Barnett, 2011; Chang, 2005; Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods 2009; Orozco, Alvarez, & Gutkin, 2010; Tovar, 2015). Furthermore, much of the literature is focused on equity, parity, and tenure and promotion challenges faced by faculty of color. Conversely, there is a paucity of research concerning staff of color. Additionally, there is limited research on how both faculty and staff of color utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist on their respective campuses; this is the specific focus of the intended study. Moreover, because this study was conducted at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), the history of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) is also germane. Within the context of MSIs, there is limited research conducted on full-time faculty and staff (Benitez, 1988; Berrian, 2006; Delgado-Bernal, & Villalpando, 2002). Therefore, this study is critical to contributing to the theoretical discourse on how faculty and staff of color give voice to their lived experience and how mentoring impacts their persistence in higher education through the development of resilience.

Recent statistics reinforce the concept that there are limited numbers of faculty and staff of color who work in higher education in comparison to their White colleagues. Although there have been significant increases in the minoritized populations in both the general U.S. population as well as in postsecondary institutions, proportionally there is a lack of equity and parity among professionals of color (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). For instance, the Digest of Education Statistics (NCES) reported that in the fall of 2013,

7% of college and university faculty were Asian, 7% were Black, 5% were Hispanic, 1% were American Indian/Alaska Native, 0.5% were Pacific Islander, 1% were of two or more races, and 79% of all faculty with identified race/ethnicity were White. At the same time, 25% of graduate assistants and 29% of other staff in non-faculty roles were American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races. Additionally, staff that identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races were represented in the following proportions at various types of institutions: 26% at 4-year colleges, 24% at 4-year private non-proprietary colleges, 25% at public four year colleges, 22% at 2-year public colleges, and 26% at private non-proprietary 2-year colleges. Interestingly, there are increased percentages of faculty and staff of color who are employed by proprietary higher education institutions when compared to nonprofit schools. Specifically, staff of color at proprietary schools are as follows: 31% at 4-year colleges, 38% at proprietary institutions, and 31% at 2-year public schools (p. 409). The statistics punctuate that this segment of professionals remains on the fringes of the university community (Damasco & Hodges 2012). These findings emphasize the necessity to recruit and retain faculty and staff of color who are reflective of the increasing diversity among today's college students. Also, with the increased attention given to diversity it has become essential to have all students, irrespective of background become culturally competent to successfully engage in an ever-changing global economy and society.

Given the limited representation of faculty and staff of color in postsecondary education, those who work in academia often find themselves experiencing, isolation,

microaggressions/macroaggressions, marginalization, discrimination, lower retention rates, decreased job satisfaction, and inequity (Alfred, 2001; Alfred, and Chlup, 2010; Damasco & Hodges, 2012; Delgado-Bernal and Villapando, and Gardner 2002; Garcia, 2015; Zambrana et al., 2015). This is highly problematic because it adversely impacts job satisfaction, recruitment, resilience development, and retention among faculty and staff of color. Therefore, educators, government policy makers, and higher education administrators continually work to ameliorate campus climate, recruitment and retention conditions for professionals of color.

Yet, there is a gap in our knowledge base regarding the phenomena of how faculty and staff of color utilize mentoring and develop resilience that enable them to persist on their respective campuses. Mentoring that faculty and staff of color receive has played a major role in the development of resilience for this group (Berrian, 2006). Resilience in this case being a dynamic process which includes positive adaptation within the context of major adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). Additionally, The American Psychological Association (2014) defines resilience as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress (para. 4). There is a necessity to examine how faculty and staff of color utilize their mentoring experiences to strengthen their resilience and ability to persist in their careers. The current literature recommends that additional research be conducted on faculty and staff of color (Alfred, 2001; Alfred & Chlup, 2010; Berrian, 2006; Carr, Gunn, Kaplan, Raj, & Freund 2015; Chang, Welton, Martinez, & Cortez, 2013; Damasco, & Hodges, 2012; Dawson, 2013, Delgado-Romero, Manlove, Manlove & Hernandez, 2007; Digg, garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009). While there might be more research on

faculty of color, it is important to tease out what is known of their mentoring experiences and how they develop resilience from such mentorship that enables them to persist at their college or university campuses. My research interest, which is centered on gaining an in-depth perspective of the lived experiences of higher education professionals of color (faculty and staff) with regards to the mentoring they receive and how this helps them develop resilience, is based on my own experiences that have ranged from innocuous to inimical. Furthermore, my intersectional identities as a temporarily able-bodied, Black, middle-class, adult educator, son, brother, first generation college student, and the first in my family to pursue and obtain a doctoral degree served a major role in selecting this topic.

Purpose of the Study

Through utilization of a qualitative approach, specifically phenomenology (Grant, & Simmons, 2008, Guarino, & Borden, 2017; Lloyd-Jones, 2009; Louis, Rawls, Jackson-Smith, Chambers, Phillips, & Louis, 2016), I aim to make meaning from the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color as recipients of mentoring, to understand if and how this has contributed to their resilience, while taking into account the role intersectionality has played in this process.

Eight full-time professionals of color (3 faculty and 5 staff members) that are employed at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in central Texas participated in this study. Hence, the phenomena being examined is being a faculty and staff member of color that has persisted in academia through mentorship and the development of resilience. The HSI context contributes to the purpose of this study because this “minority enrolling” type of institution is decidedly different from the other types of minority

serving institutions (MSIs) which aim to primarily educate students based on ethnic, cultural or racial background. HSIs educate and have significantly higher retention rates for people of color in the United States (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008).

Researcher Question

To amply delve into the phenomena of being a full-time faculty and staff of color at an HSI in central Texas, the following research question was used to guide the study:

1. How do faculty and staff of color at a Central Texas HSI utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist in their careers, given the intersectionality of their identities?

Theoretical Framework

Intersectionality is the theoretical framework for this study. Intersectionality is a way of comprehending and investigating the complexity in human experiences and in people (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). This theoretical lens differentiates the social divisions of ability, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender identity expression, gender, race, culture, and sexuality (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality is employed as an analytic tool to solve problems that individuals around them face (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). This analytic tool is useful in the management of complex discriminations (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Utilization of this framework will provide a method to better understand the phenomena of being a faculty and staff of color at the HSI in this study. Chapter 2 will provide a more expanded discussion of the theoretical framework.



INTERSECTIONALITY

Figure 1.1 Crenshaw, (1991) Intersectionality Theoretical Framework

Brief Overview of Methodology

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine, discover, and make meaning of the lived experiences of eight full-time faculty and staff of color at a large HSI in central Texas. This approach was employed in order to encapsulate the detailed, differentiated, and unparalleled essence of full-time faculty and staff of color lived experiences. According to van Manen (2007), phenomenology affords you the opportunity to have lived experiences and give form and context to our awareness and reflection. This phenomenological approach will enable the individual participant's experiences to be represented through narrative in order for the data to be analyzed so that common themes among participants may emerge.

Significance of the Study

This dissertation contributes to the body of literature specific to faculty and staff of color in multiple ways; (1) providing a space to illuminate the voices of faculty and staff of color at a HSI; (2) providing in-depth insight to how mentoring experiences have

affected the development of resilience among full-time faculty and staff of color and; (3) differentiating how intersectional identities of faculty and staff members of color have impacted the development of resilience or the mentoring they have received. The study's findings are useful to university administrators, educators, and government policy makers to inform strategies that improve supportive and collegial community climates, job satisfaction, recruitment, and retention for faculty and staff of color. This study provided integral data about full-time faculty and staff of color and their role in the HSI community for practitioners. More specifically, a careful review of how these professionals of color interpret their lived experiences has the capability to enable institutions of higher education to develop and maintain sustaining relationships that emphasize cultural competency, inclusion, mattering, security, and worth for those who are involved in ameliorating college and university life.

The goal of this research was to inspire and encourage other scholars of varying ethnicities and races to conduct additional research on how the lived experiences of this key population of higher education professionals has impacted their job satisfaction, resilience, and retention. Furthermore, it was my intention to develop a deeper differentiated understanding of the challenges and triumphs of this group. It is hoped that the findings also contribute to existing frameworks and inspire the development of alternate frameworks that higher education practitioners and postsecondary institutions can employ to better inform their policies and practices to improve recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction.

Key Terms

Career Satisfaction. How pleased one is with their career/employment role (Berrian, 2006; Spector, 1997).

Ethnicity. Cultural attributes which are passed down from generation to generation. These cultural attributes may include religion, language, humor, clothing, heritage, folklore, and shared ancestry along with social experiences (Root, 1996).

Faculty and staff of color. For the purposes of this study, faculty and staff members who self-identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Bi-Racial, /Multiracial, Black, Hispanic/Latina/o/x, and Pacific Islander, or some combination of these identities. Included are faculty who are full-time and tenure track and full-time staff who are academic or student affairs professionals at any level.

Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). A two-year or four-year public or private institution with a minimum of 25% full-time equivalency (FTE) enrollment of Hispanic students (Gasman, 2008).

Intersectionality. A theoretical framework that provides a method of both analyzing and understanding levels of complexity in people, the world and in human experiences. This form of critical inquiry that examines relationality, power relations and social justice along the intersections of ableism, age, class, gender, gender identity expression, and sexual preference (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991).

Lived Experience. A phrase used in phenomenological studies to differentiate the individual experiences of a person(s) or phenomenon that is being researched (Moustakas, 1994).

Mentor. A person (usually having more professional experience) who serves as a guide,

role model, or teacher and provides expertise or guidance to another individual (usually having less professional experience). The two enter into a mutual relationship with a common goal for the less experienced individual to grow or further enhance specific skills or abilities (Murray, 1991).

Mentoring. Is a close, personal, and mutually agreed upon relationship that usually involves the mentor having more seniority, expertise or status than the protégé.

Additionally, the protégé gains knowledge, insight, and advice from the mentor (Jacobi, 1991).

Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Currently include Asian American and Pacific Islander institutions (A APIs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) (Gasman, 2008).

Persistence. Firm continuance in a course of action despite adversity. (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014).

Phenomenology. A discipline that centers on people's perceptual experiences of their lived experiences. In addition, what meaning those experiences hold for them (Langdrige, 2007).

Protégé. A person who is a recipient of advice, expertise, guidance, and role modeling from someone with more professional experiences than they possess (Zey, 1997).

Resilience. The capacity to recover quickly from challenges. Social networks have become increasingly recognized for their positive impact on resilience (Burdick, 2015).

Organization of the Study

Chapter one provides an introduction to the study as well as my individual experiences as an adult educator, first generation student, and student affairs practitioner and describes how I came to select this particular research topic. In addition, chapter one provides the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research question, theoretical framework, brief overview of the methodology, significance of the study, and key terms. Chapter two furnishes a review of the literature on the historical review of minority serving institutions (MSIs), given the HSI context of this study. It also contains a review of mentoring and development of resilience. Chapter two concludes with an expanded discussion of intersectionality as the theoretical framework. Chapter three follows and is centered on the methodology and research design for this study. Included in chapter three is an in-depth discussion of the specific research approach, study setting, research participants, data collection methods, data analysis, and role of the researcher. Chapter four provides the findings obtained from this study. In addition, Each of the eight study participant profiles are detailed, as well as, four major themes which emerged from this study are reviewed. This chapter closes with a summary of the aforementioned information. Chapter five provides the discussion and conclusion for this study. It covers the discussion of key findings, emergent themes. Also, it includes recommendations for policies and practice stakeholders. This chapter concludes with a reflection of the research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a review of the literature to aptly contextualize and better understand the phenomena of how faculty or staff of color utilize mentoring and develop resilience that enable them to persist on their respective campuses. Upon undertaking the review, a literature search was conducted employing various databases: EBSCO, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ProQuest. The following types of search phrases were used in various combinations for this review with some emerging as additional literature was read: minority serving institutions, marginalization, mentoring, racism, recruitment, resilience, retention, staff satisfaction, critical race theory, and women of color in higher education. Hence, the following themes emerged from the literature and resulted in the following sections of this literature review: (1) historical overview of minority serving institutions (MSIs); (2) marginalization and institutional racism which affect faculty and staff of color; (3) resilience, retention, and recruitment of faculty and staff of color; and (4) mentoring and its connection to the study. The chapter closes with a discussion of intersectionality as the theoretical framework for this study.

Historical Context of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)

The history of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) is distinctively unique when compared to either historically Black colleges or universities (HBCUs) or Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs). However, all fall under the umbrella of minority serving institutions (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008). To better understand the nuances associated with the origins of each type of MSI, they will be discussed further.

HBCUs were founded in the 1800s to intentionally serve over four million newly freed Black slaves and their decedents (Gasman et. al., 2008). Cheney, Lincoln and Wilberforce were among the initial HBCUs founded in the northern United States before the Civil War. Subsequently, the majority of these institutions were founded after the Civil War through the assistance of the federal government's Freedman's Bureau. White religious organizations such as the Baptists, Congregationalists, American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the American Missionary Association aided in founding some HBCUs. This generosity was steeped in their self-interest to convert former slaves to their own religious denomination. Fisk University, Spelman College, and Tennessee College are some of the colleges and universities founded by this group. Conversely, Morris Brown, Paul Quinn, and Allen University were established by Black religious groups (Gasman et. al., 2008).

The passing of the Morrill Act in 1890 resulted in the establishment of the first public agricultural and mechanical Black higher education institutions, which called for equity and parity of federal funds. However, these schools received far less funding than White schools (Gasman et. al., 2008). Following the governmental support for HBCUs was the industrial philanthropic time period. The General Education Board (GEB) was founded by John D. Rockefeller Sr., Andrew Carnegie, Julius Rosenwald, and John Slater. The GEB provided HBCUs with over \$63 million dollars between 1903 and 1964 (Gasman et. al., 2008, p.20). Nonetheless, White institutions received much more financial assistance from these industrial tycoons. Although their generosity is duly noted, these men and their corporations benefited from the skilled HBCU graduates. The leadership of HBCUs changed from White to Black during the 1960s. The Higher

Education Act of 1965 resulted in increased federal funding for HBCUs. Also, presidential executive orders by President Jimmy Carter and President Georg H. W. Bush aided in the expansion and strengthening of the existing 105 HBCUs (Gasman et. al., 2008).

The National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) was founded in 1967 and is the umbrella organization for HBCUs and predominantly Black institutions (PBIs) (NAFEO, 2017). This organization was established to serve as the international voice for HBCUs as well as to advocate policies, programs, and practices that preserve and enhance HBCUs (NAFEO, 2017). As of 2015, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that there are approximately 102 HBCUs located in 19 states, including Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Of which, 51 were public institutions and 51 private nonprofit schools. Enrollment at HBCUs increased 32% between 1976 and 2015 from 223,000 to 293,000 (NCES, 2015). In addition to federal funding, HBCUs receive additional funding from either the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) or the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) (NAFEO, 2017). Although HBCUs were created to educate Black students, they historically provided education for students from different races. In 2015, non-Black student enrollment at HBCUs increased to 22% compared to 15% in 1976 (NCES, 2015).

Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) were established in the 1960s and primarily serve Native American populations. TCUs are located in the following states: Arizona, California, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Washington. These schools are primarily located either on reservations or tribally controlled properties (Gasman et. al., 2008). Indigenous

Americans had historical access to a majority of American higher education institutions, but the goal of these schools was to assimilate Native Americans rather than empower them (Ginelle, and Stage, 2014). The American Indian movement of the late 1960s and 1970s resulted in the mission of TCUs being centered on providing culturally based education to their students. These schools accomplish their mission by providing workforce training, preserving language and culture, and supporting local economic development (Ginelle & Stage, 2014).

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) was created in 1972 and later incorporated in 1973 by tribal leaders who sought to keep their struggling institutions operating. AIHECs were instrumental in preserving tribal college federal legislation, but assertively advocated being added to the list of land-grant colleges supported by the Department of Agriculture. AIHEC set up an office near Washington, D.C., to forge and broaden their base of federal support. The association's efforts proved to be successful as they have secured a \$22 million Kellogg Foundation grant and other federal support (Boyer, 1998). Today there are 30 TCUs whose enrollments include over 250 tribal nations. Community colleges primarily comprise the majority of TCUs and enroll 20% of Native American college students (Ginelle & Stage, 2014). TCUs experience similar financial challenges that HBCUs face and receive the same federal funding (Ginelle & Stage, 2014).

Research indicates that Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) differ from HBCUs and TCUs because these institutions were not specifically founded to assist people of Latin ancestry (Gasman, et. al., 2008; Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2017). The literature intentionally specifies that the title Hispanic Serving Institution is

misleading and should more accurately be referred to as Hispanic enrolling (Gasman, et. al., 2008). The 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) specifically defined Hispanic Serving Institutions as both two-year and four-year colleges and universities with 25% or more total Hispanic full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate enrollments. It is important to note that HSIs were written in the original Higher Education Act of 1965. These institutions comprise 6% of all American colleges and universities and enroll approximately 1.4 million Hispanic students. Community colleges make up 68% of HSIs and educate almost half of all Hispanics in higher education. Almost half of all Hispanic students in the United States and 21% of students from other racial and ethnic backgrounds are served by HSIs. As such, these institutions are also referred to as minority serving institutions (MSIs) (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; Toby, 2013; The White House Initiative, 2001).

Three important elements have influenced the continued growth and development of HSIs (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; The White House Initiative, 2001; Toby, 2013). First, the Civil Rights Movement afforded minoritized students greater access to financial aid resources. The provided access to higher education was limited prior to this time period. Second, significant increases in Hispanic migration to large urban cities, as well as, less densely populated cities in the United States occurred. HSIs were founded near these communities of color to provide access to higher education. Third, HSIs are typically located in large urban cities with large numbers of Hispanics. Aside from these three elements, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) was founded in 1986 to bring attention to postsecondary schools who serve significant numbers of Hispanics (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden,

1999; The White House Initiative, 2001; Toby, 2013). The HACU established offices in San Antonio, Texas, and Washington, D.C. The latter office was established to provide easy access to law makers and educational policy makers (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; The White House Initiative, 2001; Toby, 2013). Also, the HACU strongly advocated for the HSI designation. Hence, they were successful in HSIs being recognized in the reauthorization of Higher Education Act (HEA). Specifically in 1993, the HEA was amended and moved HSIs to Title IV status along with HBCUs and TCUs. Title IV status meant HSIs would receive federal funding that was previously designated for postsecondary schools who primarily served ethnic, cultural or racial populations, not minority enrolling schools.

In order to receive the federal HSI designation, 25% of the full-time equivalent (FTE) student population at a degree granting college or university must self-identify as Hispanic. Institutions must apply, receive the federal HSI designation, and then apply to receive federal funding for research. It is important to note that not all institutions that apply are awarded the HSI designation or the research funds. Also, research dollars are dedicated to the institution for research, not programs or services that provide support for the Hispanic student population. Hence, in the grander scheme of things the federal HSI name designation gives a false impression that these institutions are intentionally providing services for Hispanic students when they are merely Hispanic enrolling institutions. Nonetheless, HSIs play a significant role in the higher education landscape because of their higher retention and success rates for people of color (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; The White House Initiative, 2001; Toby, 2013). HSIs may have more success because they intentionally provide supportive services in

addition, to enrolling students Hispanic and minority students (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; The White House Initiative, 2001; Toby, 2013). Current data suggests there are 472 HSIs in the United States. The total number of HSIs is comprised of the following: 209 are 2-year public institutions, 134 are 4-year private institutions, 105 are 4-year public institutions, and 24 are private 2-year institutions (Gasman et. al., 2008; Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2017).

According to the HACU data as of 2015, there were 60.2 million Hispanics in the United States (including Puerto Rico) and only 3.15 million were enrolled in nonprofit postsecondary institutions with 49.6% who attend 2-year schools (2017).

Understanding the history of MSIs was consequential to this study because it provided context and differentiation from predominantly White higher education institutions (PWI). Additionally, HSIs graduate and retain higher percentages of people of color when compared to majority institutions (Gasman et. al., 2008). HSIs are reported to provide a more nurturing and supportive environment than PWIs. In addition, MSIs in general are relatively rich in role models among faculty and staff, as well as, students (Ginelle & Stage, 2014). The research suggests that attending a MSI is beneficial because facets of campus climate are related to diverse students' comfort, integration, and success (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). MSIs provide students of color access to higher education at greater rates than PWIs. Furthermore, MSIs provide education for many first generation college students, especially those whose families did not receive college preparation assistance during high school because of cost, location, intentional recruitment, and retention efforts (Ginelle & Stage, 2014).

While MSIs have beneficial components, many are faced with limited funding

and resources. HBCUs and TCUs have much smaller endowments and alumni populations who provide financial support compared to PWIs (Gasman et. al., 2008). Students who attend MSIs usually have greater financial need to offset the cost of attending college. To date, HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs are the only three types of federally recognized MSIs (Gasman et. al., 2008). The history of MSIs is germane to this study because of the lack of research conducted on full-time faculty and staff who work at these institutions. Limited and/or no access to higher education for people of color necessitated the creation of MSIs. The following marginalization section is pertinent to this study because it provides context for the oppressive conditions people of color historically and continually face in the United States in higher education.

Marginalization in Higher Education Impacting Faculty and Staff of Color

This section includes data on how climate, culture, history, marginalization, microaggressions/macroaggressions, sexism, and racism affect full-time faculty and full-time staff of color in both similar and dissimilar ways. To consider these aspects within universities, it is first pertinent to consider the larger context of these issues in American society and history. The United States' economic underpinnings are rooted in the inhumane enterprise of slavery. America in the 1600s was an agricultural society that solely relied on hard manual labor to cultivate rice, sugar, and tobacco crops (Bell, 1980; Healey, & O'Brien, 2015). Indentured servants from the British Isles were initially an inexpensive labor solution. Over time, this work force was significantly diminished, which led to the establishment of slavery and the laws which it supported (Bell, 1980; Healey, & O'Brien, 2015). Native Americans were initially utilized as slaves, but they were uncooperative and fought against slave owners. Black African slaves became the

primary group in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. It is important to note, that some Africans were complicit in enslaving fellow Africans (Bell, 1980; Healey & O'Brien, 2015). Latinos and Asian Americans were historically discriminated and marginalized and denied access to higher education as well (Bell, 1980; Healey, & O'Brien, 2015).

The U.S. Constitutional Convention of 1787 was attended by mostly White men who themselves and their families benefited from the profitable enterprise of slavery. This history is important to note because this group of men either attended and/or founded the following higher education institutions in the United States: The College of William and Mary, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale. Many of the founders of these schools are celebrated, memorialized, and historically revered. Yet postsecondary institutions in America were established on a landscape rife with inequality and inequity (Bell, 1980; Healey, & O'Brien, 2015; Patton, 2015). These institutions were built on a false meritocracy narrative that has continued to thrive and pose barriers to prevent equity and parity for persons of color.

While some American higher education institutions have fair, equitable, open, and progressive environments, many faculty and staff of color have been confronted with a differing hostile reality (Bell, 1980; Healey; Louis, Rawls, Jackson-Smith, Chambers, Phillips & Louis, 2016; O'Brien, 2015). As such, in conducting this literature review the following themes among full-time faculty and staff of color emerged that fell under the guise of issues of marginalization: alienation, invisibility, hypervisibility, inadequate mentoring, questioning of credentials, negative colleague perceptions, subtle and overt racial assaults, sexual identity, and gender discrimination. In addition, it is important to

note that there was a substantial literature base with regards to faculty of color, which mainly focused on the challenges and institutional racism experienced by this group. Conversely, there was very limited research on the lived experiences of staff of color in general, whether at minority serving institutions (MSIs) or predominantly White institutions (PWIs). Thus, there is a gap in the literature on the lived experiences of full-time staff of color.

Marginalization of faculty and staff of color may be attributed to their being underrepresented in higher education. As noted in Chapter 1, full-time faculty at degree granting institutions in the fall of 2015 reflected the following demographics: 10% were Asian/Pacific Islander (6% male 4 % female), 5% Black (3% female, 2% male), and 4% Hispanic (2% female, 2% male) (The National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). As such, Louis, Rawls, Jackson-Smith, Chambers, Phillips and Louis (2016) indicated that faculty of color are significantly underrepresented in American postsecondary institutions in comparison to non-minority faculty members. Recent data from the U.S. Department of Education (2014) and the National Center for Education Statistics (2014) indicate that only 6% of full-time university faculty members were Black compared with 79% of faculty who were white. Black and White staff are noted as they are the two most represented groups in the literature.

Comparatively, according to the college and university professional association for human resources (CUPA-HR) annual report only 29% of all higher education staff are ethnic or racial minorities (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). However, overall there was less data found on staff of color when compared to faculty of color. Some of the staff data available indicated that as of 2015 approximately 40% of the staff of color at all

postsecondary institutions in the U.S. hold service and maintenance positions versus only 16% who hold skilled labor positions (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). Hence, staff members of color usually earn less than their White counterparts (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). The gap in pay between staff of color and White staff members may contribute to the marginalization of staff of color (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). Staff of color, with the exception of Asians, only earn 90 cents on the dollar when compared to their white counterparts (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017). Asian staff members are compensated at or above equity levels for all positions (CUPA-HR, 2017; Seltzer, 2017); a finding that might be attributed to the model minority myth (Poon, Squire, Kodama, & Byrd, 2016; Sakamoto, Isao, & Woo, 2012). Furthermore, women earn less than men in almost all types of staff positions except office and clerical work.

Climate and culture are two key elements that may impact the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color. Research indicates faculty and staff of color experience the campus racial climate differently based on their racial identities. The literature on faculty of color indicates it is likely that such experiences impact their retention and job satisfaction, as they are much lower for faculty of color when compared to White faculty (Damasco & Hodges, 2012; Hurtado, 1992; Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008; Reid, Radhakrishnan, 2003; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart 2008). Given the limited literature on staff of color, it was necessary to expand the search time period to include older publications that were relevant. The literature indicates that there are four elements that promote a positive climate for staff. Those elements are: psychological climate (perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about diversity), behavioral climate (how different racial groups interact), structural diversity (numbers and proportions of diverse groups on

campus), and campus legacy of inclusion or exclusion (Hurtado, & Dey, 1997; Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2006). Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey (2006) found that staff demographics, institution commitment to diversity, staff diversity experiences, and department climate contributed majorly to staff members' perceptions of a positive climate for diversity. In another study conducted at a HSI community college, it was found that most staff of color had a positive experience within their environment (Garcia, 2015). It is important to note the potentially conflicting findings of this study.

Studies examining racial climate in higher education have also revealed people's experiences with racial microaggressions in postsecondary education (Damasco & Hodges, 2012; Garcia, 2015; Hurtado, 1992; Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008; Reid, & Radhakrishnan, 2003; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart 2008). Perez and Solórzano (2015) defined racial microaggressions as "a form of systematic, everyday racism used to keep those at the racial margins in their place" (p. 298). For example, faculty and staff of color reported feeling isolated and marginalized in departments where they were the only person of color (Berrian, 2006; Damasco et al, 2012).

Often, faculty and staff of color feel they are relegated to "unequal/different treatment" when compared to their White counterparts (Stanley, 2006, p.705). This was a theme in Stanley's (2006) qualitative research on faculty of color teaching experiences where he found that "regardless of the situation, faculty of color perceive that they are held to higher expectations and that they are not acknowledged when they make an effort to respond to requirements in place" (p. 715). Consequently, it is an ongoing challenge for this group to obtain tenure and promotion at many schools in the United States (Diggs et al., 2009).

The necessity to better understand and contextualize the lived experiences of faculty and staff at a MSI in particular is needed to interrupt the dominant narrative and provide a distinctive voice to those who may be marginalized and oppressed in this context. Yet people of color have successfully employed resilience to endure micro and macroaggressions experienced in higher education (Benitez, 1998; Berta, 2001; Flores & Laden, 1999; Toby, 2013; The White House Initiative, 2001). Improved understanding of the impact of relentless microaggressions on faculty and staff of color could lead to significant change through educating staff on appropriately responding to issues faced by faculty and staff of color (Louis, Rawls, Jackson-Smith, Chambers, Phillips, & Louis, 2016). Hence, the following section of this literature delves further into retention and recruitment.

Retention and Recruitment of Faculty and Staff of Color

From a global perspective, the world has become a much more culturally, economically, and politically interconnected social structure. Higher education institutions have been tasked with the challenge to provide a stellar, well-rounded education which enables their graduates to compete in this global market and be culturally competent (Damasco & Hodges, 2012). As such, it is crucial that a university's faculty and staff be representative of the increasingly diverse student body it serves, and the larger society. Yet retention and recruitment of faculty and staff of color is a complex, every-changing dilemma for many postsecondary institutions and has serious implications for individuals, departments, institutions, and students (Damasco & Hodges, 2012; Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009; Martinez, Chang, & Welton, 2016). For instance, although there has been an increase in the numbers of faculty and

staff of color in U.S. postsecondary institutions over time the growth pales in comparison to that of White faculty (Martinez et al., 2016, Zajac, 2011). Furthermore, researchers have well documented the challenges of lower rates of career satisfaction and retention among faculty and staff of color (Alfred, 2001; Alfred, & Chlup, 2010; Delgado-Bernal, Villapando, & Gardner 2002; Garcia, 2015; Zambrana et al., 2015).

Research on job satisfaction for faculty of color has implications on the following levels: Individual, departmental, and university. Dawson (2013) created and utilized the Faculty of Color Themed Inventory (FOCTI) to more accurately describe faculty of color experiences (p.49). In this process, Dawson developed and implemented a Career Satisfaction Survey (CSS). Dawson found that communication barriers based on personal background (age, culture, gender, and race), isolation, and marginalization had a negative impact on job satisfaction and retention. Dawson (2013) surveyed 40 faculty members at a university in central Texas in the College of Liberal Arts. Similar studies do not exist for staff of color. Diggs et al. (2009) expressed a need for additional research on staff of color at HBCUs and HSIs. Departmentally, faculty of color must manage demanding research, competition, teaching, and sometimes isolation. On a university level, academic identity, addressing diversity, and mentoring faculty of color were common themes connected to job satisfaction (Diggs, et al., 2009). Turner, Gonzalez, and Wood, (2008) indicated in their review of the research on faculty of color from 1988 to 2007 that the best practices for recruitment and retention efforts for this group occurred on the departmental, institutional, and national levels. Although this study was focused on faculty these findings could potentially be relevant for staff of color as well by establishing most effective practices on the same levels previously mentioned. On a

departmental level, it is important to establish hiring, recruitment, and retention plans as well as to provide training on faculty of color issues. Also, creating environments where collegial networks and collaborations are possible was suggested, such as, promotion of mentoring programs and supportive policies of a diverse faculty. It is key to institutionalize diversity goals and promote strong leadership for diversity. Nationally, it is important to establish connection to diverse communities as well as reduce salary inequities. Additionally, more inclusive standards for assessing professional performance and the creation of opportunities for authentic and spiritual expression were noted.

Mentoring Faculty and Staff of Color

Mentoring plays an integral role in career advancement for faculty and staff of color (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014; Collins, 2014; Darwin, Palmer, 2009; Murakami & Nunez, 2014). Mentoring relationships should not be limited to a single mentor-protégé relationship. Also, these relationships should not be viewed as an all-encompassing solution for the challenges faced by minoritized faculty (Diggs et al. 2009). Developing mentoring relationships between senior and new faculty and staff members of color may lead to improved retention for this group. Research has found that mentoring across racial backgrounds can be beneficial to both parties as well (Diggs et al. 2009). For instance, two notables in adult education who were of different races and genders, Johnson-Bailey and Cervero, developed a successful mentoring relationship. Both parties were exposed to a different culture and were challenged to step outside of their comfort zones (Diggs et al. 2009). The participants described mentoring as the way in which family, friends, and co-workers provided support (Clark-Holland, 2014).

Conversely, race and gender were the two most common barriers to success for people of color.

Research on staff of color indicates three primary benefits of mentoring: career advancement, personal growth, and psychosocial support (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). There were a variety of formal and informational mentoring relationships that added to their professional development (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). Mentoring took place within and outside of the professional work settings and lasted over six months (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). It is important to note that female staff typically sought mentoring relationships for psychosocial support. While male staff sought mentoring to develop career skills and increasing their professional network (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). These benefits enabled staff to develop resilience and persevere at their perspective institutions. Mentoring relationships played an integral role in the staff of color's professional and leadership development (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). Study participants found that both formal and informal developmental (mentoring) relationships strengthened trust, networking, support, and career satisfaction (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). Institutions play a significant role in both facilitating and inhibiting the development of leaders of color through mentoring opportunities (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). The research indicates the importance of supportive and developmental mentoring relationships for professionals of color (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014; Darwin & Parker, 2009).

Leadership and mentoring among people of color in higher education has led to increased retention and resilience among them (Rogers & Cudjoe, 2013). The literature consistently addresses the necessity to overcome institutionalized oppression by relying

on assets already contained within communities of color. Martinez, Chang, and Welton (2016) utilized a similar strategy by conducting a qualitative study that employed Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) model to examine how faculty of color at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) employ strength-based tactics to successfully navigate challenging higher education landscapes. The before-mentioned authors all advocate for mentoring and acknowledge the different gendered and international experiences that impact faculty of color's ability to navigate postsecondary contexts (2016). Faculty of color at PWIs reported that they were exposed to mentoring in higher education through federal programs such as Trio programs, Upward Bound, Ronald McNair, etc. Those experiences led to increased interest and motivation in serving in leadership roles to inspire and encourage other people of color in taking on leadership roles in higher education (Rolle, Davies, & Banning, 2000). It can be argued that similar findings might be found for staff of color; however, given the dearth of the literature including staff, this proposed study is particularly pertinent.

Another research study examined the mentoring experiences of 58 underrepresented minority (URM) faculty at 22 higher education institutions. This study found that mentoring was essential throughout the participants' lives (Zambrana et al., 2015). Furthermore, ideal mentoring relationships were inclusive of valuing the faculty member's ideas, intellect, and commitment to uplift both students and their respective communities from systemic marginalization. The study's participants described stellar mentors as staunch supporters who both guided and invested time into them becoming successful (Zambrana et al., 2015). Another research study of student affairs practitioners

at an HSI found that a positive perception of the campus racial climate along with impact compositional diversity helped to positively impact retention for them (Garcia, 2015).

Darwin and Palmer (2009) researched mentoring circles in higher education which take a differing approach to mentoring. Mentoring circles employ an innovative group mentoring model. Hence, they include one mentor working with a group of protégés or groups of people mentoring one another. These mentoring circles have a facilitator to ensure focused and productive conversations (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014). Research has shown that mentoring circles were effective for those who believed in collaborative group environment and was ineffective for those who were not comfortable sharing information in groups (Chang, Longman, & Franco, 2014).

It became necessary to expand the search on well-known successful concerted efforts on higher education campuses to improve retention and jobs satisfaction among faculty and staff of color through mentoring. A research study was conducted with 64 faculty of color (11 Asians, 28 Blacks, 11 Native Americans and 14 Latinos) in Midwestern colleges and universities (Turner, Myers, & Creswell, 1999). Mentoring and networking programs greatly contributed faculty of color managing challenges and developing resilience. In addition, faculty of color reported having increased job satisfaction. Furthermore, these institutions all had exemplary fellowship and hiring programs, policies and resources that promoted the recruitment and retention of faculty of color. Although this study was focused on faculty of color there are several aspects which may be applicable to staff of color. Resilience is a key concept that was integral to this study as it closely connected to mentoring. Hence, it became necessary to look further

back in the literature to gain appropriate insight. Therefore, the following section will examine resilience within the context of mentoring for faculty and staff of color.

Resilience

For several decades, resilience has been the focus of researchers in adult education, business, psychology, and social work (Ayers-Lopez & McCrory, 2004; Richardson, 2002; Waller, 2001). Since the 1950s resilience has been researched, but there is no clear consensus regarding its definition. Hence, there are multiple definitions that have been formulated. Some scholars posit that resilience is a personality trait or distinctive characteristic that people employ as a reaction to adversity, change, and crisis (Corcoran & Nichols-Casebolt, 2004; Jacelon, 1997). Ayers-Lopez and McCrory (2004) define resilience as “the capacity to recover from adversity” (p.1). Furthermore, resilience has been defined as a psychological strength that enables an individual to deal with and respond effectively to life stressors (Neill & Dias, 2001). The literature also defines resilience as successful adjustment in the face of challenges or threatening circumstances (Ayers-Lopez & McCrory, 2004; Richardson, 2002; Waller, 2001).

Underrepresented minority (URM) administrators and faculty report increased resilience when they had positive mentoring relationships across their lifespan (Zambrana, et al., 2015). In a study of URMs insight obtained from mentoring experiences resulted in learning cultural and political norms, navigating institutions, accessing financial support, and connections to others. These experiences resulted in increased personal self-confidence and professional growth (Zambrana et al., 2015). In the same study of URM faculty reported how observations of senior URM researchers resulted in hope and inspiration as they experienced struggle (Zambrana et al., 2015).

Resilience is essential to this study as it situates the importance of managing routine challenges faced by administrators and faculty of color. There is a scarcity of research that is focused on faculty and staff of color resilience. It is essential to note that there was a scarcity of research on resilience for faculty and staff of color.

Spirituality is a key element in the development of resilience. Alexander and Astin's (2015) data on spirituality focuses on five dimensions of spirituality which include: spiritual quest, equanimity, charitable involvement, ethic of caring, and ecumenical worldview. Spiritual quest refers to the degree to which a person seeks to become more self-aware and enlightened to find answers to life's mysteries. Equanimity examines the extent to which an individual is able to find meaning in times of difficulty, but feels good about life. Charitable involvement is involvement in community service, charitable donations and helping others. Ethic of caring is a commitment to helping others in difficulty and ameliorating suffering in the world. Ecumenical worldview is the extent to which a person is interested in differing cultures and religions, as well as, having a belief that all life is interconnected (Alexander & Astin, 2015; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005).

Intersectionality as a Framework for Examining Faculty and Staff of Color

Experiences

Intersectionality was employed as an overarching theoretical framework to more aptly understand the experiences of faculty and staff of color at a HSI in this study (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Kimberle Crenshaw is a notable scholar who was a key contributor to Black feminist thought theory and also developed and coined the term intersectionality in the late 1980s to center attention on the dynamics of difference

and the solidarities of sameness in the context of anti-discrimination and social movement politics (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). Intersectionality is centered on examining the dynamics of difference and sameness and has played a significant role in the consideration of gender, race, and other axes of power in a large portion of academic disciplines and political discussions (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). This theoretical framework has been previously used in anthropology, ethnic studies, feminist studies, history, legal studies, literature, philosophy, queer studies, and sociology (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). Intersectionality is a tool of both investigating and comprehending the complexity in people and in human experiences (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). This framework is employed as an analytic tool to decipher the social divisions of ability, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender, gender identity expression, race, and sexuality (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Social inequality, power, relationality, social context, complexity, and social justice are the six core concepts of intersectionality (Collins, Bilge, 2016). Hence, the following paragraph will delve into the previously mentioned core concepts.

Collins and Bilge report that several recent definitions of intersectionality stress social inequality. Intersectionality has prevailed as a framework because people are attentive to the social inequality they have individually experienced or witnessed in their local, national, or international respective communities. Social inequality is conducive to understanding intersectionality by examining interactions among several categories instead of taking a dualistic approach. First, power relations are mutually developed. Specifically, people's identities and lives are formed by multiple parameters in diverse and influential ways (2016). Second, power relations should be analyzed in both their

intersections (racism and sexism) as well as across domains of power (cultural, disciplinary, interpersonal, and structural). Relational thinking moves from an either/or (scholarship or practice) and encompasses an and/both/with perspective (differences between faculty and staff of color, to understanding their interconnectedness) (Collins & Bilge 2016). Differing perspectives may occur in varying social contexts and are essential for comprehending differences within intersectionality (Collins & Bilge 2016). The before-mentioned core components of social inequality, power, relationality, and social context are inextricably linked to complexity. The use of intersectionality as a framework is complex because it is in-depth and multidimensional (Collins & Bilge 2016). The social justice element of intersectionality involves being critical of the status quo rather than accepting of it (Collins & Bilge 2016).

Intersectionality as an analytic tool may be used to create savvy comprehension of individual and collective identities (Collins, Bilge 2016). Therefore, review of identity in the context of intersectionality is key. This framework values abundance of multiple identities that make individuals unique, but much more is involved (Collins, Bilge 2016). Exploration of the connections within the politics of identity and intersectionality as a form of critical inquiry and praxis is needed (Collins, Bilge 2016). Specifically, people who have experienced age, citizenship, class, race, and sexuality discrimination are central to the development of intersectionality and hip-hop culture (Collins, Bilge 2016). These two comparable topics provide critical inquiry and praxis (Collins, Bilge 2016). Identity politics serves as a resistance tool against oppression. This relies on an understanding of identity as a political location (Collins, Bilge 2016). Hip-hop culture regularly experiences social inequality and is an expression of individual identity

(Collins, Bilge 2016). Collins and Bilge indicate that identity is key to establishing a collective 'we'. Emphasis on the self and wholeness serves as a motivator for individual and collective empowerment (2016).

Diversity, higher education, and intersectionality are connected to collective empowerment. "Intersectionality is the intellectual core of diversity work" (Dill, 2009, p. 229). Higher education institutions in the United States have vastly different diversity initiatives resulting in the ways that intersectionality may or may not be the intellectual center of diversity work (Collins & Bilge 2016). For instance, there are typically less diverse faculty, staff, and student populations at elite Ivy League institutions and highly selective liberal arts institutions when compared to community colleges and public universities (Collins & Bilge 2016). Intersectionality has led to the analysis of social inequality in promotion of individual and cultural interpretations of social problems (Collins, Bilge 2016). Utilization of this theoretical framework is particularly useful to better understand this proposed study's context through a more accurate understanding of how the intersectional identities of the participants help them develop resilience through mentoring they might receive.

Summary

The review of the literature suggests there is a critical necessity for intentional research that is centered on illuminating the voices of faculty and staff members of color to further understand their lived experiences in higher education in general, and more specifically when considering the role of mentoring in their resilience. This chapter provides an overview of the topic and a contextual view of marginalization, resilience, recruitment, retention, and mentorship for faculty and staff of color, and intersectionality.

Through examining the experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color, research will afford critical insights into the faculty and staff of color population and how their experiences impact their ability to thrive and persist. This is imperative as it provides a venue to both develop and identify a plan of action to improve recruitment and retention rates.

Ongoing research perspicaciously informs the literature regarding the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color. However, there is a gap in the literature surrounding the experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color. Specifically, there is a scarcity of research on full-time staff of color who provide support to students. The majority of research is focused on faculty of color. Policy changes, recommendations, and standards to improve retention and recruitment are made through the examination of the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color who work at MSIs. Interestingly, the literature indicated that mentoring was an important component to women in various settings in higher learning.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to examine, discover, and make meaning of the lived experiences of eight full-time faculty and staff of color at a large HSI in central Texas. This chapter describes the qualitative methodology and rationale for this research approach as well as justification for how phenomenology was selected. This approach was employed in order to encapsulate the detailed, differentiated, and unparalleled essence of full-time faculty and staff of color's lived experiences with mentoring and its impact on their resilience, if any. Hence, this chapter details how this methodological approach is well suited to adequately respond to the study's research question. Furthermore, the research setting, research sample, data sources, data collection methods, data analysis methods, trustworthiness, limitations and delimitations, and a comprehensive summary of the sections of this chapter will be discussed.

Qualitative Research Design

The purpose of choosing a methodology in research is to more keenly understand the phenomena being researched. This process allows the researcher to profoundly explore through asking questions to better understand behaviors and make meaning of the experiences that was researched. As previously noted, the intent of this study was to explore the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color at a HSI and how their mentoring experiences have affected their resilience and ability to persist, given the intersectionality of their identities. The research question that navigated this study includes:

How do faculty and staff of color at a Central Texas HSI utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist in their careers, given the intersectionality of their identities?

As such, a qualitative research design was best suited to examine such a question. This approach entails selecting a theoretical framework, research justification, methods of data collection, and data analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). These types of studies encompass elaborate descriptions of the study and illuminate and detail the participants' voices (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). This type of research aims to establish credibility and dependability and examines transferability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). Hence, in what manner and how might the findings of a given study be useful in other similar contexts (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990).

The research purports that qualitative research is an intentional activity that locates the observer in the cosmos (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). This research approach is comprised of interpretive and material practices allowing the participants' experiences to become visible (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). Artifacts, conversations, field notes, interviews, and recordings then become the manifestations of the participants' lived experiences of how they perceive a given phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990).

Qualitative research necessitates the following from the researcher: extended time in the field; labor intensive and intricate data analysis that results in themes; documentation that substantiates claims from multiple perspectives; willingness to engage in nebulous research that does not have specific protocols (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). This approach was well suited to the current study because the full-time faculty and staff of color have a unique voice that has not been illuminated in the literature at a large HSI in central Texas. The following section will delve into phenomenology and provide a historical context. As a researcher, I wanted to differentiate and understand the unique voice of full-time faculty and staff of color experiences working at a HSI. Also, I wanted to better understand if their mentoring experiences have contributed to their persistence and resilience.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology has been defined as a study of a phenomena, appearances of things or things as they appear in our experience, or the meanings things have in our experiences (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017). Therefore, as a discipline phenomenology is different from, but connected to epistemology, ethics, logic, and ontology (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). It was developed by German mathematician Edmund Husserl and his views were later expanded by Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, & Sartre (Spiegelberg, 1982). The aim of phenomenology is to develop a deeper grasp of the nature of meaning of everyday experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen,

1990). Hence, phenomenological research is the study of essences that seeks to understand the very nature of a phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1984: & van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology is distinct from other scientific approaches in that it seeks to ascertain perceptive delineations of the manner in which we experience the world.

The literature divides phenomenology into classical and contemporary approaches (Creswell, 2007; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017). Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty are credited with founding and expanding phenomenology (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017). Contemporary phenomenology is centered on the phenomenal character of consciousness or inner perceptions (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017). Hermeneutical phenomenology is focused on lived experience and interpreting the “texts” of life (hermeneutics) (van Manen, 1990). Hermeneutics allows a more interpretive role for research. Psychological phenomenology is centered less on the interpretations of the researcher and more of a description of the experiences of participants (Moustakas, 1994). This study employed hermeneutic phenomenology because it is centered on the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color. Furthermore, it is a research approach that seriously interests the researcher (van Manen, 1990). It is important to note that hermeneutical phenomenology is more than a description by researcher, but it is an interpretive process where the meaning of the participants lived experiences is highlighted by the researcher (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological researchers are curious in the subjectivity of research participants and seek to gain a better understanding of that subjectivity (Englander, 2016;

Gremler, 2004; Flanagan, 1954). Hence, this research approach would provide a distinct and unique voice for faculty and staff of color.

This approach was selected as the qualitative design of the study to encapsulate the essence of the phenomenon in question, in this instance the faculty and staff member's unique voice. Through employing intentional analysis and thick descriptions I was able to garner and more closely understand the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color to ascertain how meaning is created about the phenomena by the participants (Cresswell, 2007; van Manen, 1990).

The decision to study the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color was rooted in my belief that the intersectionality of their identities and mentoring experiences contribute to their resiliency and ability to persist in higher education. Therefore, this is essential and may have the potential to make the experience in higher education better for both postsecondary institutions and professionals of color. As van Manen states, hermeneutic phenomenology is "a philosophy of actions always in a personal and situated sense. A person who turns toward phenomenological reflections does so out of personal engagement" (1990, p.154). The aforementioned quote works in tandem with my previously articulated statement about faculty and staff of color.

Researcher's Role

This study afforded me the opportunity to have an insider's perspective as I am a staff member of color. Additionally, as the researcher, I was the "primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, et al, 2015, p.16). Qualitative research aims to deeply understand and make meaning from the data. Merriam (2015) reports that as a researcher I can expand my understanding of the phenomena through employing

clarifying, nonverbal communication and analyzing information quickly. Also, member checking was conducted as well as delving into unusual responses (p.16). Research on insider positionality describes researchers as sometimes sharing multiple identities such as class, ethnicity, and race with participants (Chavez, 2008). Therefore, my experiences and perspective as a staff member of color working in higher education contributed greatly to my positionality. Building a rapport with faculty and staff of color was likely easier and quicker for me because I had similar experiences as a staff member of color (Chavez, 2008). Additionally, participants were drawn from my workplace so I had the potential of knowing them. Being familiar with the professional associations for faculty and staff of color afforded me the opportunity to better recruit study participants. At the same time, it was essential as I moved forward with the study, that I remained aware of my thoughts, feelings, and perspective as not to allow them to cloud or disrupt the study findings. Therefore, it was essential to employ Husserl's concept of epoche (bracketing) to set aside my experiences (as much as possible) in order to effectuate a fresh perspective on the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2007). Essentially, it was critical to bracket when participants had similar or dissimilar experiences from my own. It is important to acknowledge both the benefits and challenges associated with having an insider positionality. However, it is essential to intentionally mediate and balance having insider positionality with the role of the researcher in order to have the most objective study possible (Chavez, 2008).

Study Setting

The study was intentionally conducted at a large, four-year, state public HSI in Central Texas. The public demographic information as of fall 2017 that was furnished by

the university indicated that there were 38,694 students enrolled (34,206 undergraduates; 551 post-baccalaureate; 3,447 master; and 490 doctoral) at the institution. More than 27,000 students received financial aid and there were more than 174,000 alumni during this time period. Figures 3.1 through 3.4 emphasize and provide specific analysis of ethnicity/race, and binary gender (male and female). Although this postsecondary institution became minority/majority in 2017, it is important to note the diminutive numbers of male and female faculty and staff of color in comparison to White faculty and staff. Hence, this school’s faculty and staff population is not representative of the student population.

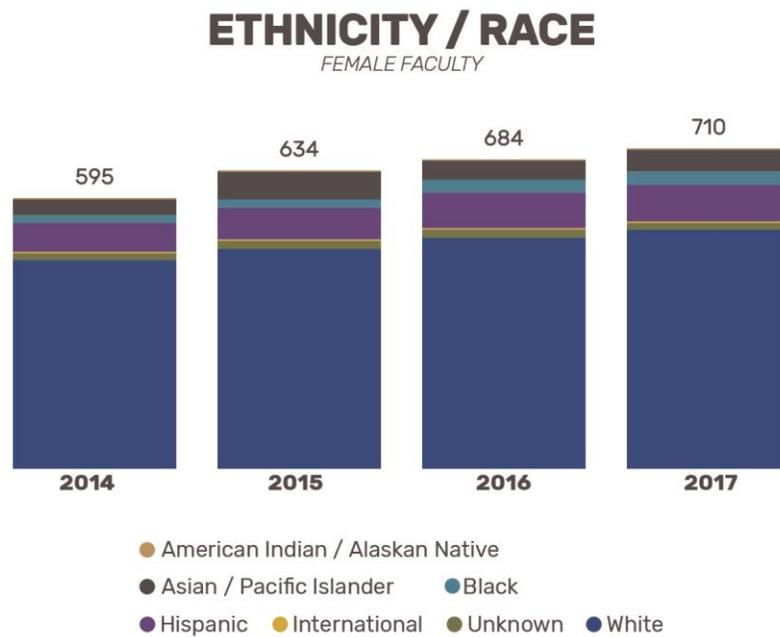


Figure 3.1 Female Faculty

ETHNICITY / RACE

MALE FACULTY

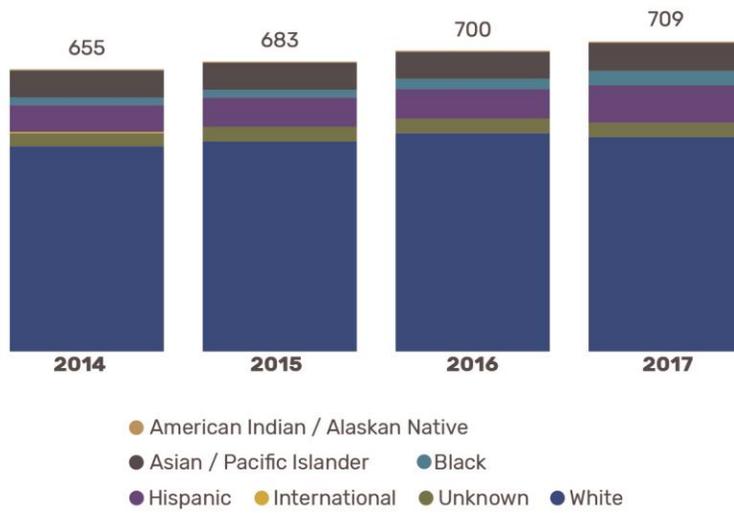


Figure 3.2 Male Faculty

ETHNICITY / RACE

FEMALE STAFF

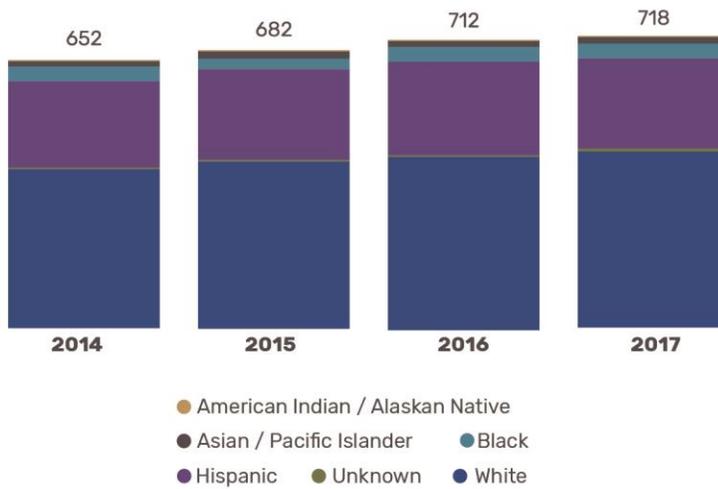


Figure 3.3 Female Staff

ETHNICITY / RACE

MALE STAFF

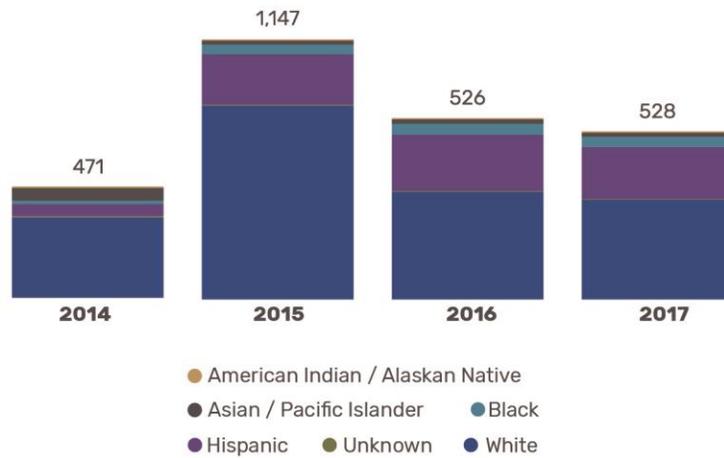


Figure 3.4 Male Staff

Research Participants and Recruitment

For the intention of this research study, I drew on a participant sample size of 8; 3 full-time faculty of color and 5 full-time staff of color, with an equal representation among males and females (4 each). A purposeful criterion sampling technique was employed to determine the research participants. Patton (2002) indicates that purposive sampling enables you as a researcher to identify the specific characteristics of interest that are uncharacteristic within the phenomena.

The essential requirements to participate in this study included: (a) being a full-time faculty or staff of color at the HSI, (b) having a minimum of 7 years in any higher education institution, (c) having experienced formal or informal mentoring and (d) being willing to participate in the study and share their experiences and reflect on how they believe mentoring has impacted their resilience, persistence and helped them grow personally or professionally. By ensuring the selected participants met the criteria, I was

vouching for the authenticity of the participants’ experiences in order to collect thick, rich data and gain and in-depth perception into the research (Patton, 2002). More importantly, I was able to effectuate that the aim of the study was achieved (Merriam, 2015).

In order to compile a sample needed for this research, I composed an email that was addressed to three different professional faculty and staff of color organizations at the HSI. The faculty and staff of color professional associations were used to recruit study participants. The email was sent to their entire membership. Please refer to appendix A for the email. Also, the consent form was completed by study participants (see appendix B). The IRB process was strictly followed to ensure that the study was ethical.

Table 3.1
Study Participants (pseudonyms) Demographic Information

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Age	Professional Area
Blue Man	Male	Black	51-55	Academic/Student Affairs
Helen	Female	Black	51-55	Academic/Student Affairs
Lucha De Vida	Male	Latinx	46-50	Academic/Student Affairs
Mel	Male	Black	51-55	Academic/Student Affairs
Michael	Male	Black	46-50	Faculty
Monica Lee	Female	Black	56+	Faculty

Rocky	Female	Latinx	46-50	Faculty
Sarah	Female	Latinx	35-40	Academic/Student Affairs

Data Collection Procedures

Merriam (2015) posited that qualitative researchers are concerned with how people make meaning from their experiences and how those meanings customize their worlds (p. 6). Hence, semi-structured, open-ended interviews, artifacts, field notes, and a researcher’s journal were collected to accurately capture participants’ experiences.

Interviews

Seidman (2006) posits that essence of in-depth phenomenological interviewing is to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experience of other people as well as how they make meaning of that experience. Furthermore, Seidman (2006) encourages use of the three 90-minute interview series in which you focus on life history, obtain details of experiences and reflect on the meaning. Additionally, interviews can assist the researcher in contextualizing the cultural, interpersonal, and social nuances of their environment (Creswell, 2007). Interviews should be spaced from three days to a week apart to enable the participant to process the last interview (Seidman, 2006). Patton (2002) suggests employing open-ended questions and prompts to garner detailed responses about people’s experiences, feelings, knowledge, and perceptions. Table 3.6 demonstrates how data collection procedure were employed to answer the research question guided by Crenshaw’s (1991) intersectionality framework.

Each interview (see Appendix C for the interview guide) lasted no more than 90 minutes which enabled study participants to provide intentional responses without becoming overwhelmed from interviews that were too long. Therefore, each of the interviews was spaced out at least one week to afford study participants to process their thoughts from the initial interview. Each of the interviews followed Seidman's three step approach (2006). The initial and subsequent (critical incident reflection) interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and saved as a searchable electronic data source in Excel for the purposes of data analysis and coding.

Initial interview. Initial interviews began in the spring of 2018, subsequent to IRB approval and participant recruitment. Initial interviews were held through the mid to late spring semester. Study participants received a demographic and qualifying interview questionnaire prior to the initial interview (see Appendix B). The intent of the initial interview was to obtain their life history as well as to obtain details of experiences (Seidman, 2006).

Critical Incident/follow up interview. The critical incident interview was essential to gather reflect on the meaning of their experiences. Specifically, the emotional and cognitive connections between the participants' work and life (Seidman, 2006). In addition, exploration of significant events, incidents, issues, and processes mentioned the research participant (Englander, 2016; Flanagan, 1954; Gremler, 2004). Participants were asked to clarify or further expand on responses from the initial interview. Questions included in the critical incident/follow up interview were generated from the transcribed data provided by study participants.

Field Notes

Field notes were an integral component of my research study. Spencer, Richie, and Ormston (2014) suggest analysis is an ongoing intrinsic part of the entire process of qualitative research and should be included in all phases. Therefore, field notes were taken before, during and after each interview, as the information was current. Patton (2002) explain that field notes give a clear delineation of observations that enable the researcher to recall an observation at a later point. Additionally, field notes serve as another data collection source of in a natural setting (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). My field notes equipped me with specific differentiated information connected to the study events, context, and setting. It is important to note that body language and nonverbal affect of study participants during the interviews served as another valuable resource (Patton, 2002). Lastly, field notes allowed me to contextualize and clarify participants lived experiences when reviewing the transcripts and audio records. As a result, I was able to seek clarification when needed.

Researcher's Journal

My researcher's journal was an integral tool that I employed throughout this dissertation study. The researcher's journal enabled me reflect on my thoughts, reactions and feelings about the study participant interviews. Most importantly, this tool enabled me to make thoughtful and informed decisions about the research process where my own perspective was reduced. The researcher's journal is a reflexive maneuver in qualitative research that makes the researcher's experiences and perspective transparent during analysis (Ortlipp, 2008). As the researcher, I intentionally reflected and wrote twice weekly as I both analyzed and reanalyzed my research data. These methodical and

reflexive practices enabled me as the researcher to intentionally consider the larger researcher picture in relation to the emergent themes and patterns.

Table 3.2
Data Collection Methods Relationship to Research Question

Data Collected	Researcher Question	
Initial and critical incident/follow up interviews, field notes, and researcher's journal	RQ1: How do faculty and staff of color at a Central Texas HSI utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist in their careers, given the intersectionality of their identities?	
	Theoretical Framework/Purpose	
	Intersectionality of Identities of faculty and staff of color that shaped your higher education experience (Crenshaw, 1991)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are your own salient identities? 2) How has the intersectionality shaped your mentoring experiences? 3) How Does this impact your resilience?

Trustworthiness

In an effort to undergird and evaluate the trustworthiness of qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985, 2000) suggest the following three differing stratagem that may be used including: Credibility, dependability, and transferability. Credibility refers to whether the participants' perceptions are congruent with the researcher's depiction of them. Dependability refers to whether you can track the processes and procedures employed to collect and interpret the data. Lastly, transferability speaks to the alignment between the research context and other contexts as assessed by the reader. For this study, bracketing, member checks, thick rich descriptions, and triangulation were engaged to achieve trustworthiness.

Bracketing

Trustworthiness was further accomplished by intentionally using epoche or bracketing my subjectivity with regard to my research topic. Provided my previous history with numerous colleges and universities as a professional of color, I believed that epoche/bracketing was essential since I have extensive knowledge about the field of higher education. My knowledge provided me with a unique insider perspective as well as a unique perspective to the study. Creswell (2007) supports this claim by suggesting that the researcher should decide how and in what way will their culture, gender, gender identity expression, race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status be integrated into the study. Throughout the entire study I employed epoche/bracketing to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. Epoche/bracketing provided that I was able to authentically represent the study participants lived experiences and not my own. Utilizing my researcher's journal on a weekly basis assisted me in reflexivity. Additionally, I

acknowledged my own thoughts and feelings that may have resulted in a loss of neutrality. Also, used the steps posited by Ahern (1999) to work around blocks and data analysis.

Member Checks

The researcher should document feedback on their interpretations of data from study participants through member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). More specifically, member checks were employed to ensure the credibility of the participants' lived experiences and accuracy of the transcribed data. Each study participant was provided with an email copy of their individual transcript of their initial interview and critical incident/follow-up interview with instructions to review the transcripts to ensure accuracy and respond with feedback so that I was able to accurately represent their experiences in the study. Each of the eight study participants responded. Six of the eight participants had no additional comments and affirmed that the transcript information was accurate. The remaining two participants provided clarification and minor edits to make sure their experiences were accurately represented.

Additionally, a second member check was conducted after the data analysis and interpretation of the results was conducted. Study participants were e-mailed their participant profile as well as their emergent themes that came out of the study. Hence, the study participants were asked to analyze their profiles and emergent themes in an effort to ensure accuracy of the interpreted data that I developed. Each of the eight participants indicated that both their participant profile and data interpretation was accurately captured. Two the participants made minor edits to their participant profiles.

Thick, Rich Descriptions

Qualitative research is distinguished by “thick descriptions. Hence, the richness of the descriptions captured in the study provide the shared vicarious experience (Denzin, 2001). Additionally, thick, rich description allows for transferability because of the detailed descriptions provided about the participants and setting. (Creswell, 2007). Provided that the essential source of data collections for this study was participant interviews, employing thick, rich description was an integral approach for achieve trustworthiness. This was achieved by providing full descriptions of faculty and staff of color who work at the HSI. Additionally, I describe in detail each subtheme and tool which emerged from the data analysis. Connections were then made between the subthemes, tools and participants with their statements to support interpretations of the data. Through the use my researcher’s journal and field notes, I provided comprehensive descriptions, which increased the transferability of my findings.

Triangulation

Triangulation is key in gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being study as it enhances the breath, depth, and rigor to the study, and provides corroborative evidence of the data collected (Yin, 2014). Hence, to establish trustworthiness, triangulation was used by drawing from the following: audio-recorded interviews, field notes, and my researcher’s journal. These multiple sources of data were compared and contrasted to validate the findings which emerged from the data.

Data Analysis

Data collected from initial and follow up interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed. Furthermore, field notes, researcher journal entries, and archival records were both digitally and manually cached. Subsequently, these data sources were utilized as supplemental resources of analysis and comprehension. Hence, becoming engrossed in the data was critically imperative to the qualitative research process (Patton, 2002). Employing Taylor-Powell and Renner's (2003) qualitative data analysis method, I intentionally submerged myself in the collected data by listening to all recorded interviews, reading and rereading through the transcripts; reviewing the collected archival records, my field notes, and researcher's journal. Through this process, themes began to emerge from the reading and rereading of each participant transcript. Creswell (2007) posits that data analysis encompasses organization and preparation of data (transcriptions, etc.) to be analyzed and subsequent compartmentalizing data into themes through use of coding and concentrating codes. This process results in discussion, figures and tables.

After collecting the participant's illustrative responses, I read and reread the transcribed interviews. Next, I listened to the recorded interviews and made corrections to the transcript while listening to the transcribed interviews. Through both listening to the interviews and cross-checking the transcriptions aided me in eliminating errors and enabled me to further submerge myself into the participant's experiences. Each participant transcript was read multiple times to obtain a general sense of the whole data. During this portion of the data analysis the feelings, ideas, and nonverbal communication that emerged were documented in the researcher's journal and was analyzed along with

the transcript. This helped me to examine the phenomenon as experienced by the study participants.

Following this step, I extracted significant statements that related to the phenomenon under study (Shosha, 2012). I utilized MAXQDA software to code the data and bracket statements which related to participants' mentoring experiences, resiliency development, support systems, challenges experienced, successes, support systems, and all other experiences encountered during their lifespan that enable them to persist in their careers working at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Then the codes and accompanying quotes were copied into an excel spreadsheet for further review. This step allowed me to formulate meanings from these statements. These formulations revealed and emphasized meanings hidden in the various contexts of the examined phenomenon (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007).

At this point in the data analysis I moved from what the participants shared to what they meant. Through repetition of the before mentioned steps I began to organize the formulated meanings into clusters of themes by combining the findings into a comprehensive description of the phenomenon being studied. Additionally, I used structure and self-imposed epoche to bridge the gaps between intuition, and data collection.

Lastly, I reached out to study participants. First, I emailed each participant their profile for review. Second, I emailed participants the research findings and followed up with a phone call to discuss the results. Third, I clarified with participants to determine if their profiles were authentic, accurate reflections of their lived experiences. All study participants indicated that these were accurate representations of who they were.

Delimitations/Limitations

Creswell (2007) posits that delimitations set the boundaries for a qualitative study and limits the study participants who meet the specific criteria of the study. The intentional aim of this research study was to articulate the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color who work at a HSI in central Texas through the lens of intersectionality. Therefore, study participants were delimited based on the following criteria, including: (a) being full-time faculty and staff of color at a HSI, (b) having been employed for a minimum of 7 years in higher education, (c) having experienced mentoring, triumphs, challenges that may or may not have impacted their resilience, and (d) being willing to participate in the study and share their experiences.

The limitations of the study include the small sample size of only 8 research participants and the limited time allocated to conduct the in-depth participant interviews. It was essential to be respectful of the research participants' time. Hence, I was considerate of limiting each of their interviews to 60 to 90 minutes for each of the two interviews. This study only centered on the phenomena of 8 full-time faculty and staff members of color at a HSI in central Texas so comparisons to the larger population of faculty and staff members cannot be made, but it is common for qualitative research to employ small purposefully selected samples of information rich cases. Information provided on the study site and participants will allow readers to make their own judgements about potential transferability of findings to their contexts. Chapter four presents a discussion of the findings, as well a profile of each of the eight participants.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed account of the study's research methodology. Hence, a qualitative methodology was employed to examine the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color at an HSI. The participant sample size consisted of eight purposefully selected study participants. The collection of data included semi-structured focused interviews which lasted between 60-to 90 minutes, archival records, field notes, researcher's journal and utilized Taylor-Powell and Renner's (2003) qualitative data analysis approach. Trustworthiness was achieved by using thick, rich descriptions, epoche, triangulation, and member checks. Delimitations in this study included, participants, location of the study, and theoretical framework. Also, limitations of this study included sample size and time allotted to conduct the research. Finally, this study adhered to an assertive timeline. A copy of the timeline is included in Appendix E.

In the subsequent section, I present the individual experiences of the study participants. Hence, each section will begin with the participant's pseudonym and an image that represents their lived experiences identity. I have intentionally chosen to employ pillars to represent each participant. Pillars were chosen because they are a solid foundation that is employed in both building and maintaining support. Furthermore, pillars are comprised of elements that assure their strength. Next, a brief narrative of each participant is provided as well as information regarding their lived experiences as a full-time faculty or staff person of color who is employed at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Also, information about whether or not mentoring has contributed to their ability to persist in their roles in higher education. Prior to further exploring the findings of this study, it is essential to contextualize the results by effectively understanding how they

were determined. All study participants selected their own pseudonyms and the departments and institution were assigned pseudonyms in order to provide confidentiality in the study as well as to ensure that the institution may not identify study participants.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings obtained from documents, participant interviews, participant profiles, and researcher's journal to answer the research question that guided this study. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate and gain in-depth insight into the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff who work at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Also, to determine if their mentoring experiences has had an impact on their ability to persist at their respective institution. It is anticipated that the analysis of these findings will ameliorate the challenges faced by faculty and staff of color. Additionally, these findings will inform the body of literature around improving recruitment and retention for this population.

This chapter describes the participants' profiles and emergent themes which were derived from the data collected from the participants at the HSI. Participant narratives speak more broadly about personal experiences and issues of resilience, persistence, and mentoring outside of the professional setting and how those then relate to the professional setting. Hence, the following themes that emerged are as follows:

1. Support Systems for Faculty and Staff of Color
2. Mentoring and Strategies that Facilitated Success for Participants
3. Development of Resiliency that Facilitated Persistence for Participants
4. Effects of Spirituality on Faculty and Staff Members of Color

Overview of Participant Profiles

The participant selection process that was discussed in the previous chapter resulted in eight volunteers who met the criteria for this research study and were available

for the set of interviews. The eight participants were comprised of four females and four males. In addition, there were five staff and three faculty participants from Nia University. Research participants hold numerous positions from mid-level management to executive positions in numerous departments and offices. Each of the study participants chose their own pseudonym to protect their identity. Hence, the following eight profiles represent the study's research participants.

Blue Man - BM

Blue Man is a Black man who has served in numerous roles in higher education for over 25 years. He currently assists students to successfully matriculate through the university system by providing students mentoring, support, and resources as a staff member in student services. His two-parent household, spiritual base, and tight-knit community significantly influenced who he is as a person today. Additionally, his childhood experiences created a foundation for the development of his resilience both personally and professionally. To this end, Blue Man states,

My mother was my biggest cheerleader. She was always there. My father always made sure that I understood that his job was to put a roof over my head, clothes on my back and food to eat. Also, too, when I think back now over the years, I appreciate that discipline now because I feel like that kept me out of trouble... I grew up in a true community in the true sense of it in that our neighborhood was truly a neighborhood. If you had, we had. If we had, you had. If it was somebody's birthday, it was our birthday. We all went to church together. We all went to the same school together.

Blue Man was initially interested in becoming a teacher, but happened upon a career in higher education through a graduate assistantship while he was obtaining his master's and immensely enjoyed his experiences. Blue Man states that his mother said, 'What makes you happy?' That's how I fell into it and I really loved it. I enjoyed it. It challenged me, especially as a young 25-year-old.

Receiving mentoring has played a monumental role in Blue Man's path as a higher education practitioner. Hence, it has aided him in further developing resilience as well as his ability to persist in his career. He states, "My director was a mentor of mine and still is to this day. He was very good about guiding me in my professional career. He gave me the latitude to do what I needed to do within parameters." His mentor was a White male who had numerous years working in postsecondary education, but provided him with both challenge and support to assist him in developing as a whole professional. In addition, Blue Man's mentoring experiences enabled him to navigate political landscapes and understand the larger context of postsecondary education. Blue Man has experienced challenging times, but has successfully overcome those challenges by relying on his resilience, larger community, and family systems. For instance, he did not succumb to a student led campaign to get him terminated from his professional role. Blue Man's most salient identities in terms of intersectionality are, as he states, "I consider myself a Black male, heterosexual, married, which I value, and I understand that out of all those differing ideas, the first thing is that I'm Black first, first and foremost."

Summary. Blue Man's story provides some in-depth insight into the experiences of a staff member of color who works at a HSI as well as his mentoring experiences that have aided him in persisting in higher education. Through his lens, relationships are

fundamental in providing support, guidance, and leadership to others. By specifically working with faculty and staff of color and in particular Black males, Blue Man speaks about creating an intentional culture of care that results in higher retention for Black faculty, staff, and students. Not only does Blue Man have the capacity to impart sage wisdom and advice to students, faculty, and staff, he also routinely learns from those he interacts with. Blue Man continues to evolve to his highest and best self.

Helen – H

Helen is a Black academic/student affairs practitioner who has worked in postsecondary education for over 25 years. Helen posits, “I prefer [postsecondary education] because higher education indicates there’s a lower with regard to education.” Additionally, her professional experiences include work in a vast array of fields ranging from criminal justice to social work. She hails from a very close family. Individuals in her family have rich history as trailblazing civic/servant leaders. Helen’s maternal and paternal grandparents left an indelible impression in shaping her. She shares,

They were very influential in shaping a lot of my ideas about the importance of community involvement and helping others and connecting with those in your community to make sure that you are positively contributing to the community. They also shaped my understanding of probably justice and the significance of making sure you do your part to ensure that others are—either have a seat at the table or are not unduly or unfairly targeted...

Helen integrated her elementary school. During this time, she developed an awareness of exclusion, invisibility, and being targeted. She explains, “That’s probably when I first learned that you have to fight for yourself because I kept leaving school.”

One of Helen's teachers served as her advocate. This educator was intentional to ensure that Helen was doing well. Because of those experiences Helen shares, "...I would say those are some early key factors that probably shaped my awareness about the roles of educators, the role of involvement in community, and responsibility towards others in the community." Helen has obtained her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Her professional journey started with criminal justice and social work prior to entering postsecondary education. It is important to note that Helen's reasoning for choosing her career path was heavily influenced by her experiences. Hence, in regards to that, she states, "the disparities between people who had an education and those who didn't, but particularly, the over-representation of people of color within those systems."

Summary. From Helen's narrative, it becomes clear the role that ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality played in her career advancement. She states,

Yeah, I would say one of the things that I learned very quickly was that not only was my identities, intersectional identities, that was a factor in other people's perception of me. That was significant, I also understood who I worked for, and their identity mattered. In higher education, in postsecondary education, excuse me. I have to interrupt myself 'cause we're so conditioned to saying that. In postsecondary education, the place, and the times, the opportunities for me to advance, primarily were extended through White men which is very interesting.

Helen explained that some of the professional challenges she's had have come from White women as a Black woman. She has received mentoring and support, but made a differentiation between the two. She says,

Yes. I would make the distinction between sponsor and mentors. A sponsor is someone who makes the decision. They're not just there to support you and help you to thrive and develop some clear goals and maybe a path for that. A sponsor is someone who says, "Okay, I understand this is your goal. Let me help you get there." Those sponsors, I would say, they mentored, but they were more intentional.

Helen is very spiritual and that has, and continues, to play a primary role in her life. She considers family members as well as professional mentors/sponsors as people who have aided her in developing resilience and persistence.

Lucha De Vida - LDV

Lucha De Vida is a Hispanic law enforcement professional with 20 plus years of experience in both corporate and postsecondary education. He comes from a very close nuclear military family that has resided all around the world. Lucha De Vida's father was a high-ranking non-commissioned officer and his family spent most of their time supporting some of the families and subordinates of his father's units. Specifically by sharing meals together and providing counseling to them. Lucha De Vida explains, "I remember not havin' a whole lot of money, because the military didn't pay a whole lot, but we never needed anything. We had everything we needed." He was introduced to the private side of law enforcement through a mentor (non-traditional student) who educated him on fraud investigations. This work enabled him to provide a quality standard of living for both his wife and family. He transitioned into postsecondary education as a result of wanting to spend more time with his family and travel less. He states, "...because of my higher education experience, because of the ability to mentor and teach

and encourage people at a different level.” Lucha De Vida’s experiences with law enforcement and a member of a military family have instilled in him the importance of learning to work well with all groups. His mother and father were influential in instilling that they, as a family, were a team and in order to be successful it was important to be open-minded about people and their lifestyles. He states, “We were always one of those families that people came to us because we weren’t judgmental, we weren’t one of those ones that was gonna cast you down. We were just open.”

Lucha De Vida is most proud of his work in professional associations within higher education that have led to the inclusion and advancement of faculty, staff, and students of Latin ancestry. He has been able to develop policies based on solid quantitative data and balance them with qualitative information.

Summary. Lucha De Vida acknowledges the importance of mentoring as well as the importance of communication and acceptance of others beliefs, thoughts, and lifestyles. Furthermore, Lucha De Vida believes in the importance to understanding how emotions play a significant role in a person’s decision making.

Mel - M

Mel is a Black academic/student affairs professional who has worked at a HSI for 28 years. A White male mentor introduced him to the profession prior to him fully understanding higher education. He is a native Texan raised in an almost all Black neighborhood. Mel’s mother and maternal grandmother raised him. His grandmother played a significant role in his life and made an indelible impression on who he has become as an adult. He states,

Of all the years I had the fortune of havin' her in my life, I never heard one story about racism, bigotry, prejudice or whatever—although I know she experienced it. There was a significant Christianity influence. I pretty much adopted her view of Christianity.

...So I think that's probably been the biggest influence on me and shaped the way I live my life, that I see life, that I see the world, that I see all others and what have ya'. I respect others and their differences, their beliefs, their upbringing' and whatever, because that's their world.

His early education was marked by the integration of Black and Mexican Americans. Later during middle school education, White students were bused into his school district. Mel went on to earn a bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degree. He entered postsecondary education through receiving both mentoring and sponsoring from a mentor. He has worked in a number of functional arenas in academic/student affairs. In terms of the most salient piece of his intersectionality, Mel shared, "The only identity I'm assigning to myself is that I'm a Christian, and I'm a child of God. That's all that I'm assignin' to myself."

Summary. From Mel's story, it is evident that he meets people where they are and views them through a lens of respect, equity, parity, diversity, and most importantly acceptance. His strong moral foundation serves as a compass to navigate life. Mel is most proud of being a father to his children. Mel has served in numerous professional leadership positions to advance cultural diversity and inclusion. He has benefited from the mentoring he has received throughout his life and professional career. Additionally,

Mel continues to serve as a mentor and resource for students, faculty, and staff of all different races.

Michael - MI

Michael was born and raised in southern Georgia. He grew up in a two-parent household in which both his parents were formally educated teachers. His two siblings have terminal degrees in addition to himself. He also adds, "...32 members of my family graduated from the same HBCU." Michael followed the footsteps of his father's chosen field of expertise. He has worked in higher education for over 18 years and held a tenured faculty position at a previous university. In addition, he is one of a few Black people who hold a doctoral degree in his field of study. Michael has significant professional experience ranging from corrections to teaching. He describes his childhood as a positive and structured one that included boundaries and consequences if rules were not followed. Early in his childhood, his parents told him he would be attending college. Assisting others was a core value that his family instilled in him. Michael states, "No matter where you go in life, you always reach back and help somebody else." Hence, this philosophy serves as the foundation that guides him to this day. He made the decision to enter higher education after working in the field of corrections. An encounter with a former student served as motivation for him to go back to school, complete his doctorate, and return to teaching.

Michael's Black colleagues, parents, relatives, and siblings have served as his mentors and role models as they are accomplished in their respective fields. Conversely, in an effort to pay it forward he serves as a mentor for students and has established a

national organization for minorities. With regard to his development of resilience, Michael states,

I use negative push to drive me to the positive factor. What I mean by that is I've been told no and what I can't do all my life. The sense of bein' resilient is that being able to overcome all of the obstacles that've been there. Whether they hurt or not, the problem—the thing was I push myself still continuin' the process. I use negative energy to drive me.

Summary. From his narrative, Michael is an accomplished scholar and professor in a field of study with very few minority educators. Although he is routinely confronted with vicissitudes in and around race and marginalization, he remains hopeful and resilient. He states, “I say, you know what? I'm gonna persevere and push on, no matter what can—obstacle get in my way, I'm not gonna allow that to stop me from bein' successful.” In terms of the intersectionality of his identities, he views his race as the most salient aspect of his identities.

Monica Lee - ML

Monica Lee is a native Texan who grew up in a two-parent household. Her parents were both teachers. Growing up, her parents believed and exercised gender equality before it was either a trend or popular concept. For instance, her father cooked and sewed when her mother did not. She states, “...I actually lived a pretty good and charmed life—when I reflect back on the lives of other people that I've seen and encountered.” Monica Lee developed a strong work ethic based on the example that her parents set. For instance, she states,

I also learned, and was taught old fashioned values, which I really adhere to. That your word is your bond. If you say you're going to do something, then you do it. That you respect people. That you are civil towards people. It doesn't matter how people treat you. It only matters how you treat people. Those are the things that I think I grew up with and learned. You always leave a job the way you found it as if you are going back to it.

Monica Lee has worked at a HSI for almost 19 years. She is a Black tenured faculty member who has taught for the last 12 years. Her professional experiences include case manager, child protection, social work, trainer, and education. Although her parents were public school educators, they intentionally enrolled her in parochial school until high school, when she attended a public school. She believes race, ethnicity, and gender have played a significant role in her career path. She states,

In this country, gender plays a part because women then are usually allowed to do some things, and especially Black women, that Black men can't do. We're more "acceptable" than Black men are. I know gender played a part there because I'm not as threatening as a Black man is usually viewed. I think I have been given some opportunities, especially here in higher ed, to be part of committees or site visits for accreditation because I was Black when I first started in the department, I was the only one. Therefore, I was needed for them be able to check the box of this search committee is diverse.

Monica Lee has experienced triumphs by being re-appointed each year and ultimately securing tenure. Conversely, she has experienced marginalization as a faculty member of color. However, she has been intentionally silent at times when inappropriate

statements were made in order to garner support for her tenure process. To this end, she states, “Intentional silence. That means then you have to stuff that. You have to stuff it down. If you don’t have a release for it, it’s gonna come out, somehow.”

Mentoring has played a role in Monica Lee’s ability to persist and obtain tenure in postsecondary education. Specifically, she received mentoring from a White tenured colleague who understood the political landscape on both the department and university wide levels. She states, “When I was going up [for tenure], she told me, she said, ‘The requirement is six to eight. You need to have 10.’ I said okay.” Resilience has been a continual part of Monica Lee’s journey as she states, “My mother, who is one of the wisest people I’ve ever met said to me, real quietly on the phone one time, she said, ‘Honey, you are your own study in resilience.’”

Summary. For Monica Lee, spirituality is a core element of her identity. She has persisted in her career because of solid work ethic and self-determination. She pays it forward by serving in minority professional university organizations. In terms of the most salient of her intersectional identities, Monica Lee states, “I perceive myself as a strong, capable Black woman. Black is always first. ‘Cause it permeates everything. That’s a major part of my identity.”

Rocky - R

Rocky is a self-described “fighter” who was born and raised in California. She grew up in a nuclear household that was culturally, politically, and emotionally astute. Rocky’s father migrated to the United States from northern Mexico. Her mother was a native Californian who came from an influential Mexican family in the agricultural business. Her mother intentionally controlled her reproduction by waiting five years

before giving birth to her. Rocky's mother was purposefully mindful of the economic, political, and social environment at that time. Rocky states,

[My mother], she chose to have me, to have me 'cause she was hopeful that society was changing. She made that very clear to me. From the get-go, I always knew that it was a privilege for me to be born in a poor Mexican-American family living in a farm worker area in California because poverty really shaped her.

Rocky was educated in California and experienced challenges since her first day in kindergarten. Growing up, her father spoke Spanish and her mother spoke English. Her father provided her with political insight as well as the importance of education. Her mother's approach was telling her, "You're just gonna do it." In addition, Rocky's grandfather left an indelible impression on her.

Rocky's parents taught her resilience through metaphors and their experiences with discrimination and marginalization. She states, "[My father], he would tell me, 'Look at the fight Rocky.' I'm like, I would be analyzing the fight with him. He would be analyzing what's going on in the fight. He'd say, 'Notice how somebody punches. The punch doesn't happen just at random.'" Hence, Rocky holds an associate's, bachelor's, and doctoral degree. She refers to herself as a teacher, professor, and researcher. She has spent the last 13 years as a faculty member, and is now a tenured full professor at Nia University. Rocky indicates that because of her bicultural upbringing she is adept at code switching with the use of both English and Spanish. For example, she states, "That switching, I think, has helped me in—politically I do that. I'm not a way here or extreme. I play the middle. I'm very centrist. In other words, I learn about different cultures..."

Hence, this is how she views how race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality have played a role in her career path.

Rocky received mentoring from a White lesbian professor who, as she states, "...also helped me get orientated of what I needed to do to go to graduate school." Her professors in her doctoral program served as mentors who heavily influenced and encouraged her. She categorizes mentoring into the following,

"A" work is all those technical preparations that you need, mathematically, conceptually, the work, the academic work, as we think of academic work. The "B" work is keeping your soul or your spirituality intact, right... The "C" piece are the people who I had that couldn't do the psychosocial, they didn't have the affect piece, they didn't have the skills, but they had the connections.

Summary. Rocky is a student-centered professor who is committed to social justice as well as equity and parity. She routinely goes beyond the call of duty to assist all students in successfully matriculating through the university system. Also, she was teaching at her university prior to its HSI designation, so she understands how the institution has struggled to define itself. She has an intimate understanding of the health implications that universities have on faculty and staff of color. She is a spiritual person whose Christian ethos guides her decision-making.

Sarah - S

Sarah is a native Hispanic Texan who grew up in a predominantly Hispanic area of the state. She is an only child who was raised by her grandmother and grandfather. She states,

I grew up as an only child, and then around my family with a lot of cousins. They were the biggest strength for me in coming—my grandmother was that sense of strength to go to church, to do all of the things that would help me be successful. She attended public elementary, middle, and high school in her hometown. In addition, she did not receive counseling that encouraged her to pursue postsecondary education. However, because she had a cousin whom she had visited at a university in Texas she chose to attend that school. Sarah graduated and then successfully completed her master's degree while working fulltime. Academics and grades were important to her and although her parents completed high school she desired to go further. Professionally, Sarah has worked in and around postsecondary education for eight years. Initially, she worked as a consultant for her sorority and then worked in career services. She is an advocate for women and children. As a result of her experiences as a child, Sarah experienced challenges along ethnicity and race during her professional career. Hence, that impacted how she spoke. She states, "I learned how to pronounce things different, so that I didn't—I didn't—I already knew I stood out by the way I looked, but just the way I sounded." Her professional experiences ranged from sorority consultant, boyscouts, to higher education administrator.

Serving as a mentor to students is one of her biggest accomplishments. She has had many great mentors in her life who have positively influenced her personally and professionally. Sarah is proud of the fact that she is in a position to empower, train, and influence the next generation of student leaders at her university. She has primarily benefited from informal mentoring relationships, as the formal relationships did not work out. Because Sarah's mother and father had areas of deficit and were challenged, she

developed stellar resilience and was able to overcome those challenges. Her grandmother served as a beacon of hope who instilled a strong sense of spirituality in her.

Summary. Sarah is a student-centered professional committed to mentoring as well as seeing students ascend to their highest and best selves. Moreover, she continues to hone and develop her skill set through involvement in local, regional, and national professional organizations to deliver the highest level of service. She is an optimist who is able to see the bright side, while simultaneously understanding real life challenges. She is authentic and caring such that students, faculty, and staff at various levels easily connect with her.

EMERGENT THEMES

The purpose of the study was to delve into and elicit the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color who are employed full-time at a HSI to determine if mentoring had an impact on their ability to persist in their respective careers. The phenomenological model provided the means to both comprehend and explore the meaningfulness of the faculty and staff of color's lived experiences as obtained from them. In addition, the emergent themes section aids to comprehend the differences and similarities of faculty and staff of color. Through thematic analysis, I have four primary themes that encompass each study participant's personal and professional experiences. Intersectionality theory was employed and was evident in their collective narrative. Hence, I chose to organize the study results into the following four themes:

1. Support Systems for Faculty and Staff of Color
2. Mentoring and Strategies that Facilitated Success for Participants
3. Development of Resiliency that Facilitated Persistence for Participants

4. Effects of Spirituality on Faculty and Staff Members of Color

Support Systems for Faculty and Staff of Color

A support system is a network of people who provide a person with practical or emotional support. During the analyzation of the data, I considered how support systems for faculty and staff of color would impact their personal and professional lives. Upon further analysis, the concept of support came through frequently in the transcriptions from both the initial and final interviews. More intentionally, support systems for all study participants served as a transformative foundation and preparation for navigating numerous aspects of life. I was able to observe this in each of the interviews by the participants' ability to recall these experiences in vivid detail. In addition, most participants expressed deep emotional connections to several family members.

The participants shared in-depth narratives of experiencing support as well as, how it influenced their lives. This study identified two subthemes of support: familial support and guidance and community/educational support and guidance. Participants' experiences with support over the course of their life span is elucidated below.

Familial Support and Guidance. Familial support and guidance are some of the most important influences in a person's life. Throughout their lives, people depend on family to provide for their needs and protect them. I asked study participants to talk about their formative years growing up in context of home, family, and school. This question enabled me to gain deeper insight into their lives. All study participants discussed familial support and guidance and the impact that it had on their careers and lives. Study participants experienced transformative, unique, and profound support from family that shaped them.

The participants also shared the fortitude, struggles, and positivity of being a person of color raised in the United States. Each person had unparalleled experiences and world views around being a member of a racial/ethnic minority group. Hence, I want each participants' experiences and thoughts with regard to familial support to strike a global chord because it is my belief that marginalization of people of color is a continual challenge. While participant's voices will be individually highlighted and emphasized, each person's voice represents a piece of art in the mosaic arrangement representing faculty and staff of color in postsecondary education in the United States. Individual pieces of art tell individual and collective stories. Their collective mosaic should illuminate their voice to inspire hope, change, and resilience for all people.

Rocky stated that she knew it was a privilege for her to be born into a poor Mexican American family who lived in a farm worker area in California because poverty shaped her. She has had to be a fighter in order to survive the educational system. Her mother and father have always been engaged in the fight and provided her survival, success, and coping techniques. Her father immigrated to the United States from Mexico. His approach to providing love, encouragement, and support was through his use of metaphors that he would share with her as a young child. Rocky vividly recalled those intentional conversations with her dad as they watched different sporting events. She states,

[My father], he would tell me, "Look at the fight Rocky." I'm like, I would be analyzing the fight with him. He would be analyzing what's going on in the fight. He'd say, "Notice how somebody punches. The punch doesn't happen at random." He goes, "There's a plan with every punch or every stand and also

every duck.” Oh, okay. I’m like a kid, like “Okay.” I think he just did it ‘cause he was lonely and he had nobody else to talk to. When we’d talk about how to be successful, he says, “Rocky, somebody’s gonna need to learn how to roll with the punches. Somebody’s gonna throw a punch at you.” Whenever I experience any kind of discrimination, mostly ethnic discrimination or gender discrimination or sexism, it usually was about my poverty status, right? He says, “Those are the punches. You need to learn how to duck. You need to learn how to be able to. Okay? They’re gonna knock you down, but you gotta stand, get right back up.” I was reading a question, “What makes people successful?” My motto has always been Maya Angelou’s “And still I rise.” That every day, “still I rise.” I thank God for it, but then I said, “Okay. I gotta get ready for a new day and roll with the punches.”

Rocky describes how fortuitous she was to have experienced her mother’s affirming, deliberate coaching, grooming, support, and unconditional love. She explained that her mother as the only female child with six brothers. Her maternal grandmother died early leaving Rocky’s mother relegated to the status of a domestic in her own family after her maternal grandfather remarried. Hence, Rocky’s mother learned to be tough in a male dominated traditional household. In speaking to how invaluable a role her mother played in her life, she stated,

...it’s a privilege in that she wanted me, I wasn’t an accident, and she purposely didn’t have any more children afterwards. I don’t have any younger siblings or anything like that. [My mother] reminded me. She said you don’t have any other—you don’t have to look after little small siblings behind you. You have my

full undivided attention as a mom. Yeah. Her life revolved around me, everything. Every day it revolved around me. I think that was a lot of privilege.

Rocky's mother insisted and ensured her that her life would be different by raising her to think independently and overcome challenges. Rocky has experienced marginalization, vicissitudes, and macroaggressions on her journey to becoming a full professor. However, through the love, teaching, and support of her family she has created an indefatigable fervor to live life fully by teaching others to fight and thrive.

Sarah conversely shared a moving emotional story of the authentic hardships sometimes associated with family life. She is a Hispanic female who is an only child and who grew up in a predominantly Hispanic area of Texas. According to Sarah, familial difficulties resulted in her developing strength and resilience. She shared,

Overcoming challenges. I mean, being faced with some hard things, I grew up in—both my parents were alcoholics, a lot of abuse, and I think, just being able to have people that I could go to and feel safe helped me overcome those things. From there, I learned really young you can do well in school, you can, you have to—even though you're dealing with these things. Whether it was that—and then just growing into the profession. I feel I've had a lot of really challenging things happen, but just knowing that—I don't know, I guess, I learned at a young age how to separate it. How to separate things I was going through personally from what I was experiencing—or to go to work the next day, or go to school. I don't know if it's the healthiest way to cope, but I think just being faced with crazy challenges that you can't even make up. Then knowing that you have people that you can go to for support. That's the biggest thing, whether that was a mentor or

family member. That's built my resiliency. To have a safe support system. It comes in the weirdest times and the craziest people that you never thought it would be, but I think that's a safe support system. Or not familial support and guidance was not obtained from her parents, but other key family members. She stated, "Oh, my goodness, I'm an only child and I didn't have the strongest relationship with my parents for several reasons growing up... I really looked to other people to guide me."

Sarah had other family members like her grandmother and aunt who left an indelible impression and stood in and filled the gaps that her parents were unable to fill. The amalgamation of Sarah's experiences assisted her in becoming the woman she is today.

Lucha De Vida reiterated the transformative influence of familial support and guidance. He is a Hispanic male who was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado and hails from a close knit, large military family who has lived around the world. His mother and father were native Texans who later returned to the state once his father retired. Lucha De Vida spent many summers and vacations in south Texas and considers it his true home. In discussing his family, Lucha De Vida said, "We're still very close. Doesn't matter the youngest to the oldest, we're all a very, very tight-knit family. I remember not havin' a whole lot, but we never needed anything. We had everything we needed." The familial support and bonds have aided him in developing a solid sense of self and commitment to his community.

Mel also provided an account of the positive and significant impact that familial support had on him by being raised by his mother and grandmother. Mel credits his

grandmother, who was born in the late 1800s, with shaping him as a person. In reminiscing about his grandmother he states,

A loving lady. I say an interesting story. Of all the years that I have had the fortune of havin' her in my life, I never heard one story about racism, bigotry, prejudice, or whatever—although I know that she experienced it.

Helen recalled and reported memories of her mother supporting and challenging her to manage the problems she faced from other children at school. These experiences started her development of resilience. She states,

[My mom would say] “Baby, you can't keep coming' home, because Mama can't keep leavin' work. Mama's gotta work so you are gonna have to stay at school.” I would say, “Well I'm scared. Those kids keep pickin' on me and makin' fun of me.” My mother would say, “Okay you gonna be scared of the kids or scared of the belt. You gonna have to choose.” I was like, “Hmm, the belt. The kids. Okay.” And she would say, “You're gonna have to stick up for yourself. Mama can't be there, and I can't fight that battle for you.”

Monica Lee indicated that her nuclear familial experiences taught her insightful lessons about gender equality that she now realizes molded her. She states,

I grew up with parents who believed in gender equality before it was famous and a trend. That meant growing up, that I did stuff inside and outside of and my house and brother did as well. Because my parents did. I grew up with a father whose mother was a seamstress. When I needed things repaired as a kid, I would take them to my father, not my mother. Because my father had a sewing machine. My mother did not.

Blue Man's rearing in a two-parent household with divergent approaches to parenthood gave him an appreciation for the discipline he received as a child, and he credits those experiences with keeping him out of trouble. In discussing the different parenting styles of his parents, he states,

My father was a Marine from the '50s—Korean War era, so I grew up old school, very old school. It was his way or the highway. So, for my dad, he was one of those very strict disciplinarians. My mother was the caring one, so they kind of balanced each other out.

Similarly, Michael reported similar experiences of growing up in a nuclear household and being disciplined by his parents. His familial experiences influenced him. He states,

I had a nuclear family with mom and dad, and both of them had been my teachers. We knew right from wrong at an early age, we also knew what the switch was. We know that if we got into trouble, we had to go outside and pull that switch off the tree. Yeah. To me, having those types of experiences about havin' a nuclear family molded me to who I am to this day. I would see my dad as an agriculture teacher.

The participants' familial stories and experiences meander and take multiple twists and turns in the landscape of human relationships. Their stories converge on a continuum that ranges from innocuous to inimical. Hence, all of their lived familial experiences greatly contribute to who they have become as people and how they view the world. Their aforementioned stories speak to how "Identity is central to building a collective we. A transformed individual identity is potentially transformative and long-

lasting” (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 84). Therefore, their stories individually are moving, but collectively they serve as an omnipotent, transformative mosaic that promotes hope and inspires resilience development. Also, their experiences are congruent with Crenshaw’s (1991) study on understanding identity as a coalitional location which emphasizes inter-group power differentials.

Community/Educational Support and Guidance. Community/educational support and guidance provided additional personal, social, educational, physical, and emotional support to people. As I reviewed my researcher’s journal and field notes I documented how all participants displayed enthusiasm, excitement, and gratitude during their interviews when recounting their experiences in this form and how this support altered their lives. It is important to contextualize that several of my study participants indicated that they grew up in the southern United States and had the common experience of integration. More specifically, study participants recounted their stories that deeply affected them and shifted their paradigms.

Helen is a Black woman who grew up in the south central region of the United States and hails from an influential family who were among the first Black people to integrate the National Guard, serve on the school board, and run for mayor in his state. As previously mentioned in her profile, she was the first to integrate her elementary school. Although she comes from a great supportive family, she has faced major difficulties on her own. One of her teachers changed the trajectory of her education. Helen stated,

Then there was a teacher named Miss Shaw. I’ll never forget her. She said, “I wanna put her in my class. I want her to be my student.” She did. They transferred

me to her as a home teacher. That was a huge shaping element, I would say, in terms of my framework for education and the role of an educator, the fact that she intervened and decided she was going to be my advocate. What I noticed was the way she engaged me and her attitude towards me. The other teachers were indifferent. She was not. She was intentional. She would continue to make sure I was doin' okay. She would always be watching, and then, she would intervene and things like that. But, I would say those are some early key factors that probably shaped my early awareness about the roles of educators, the role of involvement in community, and responsibility towards others in community.

Monica Lee is a Black female native Texan who intimately understands the importance of community support. Both of her parents were public school educators in Texas. Hence, with regard to receiving educational support and guidance, Monica Lee stated,

School. I went to, then, a parochial school, a Catholic school. Both of my parents were teachers, remember, but in the public system. I went to a Catholic school, not public system. I think it was because my parents knew that I would get a better foundation. What was interesting was that most of my parents' friends, their children went to the same school, because they were also teachers. Kindergarten to eighth grade I actually went to that school and then I wanted to go to the public system in high school. I believe that I had a really good education.

Blue Man, too, experienced the advantages of community/educational support and guidance he acquired through his experiences growing up in Texas. The community was a community of care and support where adults provided support and guidance by treating

all children as their own. According to him his childhood community provided much needed support, protection, and structure. Blue Man stated,

I grew up in a true community in the true sense that our neighborhood was truly a neighborhood... So, you understood that you were representing not just yourself, but your mom and dad. I also knew that I couldn't act any kind of way in my home town because if I did, they would call my parents. It would make it back to the house before I did. So, I understood that you had to be careful what you do 'cause there was always somebody watching what you were doing. They were very supportive, but they weren't the ones that were like—they were always like, if we weren't doing what we were supposed to do, it was always challenging you.

Growing up in this environment gave Blue Man a foundational structure of collective responsibility and respect for adults. Hence, he now purposefully operates in a manner that encourages respect and peer accountability in all aspects of his life.

Michael, is a professor who specializes in agriculture and has received educational support from his doctoral institution and this serves as a continual motivator for him. He states, "I think I'm most proud of receivin' that Distinguished Agricultural Alumni Award. There's only been 288 outta over 30,000 graduates to receive that award. I received that in 2016." Sarah, a higher education administrator, similarly talked about the educational support she receives from working at a HSI and how this support motivates her to perform at her zenith. She states, "I feel at this university, there is very—it's part of the culture to promote and celebrate ethnicity, culture, being inclusive."

Mel, a Black administrator, talked about the community support he garnered from growing up in his predominantly Black community that gave him a sense of security and

validation. He states, “Yeah, so my neighborhood, I was raised in an all-Black neighborhood. I say 99 percent, there was probably 1 percent of someone of a different race somewhere.” Rocky received community support from the largely Hispanic community she grew up in California. Her tight knit community had dramatically different socioeconomic realities which informed her sense of social justice and encouraged her to grow. Rocky states,

I’m from a little town called King City, California. It’s a rural farm worker town in the Salinas Valley, and it’s famously know as John Steinbeck country. It’s the place where you have a great deal of poverty, and you have a great deal of rich people in the Monterey Bay area.

Lucha De Vida is a law enforcement professional who works at an HSI. His educational support aided him in selecting law enforcement as a professional career. He states, “I was going to classes with a non-traditional student who took me under his wing. He showed me the private side of law enforcement, which was the fraud investigations.”

Blue Man’s, Helen’s, Monica Lee’s, Michael’s, Sarah’s, Rocky’s, Mel, and Lucha De Vida’s community/educational support and guidance stories are varied and insightful, but share a common theme. Their experiences allowed them to successfully navigate change because it afforded them the opportunity to be courageous, open, and vivacious (Dweck, 2008). Also, it provided a growth mentality that enables you to overcome significant life impediments (Dweck, 2008).

Mentoring and Strategies that Facilitated Success for Participants

Mentoring plays an integral role in the lives of faculty and staff of color. Higher education research has linked mentoring to increased self-confidence, personal

satisfaction and growth, and career advancement (Darwin & Palmer, 2009). Furthermore, Darwin and Palmer posit, “Both mentors and mentees benefit from the mentoring relationship. Mentors describe reaping extrinsic rewards, such as accelerated research productivity, greater networking, and enhanced professional recognition when mentees perform well” (p. 126). Faculty and staff of color study participants have had numerous roles where they were mentored and served as mentors.

This theme emerged in both interviews for all of the study participants as they frequently referred to their mentoring experiences. Also, as I reviewed my researcher’s journal and field notes this theme was repeatedly referenced. I specifically asked each participant to define the term mentor, as well as, what impact mentoring has on people of color and what mentoring meant to them. Additionally, I asked the types of mentoring they received and the benefits, if any, received from their mentoring experiences. These questions about mentoring afforded me much needed insight into their perceptions about mentoring. Initially, I thought that their insights would be riddled with formal and negative mentoring experiences given that the theoretical framework of intersectionality is grounded on the premise and understanding of power dynamics and inequitable systems of privilege within postsecondary institutions. However, after analyzing the data, I was surprised to discover that all of the mentoring experiences were positive and were informal. Most surprising was that many study participants reported how their children have become mentors for them. Additionally, I was encouraged to discover that most study participants had mentors whose race was different from their own. Many participants reported being mentored by someone who was of a differing race, but same gender. Mentoring experiences appeared to be similar for all study participants. It is

important to mention that several participants reported the concept of sponsorship as creating opportunities above and beyond mentoring and guidance. My participants shared their mentoring experiences in the following paragraphs that reiterate and reinforce the positive impact of mentoring.

Helen, an upper level administrator, talked about her thorough understanding of mentoring and its overarching impact on her life. She states,

I think a mentor is someone who extends time to you in an effort to provide support and help you to better understand your own goals and to explore with you the ways that you want to achieve those goals or options for achieving them or opportunities. They are individuals who, I think, cue you in to things that other people won't necessarily convey to you. They make apparent to you the subtleties of situations that are just understood because of culture or because of positionality. They're able to see things that you can't. They are able to say, that right there is a land mine. Stay away from that. They are able to say, "Okay so, I noticed this happened, tell me about that. Tell me more about that. What's goin' on there?" I think they serve a multi-faceted role in your life. They support, but they are also a coach and a teacher to you. Someone who encourages.

Mel also specifically discussed how mentoring he received from a White male shaped his postsecondary career. During his interview he shared how his mentor placed a call to him while he was completing a campus recreation interview. Mel states,

When I was in New Orleans, John called me as I was in the lobby waitin' for the director to pick me up, bring me back to the airport. He said, "You haven't signed anything?" He said, "We got a job for you here."

This intervention and guidance received from Mel's mentor placed him on a career trajectory that positively altered his professional development.

Conversely Michael, imparted how the only mentoring he received was from Black colleagues. Michael states, "Typically it's when we have our conversations over the phone and at conferences. And other type of mentorship I can't say that I've experienced on hand with individuals I worked with. It's always been from a distance, mentorin' from a distance." This form of mentoring encourages Michael to be persistent in the midst of challenges.

Rocky, a Chicana professor received mentoring by other professors of Latin ancestry which encouraged, guided, and motivated her to enter the professorate. She said, "I told my professor I want to learn how to do research. She's like, 'Oh okay.'" She worked with me. She said, "This is what you gotta do. You need to do this, this, and this." I said, "Well, I know how—I know math, I know how to do research, I know all that." She goes, "Okay then you just need to learn how to collect the data." I go, "I know how to do all that." She just saw that I learned, that I just learned quickly how to do it. I want to do this for a living. She said, "You can be a professor. That means you have to go to graduate school."

During the interview, Monica Lee told her story of receiving mentoring as a faculty member. She states,

The mentors that I've had, especially the unofficial departmental one, she taught me how to be a mentor. To provide people with all the information. It's not about me holding information. Some people believe information is power. They hold it. They don't wanna share it with anybody. Because if you get the information, then

you're gonna be more powerful than me. I don't have that perception. I think I'm here, on purpose, not only for the students, but there's another purpose. I am supposed to help whoever I can help and help them blossom and bloom and develop. That's what I'm supposed to be doing. That makes me feel awesome. When I see anybody that I have come in contact with, and something I've done has been beneficial, that really helped me. That just lights my world.

She continued to describe how one particular mentor helped to develop her as a faculty member. She states,

I learned how to be a mentor. I think it was also in me, but I have developed the knowledge of how to mentor from that one particular person, especially professionally. She was always straight. She always was available, she had an answer. That kinda thing.

Monica Lee explicitly discussed how her mentoring experiences provided her with a roadmap to obtaining tenure. This specifically equipped her to become astutely aware of the political landscape, tenure requirements, and unspoken expectations by surpassing them. In addition, Monica Lee indicated that her mentoring experience taught her to be flexible and understand that the rules of tenure routinely change.

Lucha De Vida is a professional male of color that has benefited from mentoring because it has enabled him to successfully engage and connect with administrators, faculty, and staff at all levels. He said,

Success. Elevating through the ranks of where I'm at. Opportunities to teach, opportunities to engage these students, opportunity to engage the upper levels of administration for institutions of higher ed, bein' able to conversate with them at a

level that we can both meet and intersect at. I think that's important from many different perspectives. I can tell you that I can come outside of here and go talk to a top level executive, 'cause I've done it, and feel as though I belong. I think it's, out of all that, is really—is attaining the confidence to understand that I believe where I'm at. I belong and that they can't—there's nothin' that really they can say that would make me feel indifferent in that, regardless.

Lucha De Vida additionally talked about one of his mentors encouraging him to not be intimidated by senior level administrators' positions and titles, but to be authentic and true to himself. He stated, "Look. You gotta get past that. That you're kinda walkin' on eggshells to the point where you belong. You belong here. You understand the bigger picture and there's no—don't let anybody make you feel like you gotta second-guess yourself."

Blue Man was asked, "What were some of the benefits you received from being informally mentored or formally mentored?" Blue Man responded that his previous supervisor, mentor, and friend assisted him in evolving and developing as both a person and professional. Blue Man stated,

What I appreciated was the human side of him. He always cared about the human part of you too—your family, your spouse. He knew my wife very well—who our significant others were as a family. He and I used to laugh all the time. We'd always sing *Shout*. We might be going through the hallways singing *Shout* and I think people thought we were crazy. That's just how he was. He kept it lighthearted... So, he helped us that even when we moved to the next level, we kept that philosophy of relationships. To this day, we still talk about that—that he

ingrained that it's about relationships, all about relationships with each other, outside the department outside the division, academic, finance, advancement. It doesn't matter—you need to have relationships. So, I still use part of that philosophy to this day.

Blue Man's experience and expectations from his mentoring experiences are congruent with the findings from studies conducted by Chang, Longman, and Franco (2014) and Murakami and Nuñez (2014) which noted leadership development through mentoring in postsecondary education.

Sarah, a Latina administrator, was asked about the number and type of mentoring experiences she has experienced. She discussed how informal mentoring experiences received from family and professionals have benefited her. She states,

Oh, my goodness, several. I'm an only child, and I didn't have the strongest relationship with my parents for several reasons growing up and so mentoring was huge for me, so I can't put a number on it. The informal ones have been the most successful. Anytime I've signed up for formal mentoring, it just never—it hasn't been successful for me. I think it's a good way to help others meet and if somebody doesn't know how to build mentorship or find a mentor, but it just has not been successful for me.

The experiences of faculty and staff members of color revealed that the mentoring they received was great. None of the study participants reported any challenges or were left wanting for mentoring. Most of the mentors were from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds from their protégés. Interestingly, most study participants shared how many of their mentoring relationships they were engaged in were same gendered. In

addition, few participants reported that sponsorship occurred from someone of a different gender than themselves. It is important to note that mentoring involves coaching, advising, and advocating. However, sponsorship involves all of the previously mentioned aspects of mentoring in addition to going above and beyond by creating opportunities for career advancement and promotion. This finding is an unexpected outcome as my own mentoring experiences have come from the opposite gender also given the fact that I have never received sponsorship from someone outside of my race. More specifically, I have experienced people of color going above and beyond to create advancement opportunities for me as a professional. Conversely, I have experienced challenges and impediments from dominate group members in professional settings. The literature is congruent in that it indicates that mentoring among people of color in higher education has led to increased retention and resilience among them (Rogers & Cudjoe, 2013). Mentoring has served as a key component for persistence in higher education. Chang, Longman, and Franco's (2014) study tersely posits, "Emerging attention to mentoring in higher education is encouraging. While faculty and students of color have been subjects of some studies, an expanded mentoring research agenda is needed to focus on another unattended population of color—academic and administrative leaders" (p. 238).

Development of Resiliency that Facilitated Persistence for Participants

Author of Social Networks (and more) are Necessary for Student and Faculty Resilience, William Burdick (2015) postulated social networks are becoming well known for their impact on behaviors and resilience. Burdick states, "If your network is strong, you are more likely to recover from adversity..." (p.17). In this study, the full-time faculty and staff of color encountered experiences with the development of resilience

over the course of their lifespan. Each and every student participant consistently shared in both interviews the role that resilience and persistence has played in all aspects of their lives. They shared powerful and evocative narratives of challenging circumstances that they have overcome that resulted in the development of resilience that enabled them to persist. More specifically, study participants all imparted narratives that contained seemingly insurmountable hardships in both their personal and professional lives that enabled them to learn, employ, and expand their resilience to persist in the workplace. Hence, they were asked to define resilience, as well as, the experiences that have contributed to their resilience.

Michael is a Black male faculty member who is accomplished in his respective academic field. Although he has held a tenured faculty position at another iconic named postsecondary institution, he was denied tenure at his less well noted HSI. Hence, he will be leaving his HSI and pursuing professional opportunities at another postsecondary institution. He has experienced racism and oppression in multiple arenas of life. In spite of those almost insurmountable obstacles, he remains positive, hopeful, and resilient. To this end, he stated,

I will say that race is the one that I can talk about the most. Been one of a few minority educators in the nation in my respective field of study. My entire life has been a struggle and everywhere I go has been a struggle. All of my research about minorities in my field has been a struggle. There's a good and a bad about me. When it's bad, everybody in the country knows who I am. When there's good, you may never, ever hear about me. I struggled goin' through Purdue University not havin' individuals who wanted to work with me because my—whatever

reason they had. But in the end, it shows that I'm one of the very few that's left in ag education.

Similarly, Rocky provided a moving account of blatant classism, oppression, and racism that aided her in further developing resilience over the course of her life. She was the first person of Latin ancestry to integrate her academic department and was the only faculty of color in a predominantly White department. She shared,

The first semester I got here, when I got hired, I went to a Christmas party. Oh, it's those informal parties that really irk me, where all the microaggressions are—even some of the explicit racist things happen. They had the gift exchange, the white elephant gift exchange. My first party I didn't want to go, but they said all faculty members said, "We need a minority 'cause Rocky's been hired here we're gonna—we want to bring her in and welcome her." One faculty member brought in a can of hominy, you know the can of hominy that they make from a noodle, and a flare and put it in the back as one of the gag gifts. Guess who gets the gag gift?

Despite experiencing this public macroaggression Rocky was intentionally silent because she understood that if she had communicated her disapproval it would adversely impact her tenure quest.

Likewise, Helen who is profoundly spiritual, positive, insightful, and influential has experienced innumerable oppressive environments, but was able to further develop her resilience by understanding the intersectionality of her identities. She shared,

Race, gender, sexual orientation. I'm gonna use the term religion as an identity element, ability, gender identity. I would say all these areas where I have privilege are

different in the role that they play than the areas where I experience marginalization. While I have the intersectional identity of being Black and being female, I also have privileged identities with regard to my sexual orientation, my gender identity, my educational status, language, citizenship status. I have a lot of privilege in those regards, I would say the marginalized intersectional identities, I think bolster resilience, quite frankly. I think they're very beneficial in that regard.

Blue Man is an administrator of color who cited his faith as the primary source of his resilience that enables him to situate whatever circumstances he faces. He states,

My faith, my faith has played a big part in sustaining me in understanding that again, it's bigger than the bigger picture. It's bigger than this and understanding that I'm confident in who I am, so even when I'm in a storm again, understand that the storm don't last always. Yeah, you might be in a season right now, but that season will come to an end. That's what has helped propel me and helped me, understanding yeah, it's rough right now, but that season will come to an end. That's what has helped propel me and helped me, understanding yeah, it's rough right now, but there's a brighter day coming, so don't just wallow in what's going on right now.

Understand it's gonna be alright. It's okay to get in your feelings every now and then, but don't wallow in it. Don't stay there. It's easy to stay there and complain, but what are you gonna do? What are you gonna do about it? It became that process of like, okay, I can't be one of those who just complain about it 'cause there's some other people looking.

In similar fashion, Lucha De Vida was asked if spiritual connection contributed to his resilience. He articulated how both spiritual connection, as well as, serving as a mentor has contributed to his resilience. Lucha De Vida states,

Absolutely, I leave it up to God. The true meaning of grace and understanding that in my God, my God, with the way I understand my religious beliefs is that there's nothin' that has been given to me that I can't handle. If I can leave all those worries and all that anxiety, or if I can leave all the possibilities of what could happen to a being, I really believe that that's what gives me the confidence to do what I do. As being a mentor to someone, I think helping them to be successful pays you back in affirmation that you were doin' the right thing for that person.

Mel was also asked about what impact spirituality has had on his resilience? He responded, "One hundred percent. That's the part where I say that's my old grandmother's teaching, even if I go through things that are difficult and what have you—I had that conversation with her years ago. She told me, she said, "Mel, I've never seen you upset." I always said life is good. In Mel's quote he explained how a colleague who knew him and understood some of the trials and tribulations he experienced at work, but Mel always kept a positive outlook and never fixated on the negative experiences.

Monica Lee articulated that spiritual connection plays an integral role in all aspects of her life and contributes to her ability to persist in life. Additionally, spirituality allows her to understand the bigger picture. She states,

If I didn't have a spiritual connection, I would not be standing, sitting, I wouldn't be here, okay? I'm just telling you. There's no way I would be here. It has greatly contributed to my resilience and me being able to get outside myself and endure. To

be resilient because I realized that everything was not about me. There was something else at work. I was the conduit for whatever needed to happen. I just had to stay in place and let myself be used and be the conduit for whatever was supposed to be happening.

These narratives shared by Monica Lee, Mel, Michael, Lucha De Vida, Blue Man, Helen, Sarah, and Rocky are supported by Collins and Bilge's (2016) research which stated that "We have argued that power relationships are to be analyzed both via their intersections, for example, of racism and sexism, as well as, across domains of power, namely structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal" (p. 200).

Effects of Spirituality on Faculty and Staff Members of Color

Merriam-Webster (2018) defines spirituality as, "the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things." Spirituality intersects all cultural, societal, and global communities. All eight study participants indicated in great detail how spirituality guides their decision making and influences how they view the world through a lens of positivity and hope. Study participants were asked if spiritual connection contributed to their resilience. I was astonished to discover just what a profound and prolific role that spirituality played in each and every study participant's life. This concept cut across all of the various cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds of the participants. Spirituality serves the primary core and rudder that guides the direction and viewpoint of study participants. Most importantly, this factor allows them to operate from an ethos of grace, mercy, and justice for all people, even those who oppress and marginalize. Spirituality was intentionally utilized as an inclusive term, but not limited to religion. More specifically, participants were asked if spirituality

played a role in their resilience. In addition, spirituality is transformative for study participants as it allows them to transcend vicissitudes.

Mel, a Black male and senior level administrator at his HSI, elucidated his experience with regard to the role of spirituality. He was raised by his grandmother who was born in 1899 and taught him Christianity. This experience has had the biggest influence on him and has shaped how he lives his life, sees the world, and others. Mel states,

My deal is, is that if I'm gonna be true and authentic, and I'm gonna care about you as a person, I need to do what I can do to help you in your situation. So that's not a focus on me. I mean, if I'm Black, it doesn't matter. It may matter to you. It doesn't matter to me. If I'm heterosexual, it doesn't matter. It may matter to you. That's fine. If I am male, that doesn't matter to me. But, I'm okay if it matters to you, and it could influence you. But, my deal is to be authentic, again, with the spirituality is that I need to just help you because you need help. You can assign the identities and say what's important to me. The only identity I'm assignin' to myself is that I'm a Christian, and I'm a child of God. That's all that I'm assignin' to myself.

He continued, "But I mean, that's all that I'm assignin' to myself. I am a child of God. I need to help people where I can. I need help sometimes, as well. But that's all that matters to me." Essentially, the core of his self-perception is grounded in spirituality and this enables him to assist others and be empathetic towards them.

Rocky's sense of spirituality was informed by her understanding of Chicana culture, family, and her Catholic upbringing. She states,

Oh, the Virgin De Guadalupe is the patron saint of Mexico. Right? She is our brown Virgin Mary, the brown Virgin Mary. She is everywhere in my house. She is everywhere in my office. She's in fact, right there facing me. I symbolically have to put her facing, not only me, on my back. She faces my back and she faces whoever comes into my office. Whenever somebody comes sees me, they see her so that they can see she's got my back. To me that is my strength. I feel that she gives me hope. She is the one that performs miracles, and she gives me those angels. My mom used to say, "There's gonna be a point, Rocky"—and she would talk like this 'cause we talk a lot about death in Latino culture—"There's gonna be a point where I'm going to die. I want you to assume that I will still be there, but she never fails us." It's almost like she was—that's how I always see her. She always says, "You're never alone, Rocky." She's always there with me, us.

Rocky's experience with spirituality helped her to contextualize death and varying life experiences.

Similarly, Sarah cites how growing up in a Hispanic, Catholic culture has made an indelible impression on her life. In addition, this spiritual base serves as a foundation for her to navigate any and all situations that life presents. She states,

Absolutely, I grew up with my grandma. Well, my entire family was Catholic, so I grew up in a very religious home in terms of my grandmothers. At the end of the day, if you have nothing else, you have faith. That has stuck with me. At the very end, it's, "Nope I have this," so that's all I can hold onto. That's been, yeah, absolutely the biggest driving factor.

Blue Man discussed how his faith has sustained him and helped him to develop resilience. He states,

My faith has played a big part in sustaining me. Yeah, you might be in a season right now, but that season will come to an end. That's what has helped propel me and helped me, understanding yeah, it's rough right now, but there's a brighter day coming, so don't wallow in what's going on right now. Understand it's gonna be alright. It's okay to get in your feelings every now and then, but don't wall in it. Don't stay there. It's easy to stay there and complain, but what are you gonna do about it? It became that process of like okay, I can't be one of those who just complains about it 'cause there's some other people looking.

Helen was also asked how spiritual connection contributed to her resilience. She states,

Absolutely because that is a core value that I have that my family gave to me as well. My family gave me that. It's also a continuing way in which I anchor myself. It's huge for me. I'm a very spiritual. Spirituality is also cultural for me. It's communal.

Lucha De Vida similarly expressed how important the concept of spirituality has been to his life. He states,

Absolutely, I leave it up to God. The true meaning of grace and understanding that in my God, my god, with the way I understand my religious beliefs is that there's nothin' that has been given to me that I can't handle. If I can leave all the possibilities of what could happen to a being, I really believe that's what gives me the confidence to do what I do.

Michael, talked at length about how spirituality has enabled him to cope with being denied tenure and routinely encountering racism. He states, “If it wasn’t for spiritual connection I don’t know where I would be because that puts the icing on the cake with all of my sorrow, resilience and everything else.”

Monica Lee also chronicled her spiritual experiences that have contributed to her resilience. She states,

If I didn’t have a spiritual connection, I would not be standing, sitting, I would not be here okay. I’m telling you. There is no way I would be here. It has greatly contributed to my resilience, and me being able to get outside myself, and endure. To be resilient because I realized that everything was not about me. There was something else at work. I was the conduit for whatever needed to happen. I just had to stay in place and let myself be used.

The effects of spirituality play significant roles in the lives of all study participants. Although each participant has faced challenges in several aspects of their personal and professional lives, spirituality serves as an anchor and positive guiding force.

Chapter Summary

The eight study participants (five administrators and three faculty members) in this study imparted powerful, provocative, and interesting experiences from their journeys in higher education. Their gender, age, ethnicity, and professional experiences ran the spectrum. Faculty and staff of color’s experiences in this study routinely encounter discrimination in the workplace which is a reflection of discrimination in the workplace. However, this serves as a catalyst for them to remain hopeful, effect change,

and develop persistence. The data and findings from other studies suggest support systems, mentoring, resilience development, and spirituality are integral pieces of becoming successful in postsecondary education.

The eight participants in this study had unique, incomparable, and intriguing narratives to impart. Each of them addressed a gamut of experiences in both their professional and personal journeys through postsecondary education. Additionally, the intent of this study was to illuminate their lived experiences as full-time faculty and staff of color and ascertain if mentoring had an effect on their ability to persist in their careers. The study provided a venue for participants to chronicle their experiences in higher education, as well as, contextualize their experiences at a Hispanic Serving Institution. The four themes that emerged speak more broadly about personal experiences, issues of resilience, persistence, and mentoring outside of the professional setting and how those then relate to the professional setting.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

Across the nation there is a clarion call for postsecondary institutions to boost retention and recruitment of faculty and staff of color (Damasco & Hodges, 2012). These institutions have begun to employ strategies that have faculty and staff being reflective of the increased diversity of the student body, but mentoring serves as an effective tool for meeting the needs of administrators and faculty of color (Chang et al., 2014). At this juncture, there is a paucity of research with regard to the study of the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color at Hispanic Serving Institutions, but that also specifically look at the role of mentoring in fostering persistence for faculty and staff of color.

This study centered on the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color who have worked in postsecondary education for seven or more consecutive years and who are currently employed at a Hispanic Serving Institution. The study explored whether or not informal or formal mentoring experiences had an impact on their resilience and persistence in their respective roles. In addition, it examined the intersectionality of their identities that influenced their higher education experiences by answering the following research question:

- 1) How do faculty and staff of color at a Central Texas HSI utilize mentoring experiences to develop resilience and persist in their careers, given the intersectionality of their identities?

This study expanded the literature that is centered on the topic of the experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color. Through this research, I was able to furnish a

meticulous description of the lived experiences of faculty and staff of color at a HSI. Moreover, in this research, I employed Crenshaw's (1991) intersectionality theory to examine how the intersectionality of their identities shaped their experiences in higher education.

Discussion of the Findings

The lived experiences of faculty and staff of color are a culmination of all the experiences that participants had during their life span, including early childhood events, educational, social, and work experiences. During the interviews, participants elaborated how familial and community support and guidance influenced them. Participants detailed their reasoning for entering postsecondary education as a career. In addition, participants narrated multiple challenges they encountered such as integration, racial and gender discrimination, and preconceived notions of people of color in the American culture and within postsecondary education. Additional barriers mentioned during their professional journeys were routine macro/micro aggressions, stress, and isolation. Contrary to all of the difficulties experienced by participants they developed resilience from critical incidents that left an indelible impression on their lives. Furthermore, participants have developed strong mentoring relationships that have enabled them to excel in their chosen career paths. Finally, participants serve as mentors and pillars in their respective roles to ameliorate these conditions for students and colleagues alike. While mentoring has assisted in building their resilience, spirituality has served the most influential role in their professional lives to build resilience.

The findings were presented through utilization of participant quotes to competently and accurately illuminate their experiences. Employing the voices of the

participants facilitates in-depth understanding of the phenomena of their lived experiences. The respective key findings based on investigation of the themes that emerged from the data include: a) support systems for faculty and staff of color, b) mentoring and strategies that facilitated success for participants, c) development of resiliency that facilitated persistence for participants, and d) effects of spirituality on faculty and staff members of color. These findings are inextricably linked to Crenshaw's (1991) intersectionality framework. Crenshaw acknowledges that identity politics occurs at the site where categories intersect which is more advantageous than challenging the possibility of discussing categories (1991). For instance, Crenshaw posits that distinguishing identity as coalitional creates possibilities for political organizing that tackles intersecting power differentials (1991). Study participants indicated how their identities of being female, male, heterosexual, Hispanic, and Black were at times used to marginalize them in their respective professional roles. More specifically, race/ethnicity and socio-economic identities were areas most often the intersections where they experienced discrimination. Power relationships and systematic inequity have played significant roles in study participants personal and professional lives. Additionally, the mentoring they received has positively influenced their ability to further develop resilience and persist in their roles.

Support Systems for Faculty and Staff of Color

Historically, there is a scarcity of research on the topic of support systems for faculty and staff of color in administrative roles, academic affairs, and student affairs (Patitu & Hinton, 2003). Existing research is centered on job performance, promotion, retention, and tenure of administrators and faculty. Issues that emerged from previous

studies were climate, coping strategies, homophobia, institutional ethos, isolation racism, salary issues, and sexism (Allen, Epps, Gullory, Suh, Bonous-Hammarth, & Stassen, 2002; Delgado-Romero, Howard-Hamilton, & Vandiver, 2003; Kolodny, 2002, Jackson, 2001, James & Farmer, 1993). The literature suggests that administrators and faculty of color sought support from church, community, family, and minority professional organizations in order to cope with challenges faced at work (Patitu & Hinton, 2002).

Study participants echoed the findings from the aforementioned literature in that they relied heavily on familial spiritual, community/educational, and mentoring support as a means to strengthen resilience and persist in their roles as administrators and faculty. Most importantly, they indicated that the early familial support and guidance they received was transformative and has had a profound effect on how they view the world. Spirituality is an aspect of each of the participants' backgrounds that enables them to look beyond injustice and maintain a sincere positive outlook on life and even those systems that are oppressive. This study revealed that all the study participants greatly benefited from use of support systems and were actively engaged in serving as a support system for other administrators, faculty, and students irrespective of their ethnic, gender, gender identity expression, racial, or sexual orientation.

Support was a major finding that provides insight on the research question and this key area serves as a continued motivation for administrators and faculty of color to thrive in the midst of adversity. All study participants indicated in their interviews the truly profound effect that familial and community/educational support has had. The diversity in and among the study participants emphasized differentiated them. In addition, support served as an essential source of continued inspiration for participants to assist others and

weather multiple circumstances. Support was instrumental in building trust for study participants.

Mentoring and Strategies that Facilitated Success for Participants

The research on mentoring posits that an increased number of underrepresented students of color are attending colleges and universities, while faculty and staff representation falls behind in relation to their numbers proportionally in the United States (American Federation of Teachers, 2010). Additionally, a small body of literature indicates the wide scale challenges that faculty and staff of color face in postsecondary institutions and is centered on the integral role that mentoring plays in retention (Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett, 2003; Turner & Myers, 2000). Mentors play a critical role in professional life that enhance faculty and administrators of color's advancement, career success, educational access, and persistence (Zambrana et al., 2015).

It is key to comprehend how the intersection of race/ethnicity and gender influence mentoring experiences. The lens of intersectionality is closely aligned with mentoring because it is centered on the ways that several social categories (ethnicity, gender, race, and socioeconomic status) intersect on differing levels within systems of power and privilege (Zambrana et al., 2015). Again, intersectionality is a framework that stems from both critical race theory (CRT) and feminist theory (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw 1991; Collins & Bilge, 2016). Gonzales, Murakami, & Nunez (2013) conducted research on Latina faculty which aptly provides a deeper application of intersectionality. Hence, they assert that in postsecondary educational careers occur in spaces where several relations of power regularly merge and where naming and outlining legitimacy is central to those power relations (Gonzales, Murakami, & Nunez, 2013). Additionally, Latina

faculty personify multiple facets of identity (e.g. gender, marital status, race, sexuality) concomitantly and these facets are always intersecting with power differentials that Latina faculty must negotiate (Gonzales, Murakami, & Nunez, 2013).

Mentoring provides emotional and moral support which is both needed and desired among minoritized administrators and faculty in higher education (Bond, Carson, & Baxley, 2015). All of the eight study participants indicated that their mentoring experiences as a mentor or protégé has made a significant impact on their professional and personal lives. The informal nature of mentoring demonstrated to participants the investment of time, care, interest in them. Hence, this enabled them to build more effective relationships with their mentors that resulted in additional career advancement for study participants. Additionally, several study participants discussed sponsorship which they defined as going beyond mentoring through creating opportunities to advance and excel in their careers. Study participants stated that mentoring experiences were transformative and enabled them to persist in their careers in higher education. What is also interesting is that seven out of eight study participants indicated that they had received mentoring from someone outside of their race.

Study participants indicated as a result of their positive mentoring experiences they have been able to persist in their perspective careers. This directly responds to the research question regarding if mentoring has had an effect on their ability to persist in their careers. It was interesting that many study participants had mentors who were from a different ethnicity and/or race than themselves. The study revealed that most of the participants had ample mentors in their early life experience. Also, all of the participants

engaged in informal mentoring relationships. Mentoring provided study participants with structure and guidance to navigate several of life's arenas at critical points.

Development of Resiliency that Facilitated Persistence for Participants

Researchers have highlighted the critical importance of the psychological aspect of successful professional integration within postsecondary institutions. This sense of belonging is associated with persistence among administrators, faculty, and students of color. (Hauseman, Schofield, & Woods, 2007; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Strayhorn, 2012). Closely related to resilience is the concept of validation which includes, but is not limited to appreciation, recognition, and respect (Hurtado & Carter 1997). Each of the eight study participants cited a critical incident early in their childhood that presented difficulty in and around ethnic/racial integration and/or discrimination. Those experiences shaped how they view the world and marginalization. In many cases, study participants developed a strong sense of resilience to persist in life and in their careers. Additionally, study participants indicated that they do not immediately react to macroaggressions or microaggressions, but have enhanced their coping ability to respond appropriately to discrimination. Several participants also referred to the importance of intentional silence. This is essential for examining power relationships, relationality, and social justice along intersections of ableism, age, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender, gender identity expression, race, and sexual preference that occurs in postsecondary education (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Hence, the intersectionality framework is a means to analyze and understand differing levels of complexity in people, the world, and in human experiences. Study participants indicated that resilience was developed through familial support and guidance, community/educational support and guidance, mentoring, and

spirituality. This area spoke directly to the intersectionality of their most salient identities as it juxtaposed the power differentials in higher education along the intersections listed above. Ethnicity, race, gender, sexual preference, and spirituality were the intersections that study participants identified. For example, Rocky provided several examples of how her ethnicity and socio-economic status intersectional identities led to discrimination she experienced in school and in her professional career. The study revealed that most study participants had a negative critical incidents (integration, discrimination, and marginalization) that served as catalysts to develop resilience.

Effects of Spirituality on Faculty and Staff Members of Color

In the early 2000s interest in spirituality in postsecondary education peaked. The Association of American Colleges and Universities hosted a national conference on spirituality and learning. Hence, this conference led to an intentional focus on the inner lives of administrators, faculty and staff in higher education (Alexander & Astin, 2015; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005).

Alexander and Astin's (2015) research on spirituality focuses on five dimensions of spirituality which include: spiritual quest, equanimity, charitable involvement, ethic of caring, and ecumenical worldview. Spiritual quest refers to the degree to which a person seeks to become more self-aware and enlightened to find answers to life's mysteries. Equanimity examines the extent to which an individual is able to find meaning in times of difficulty, but feels good about life. Charitable involvement is involvement in community service, charitable donations and helping others. Ethic of caring is a commitment to helping others in difficulty and ameliorating suffering in the world. Ecumenical worldview is the extent to which a person is interested in differing cultures

and religions, as well as, having a belief that all life is interconnected (Alexander & Astin, 2015; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005).

Each of the study participants cogently articulated the major role spirituality serves in their lives. All participants indicated in their narratives how family members initially introduced them to spirituality at an early age. This foundation has resulted in them developing a positive non-fatalistic outlook on life and difficult circumstances. It is important to note that even in the face of blatant injustice, discrimination, and racism in both their personal and professional, lives participants are able to thrive because of their spiritual beliefs and practices. Study participants reported how their families have endured, survived, and prospered in incredulous situations because of their spirituality. The study revealed that faculty and staff of color view spirituality as the most essential component in their ability to be resilient and persist in both their personal lives and in their careers. It is interesting to note that study participants come from a variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds, but their strong sense of spirituality was consistent. I was most surprised by the preeminent role that spirituality played in the lives of all study participants as evidenced through their stories about this subject in both interviews. Intersectionality is pertinent to spirituality and critical education. Spirituality has the all-embracing emancipatory ability to liberate (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991). Hence, intersectionality, critical education and intersectionality and spirituality have an intermingled relationship that has complemented the critical inquiry and praxis of each (Collins, Bilge 2016; Crenshaw, 1991).

Recommendations for Policies and Practice in Higher Education

This study may be utilized to inform postsecondary administrative policies as they relate to ameliorating recruitment, retention, and resilience for administrators and faculty of color. Truly, this study unearthed multiple factors affecting administrators and faculty of color who work at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) such as the importance of spirituality, support systems, and informal mentoring. It is important to note that several study participants indicated that recently receiving the HSI designation seven years ago has created dissonance. Several study participants indicated that Hispanic retention rates are abysmal. In addition, participants indicated that the HSI designation does not address the support issues for faculty and staff of color. Also, no study participants related their HSI mentoring experiences to their persistence or resilience. However, all participants indicated how motivated they are in encouraging and mentoring students of color and how that contributes to their resilience to persist at their institution.

The recommendations are guided by the findings from this research which suggest approaches that postsecondary institutions and policy stakeholders can employ to enhance the experiences of administrators and faculty of color who work at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). The recommended policies suggested can impact new employee orientation, recruitment and retention programs especially when encouraging and promoting support systems. More specifically, policy recommendations that encourage and support informal mentoring relationships, community, educational, and spiritual resources provide a supportive environment for administrators to thrive. In addition, marketing and providing the aforementioned resources during recruitment and orientation activities can distinguish an institution as providing intentional support.

Through intentional preparation of key staff and faculty by providing training, retaining, and recruiting administrators and faculty of color. Finally, this study illustrated the merit that informal mentoring provides to administrators and faculty and staff of color.

Through emphasizing the experiences of faculty and staff of color, their voices have been illuminated and their experiences shared with other staff, human resource departments, and postsecondary institutions. It is expected that faculty and staff continue to become increasingly more reflective of a diverse student body, as well as, an equitable and supportive environment.

Previous studies emphasize formal mentoring programs and creating welcoming environments for faculty and staff of color to survive and thrive. Informal mentoring is great and is often more effective than formal, so it is important to establish systems to train individuals to mentor. However, in hierarchical postsecondary organizations there is a disincentive to mentor. For instance, someone could move beyond your own role, or your mentoring could not be recognized to the same degree as other things within that institution. While some of these approaches have been effective, they have also become outmoded in the ever-changing higher education landscape. Interestingly, all study participants shared how their resilience emanated from their lived experiences outside of higher education. Taking a non-linear approach to informal mentoring by creating opportunities for faculty and staff and staff of color to connect with other professionals in the academy across intersections of ethnicity, race, gender, class, citizenship, etc. Higher education can harness the synergistic effects of mentoring by creating opportunities for this marginalized community to obtain mentoring. Discrimination, marginalization, isolation, and oppression were endemic to study participants lived experiences of faculty

and staff of color in postsecondary education. However, informal mentoring has improved their ability to persist while facing these challenges. Intentional policy development that supports and encourages mentoring can be transformative for HSIs and other universities.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study is only the tip of the iceberg with regard to delving into the lived experiences of administrators and faculty of color. As an evolving scholar and researcher, I would recommend that other researchers continue to study the lived experiences, support systems, spirituality, and resilience of faculty and staff of color. Additionally, I would recommend that scholars who are not members of minoritized populations conduct research to illuminate faculty and staff of color's experiences. However, it is important to note that scholars who are not members of minoritized groups have an interest in conducting research from a strengths-based perspective and not a deficit perspective. It is important to note that additional research be done that employs mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative data for faculty and staff of color in postsecondary education for increased comprehension, appreciation, and support. It is my hope that this study serves as a catalyst of motivation for fellow scholars to enhance and contribute to the literature through furnishing empirical evidence that becomes integral for practitioners who seek to ameliorate conditions for administrators and faculty.

Reflection of the Research

As a Black male, adult education and student affairs practitioner, this research was a powerful transformative and holistic learning experience. Listening to the experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color who work at a Hispanic Serving

Institution (HSI) was like experiencing an emotional whirlwind. There were times during the interviews where I felt elation, trauma, anger, and hope. This caused me to reflect in my researcher's journal. This was a process where I laughed and cried as I reflected on my experiences in postsecondary education which are on the continuum ranging from challenging to triumphant. Ultimately, my participant experiences were connected to my own experiences in several ways. My experience reminds me of a West Indian proverb which goes, "When the rain falls it don't fall on one man's house." This proverb helps me to understand that there are most definitely going to be barriers and challenges similar to the ones experienced by my participants which range from ethnic/racial discrimination, isolation, inequity, and marginalization. However, through supportive systems and a sound spiritual connection, hope is available in abundance and can shift your paradigm.

My research emphasizes similar struggles faced by faculty and staff of color navigating postsecondary education amid a landscape rife with inequity and the resilience developed through mentoring and support systems. The participants' experiences have both humbled and significantly impacted me to appreciate and better understand the challenges they face and the challenges I encounter. My participants and I are pillars in a community that provide assistance to all who need help.

APPENDIX SECTION

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APPENDIX A

PROPOSED REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION EMAIL

Dear [Participant Name],

I am conducting a research study in partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Education Degree in Adult, Professional, and Community Education (APCE) at Texas State University. The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore the experiences of full-time faculty and staff of color who are employed at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The study will examine if and how participants' previous mentoring experiences have contributed to both their resilience and persistence at their respective institution.

Participants for this study will be selected from a large HSI in Central Texas who meet the primary criteria for study inclusion (a) currently being a full-time faculty or staff of color at the HSI, (b) Having a minimum of 7 years in at any higher education institution, (c) experienced formal or informal mentoring and (d) being willing to participate in the study and share their experiences and reflect on how they believe mentoring has impacted their resilience, persistence and helped them grow personally or professionally.

If you meet the before mentioned qualifications and would like to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire and set up interview times.

Should you have any questions about participation in this study, please contact John Lowney via telephone phone at 347.573.1232 or via email at jlowney@txstate.edu. You may also contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Denise Gobert 512.245.8351 – (dgobert@txstate.edu) or Monica Gonzales, IRB Regulatory Manager 512-245-2314 - (meg201@txstate.edu), if any concerns arise during the course of the study.

Sincere Regards

John Lowney, B.S., M.Ed
Doctoral Candidate
Adult, Professional, and Community Education Ph.D. Program
Texas State University
Phone: 347.573.1232
Email: jlowney@txstate.edu

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC AND QUALIFYING INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Use this form to answer the demographic and qualifying questions to participate in the research study.

If you have any questions, please contact John Lowney at jlowney@txstate.edu

*** Required**

What is your name *

Please provide your e-mail address *

What gender do you identify as? *

Male

Female

Gender Neutral

Transgender

Other

Prefer not to respond

What is your ethnicity or race? *

Asian

Alaskan Native

Bi Racial/Multi Racial

Black

Hispanic

Pacific Islander

White

Other

What is your age? *

26-30

31-35

35-40

41-45

46-50

51-55

56+

Are you employed full-time at an HSI? *

Have you received informal or formal mentoring during your employment as a full-time faculty or staff member? *

Yes

No

Have you been employed in higher education for seven or more consecutive years? *

Yes

No

Are you willing to participate in this study? *

Yes

No

If you choose to voluntarily participate in this study you will be asked to take part in two interviews (in person, over the phone, or via Skype). The first interview will last between 60 to 90 minutes. The second interview will last between 45 to 60 minutes and will be to clarify and expand on the previous interview data collected. The interviews will be one to two weeks apart. *

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

Brief introduction to be used during first interview with participants-

First of all, thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of this research study is to capture the lived experiences of full-time faculty and staff who work at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in central Texas, specifically focusing on how mentoring has played a role in building resilience or persistence. In addition, I am researching how intersectionality, a framework developed by Kimberlee Crenshaw (1991) that focuses on understanding the complexity in and among people along the intersections of identity (age, gender, sexuality, race, etc.), played a role in these experiences. With your permission, I will audio record the interviews for analysis purposes only. In addition, to protect your identity, a pseudonym will be used. No one else will have access to your interview other than myself. Please note, as a volunteer in this study, you have the right to refrain from answering particular questions and at any time you can leave or stop the interview.

The first questions listed below will be asked during the first interview. The second interview will be to conduct a critical incident reflection and clarify and expand on the previous interview data collected.

Background of Participant

1. What Pseudonym would you like to use?
2. Tell me a little about yourself.
 - a. Probe: Where are you from?

- b. Probe: What is your profession?
 - c. Probe: How long have you been in your profession?
3. Please tell me about your early years growing up and how they shaped who you are today?
- a. Probe: Your early schooling?
 - b. Probe: Your early home life?
 - c. Probe: Your family?
 - d. Probe: Please share whatever else you think is pertinent to your story?

Work Experience in Higher Education

4. How did you arrive at the decision to enter higher education as a career?
- a. Probe: What roles/positions have you had in the past?
 - b. Probe: What aspirations do you have for the future in higher education?
 - c. Probe: What role did ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality play in your career path and advancement if any?
5. Tell me about your triumphs (in context of your social identities) as a faculty/staff member of color working at this HSI?
- a. Probe: What lessons did you learn from these triumphs?
 - b. Probe: How did these triumphs make you feel?
 - c. What is the single most important accomplishment that you have made and are most proud of?
6. Tell me about your challenges as a faculty/staff member of color working at this HSI?
- a. Probe: What did you learn from these challenges?
 - a. Probe: How did these challenges make you feel?

- b. Probe: How did you overcome or resolve these challenges?
- c. What are some of the challenges or things you didn't expect to encounter in the course of being a professional of color in higher education?

Role of Mentoring (We will now focus on mentoring and its impact on your career)

7. How would you define the term mentor?

a. Probe: what does being a mentor mean to you, as a faculty/staff member of color?

b. Probe: what do you think mentoring means to the individual being mentored?

8. Tell me about the mentoring you've received as a higher ed. professional of color?

a. Probe: How many informal and formal mentoring relationships have you had?

b. Probe: How long did each mentoring relationship last?

c. Probe: Was a cultural, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity match important in each of these relationships?

d. Probe: Would you change anything about the mentoring you received?

11. What are some of the benefits you received from being informally or formally mentored?

a. Probe: Were these benefits expected?

b. Probe: What lessons did you learn from receiving mentoring?

Resilience and Persistence

(I would provide a brief definition of resilience and persistence to the participants here and then ask questions related to these constructs)

12. How have you developed resilience as a faculty/staff member of color over the course of your life.?

- a. Probe: What experiences have contributed to your resilience?
 - b. Probe: What impact has sense of community had on your resilience?
 - c. Probe: Has spiritual connection contributed to your resilience?
13. What inspired you and/or what factors have enabled you to persist in your career?
14. How has mentoring helped you develop resilience, if at all, or persist in your career?

Intersectionality

We will now delve deeper into how you perceive the intersectionality of your identities has shaped your experiences in higher ed. Intersectionality...(Provide participants a brief definition of intersectionality)

15. What do believe are your own salient identities, and how do you see any of these as providing you privilege(s), and positions of power as a faculty or staff member?
- a. Probe: What type of effect does this have on you as a professional of color?
 - b. Probe: How has the intersectionality of your identities shaped your mentoring experiences?
 - c. How does this impact your resilience?
 - d. How has it impacted your persistence in higher education?

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW



INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: Illuminating the faculty and staff of color voice through their lived experiences: Contextualizing Mentoring & Resilience

Principal Investigator: John Lowney

Co-Investigator/Faculty Advisor: Dr.
Melissa A. Martinez

This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this research study is being done and why you are being invited to participate. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate as well as any known risks, inconveniences or discomforts that you may have while participating. We encourage you to ask questions at any time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and it will be a record of your agreement to participate. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

You are invited to participate in a research study that seeks to examine your lived experiences as a full-time faculty or staff member of color who works at a large university in Central Texas. You are being asked to take part in this study because you currently have seven or more years working in higher education and work at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Should you volunteer to take part in this study, your responses to the demographic survey and interview responses will be used. As a participant, you will be invited to take part in two 60 to 90-minute interview sessions. The interviews will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in one short online demographic survey and two interviews. Each interview will be scheduled for a location that is convenient and comfortable for the participant, or may be conducted by Skype or phone. The first interview will last approximately 60 to 90-minutes. The second interview

will last 45 to 60 minutes. During the interviews, you will be asked to respond to interview questions that pertain to your experiences as faculty and staff member of color. The interview will be audio-recorded and the researcher may take notes as well.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There is little risk in participating in this study as you will be discussing your own experiences and opinions. However, during the interview you may become uncomfortable in sharing certain experiences with the investigator. Should you feel uncomfortable, you may choose to not answer any of the questions.

The online demographic survey will include a section that asks for information that may make an individual person identifiable, though this is unlikely. As the investigator, I will make every effort to protect the participant's confidentiality. Your name or place of employment will not be attached to any documents. However, should you feel uncomfortable at any time revealing certain information, you may choose to refrain from answering any question.

In the unlikely event that some of the survey or interview questions make you uncomfortable or upset, you are always free to decline to answer or to stop your participation at any time.

BENEFITS/ALTERNATIVES

As a participant, you will gain a deeper knowledge and understanding regarding faculty and staff members perspectives on their lived experiences. In addition, the study will produce findings that will be of benefit to postsecondary institutions, mentoring programs, mentors, and policy makers. This study will add to the existing body of knowledge surround faculty or staff member of color. As a result, we will be able to learn from the unique experiences of the staff member of color and provide enhanced resilience and persistence initiatives to postsecondary institutions, mentoring programs, mentors, and policy makers.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Reasonable efforts will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private and confidential. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. The members of the research team and the Texas State University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) may access the data. The ORC monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Your name will not be used in any written reports or publications which result from this research. Data will be kept for three years (per federal regulations) after the study is completed and then destroyed.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION

You will not be paid for your participation in this study.

PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw from it at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, you may contact the Principal Investigator, John Lowney via email at jlowney@txstate.edu.

This project [insert IRB Reference Number or Exemption Number] was approved by the Texas State IRB on [insert IRB approval date or date of Exemption]. Pertinent questions or concerns about the research, research participants' rights, and/or research-related injuries to participants should be directed to the IRB Chair, Dr. Denise Gobert 512.245.8351 – (dgobert@txstate.edu) or to Monica Gonzales, IRB Regulatory Manager 512.245.2314 - (meg201@txstate.edu).

DOCUMENTATION OF CONSENT

I have read this form and decided that I will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement and possible risks have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand I can withdraw at any time.

Printed Name of Study Participant **Signature** of Study Participant _____
Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent _____
Date

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH TIMELINE

Proposed Dates	Proposed Actions to be Completed
Spring 2018	Defend Proposal
Spring 2018/Summer 2018	Conduct Research
Summer 2018/Fall 2018	Final Defense

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