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The Evolution Will Not Be Televised: A Comparative Study Of Women Of Color And Their Pursuit Of The Community College Presidency

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THE EVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF WOMEN OF COLOR AND THEIR PURSUIT OF THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENCY

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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DEDICATION

To my Creator, my rock and my protector. Thank you for blessing me with the intellect and wherewithal to keep on pressing toward the mark. There were so many times when there was only one set of footprints along this journey.

To my husband, for your unending love and support. This is for us. I love you.

To my children, who make me dream beyond what I thought was possible. This is for you.

To my mother, for the great sacrifices you made, for instilling in me the importance of education, but most of all for being my role model for resilience.

To the many “firsts” in the highest positions in higher education, who did not think it was enough just to make it and rest on your laurels. Thank you for paving the way.

To all the aspiring female leaders of color...assume your rightful place at the helm. You were always my inspiration; I hope I will be yours.

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quiet inner strength and grace helped me realize my own. Aunt Doll, for planning to come to my graduation since the day I was accepted into the program – that day is finally here. We can go back to the hilltop and celebrate!

ABSTRACT

Although the career paths of presidents have been documented, the personal considerations an individual makes for choosing these pathways are not articulated. This study sought to uncover the decision-making of sitting presidents and presidential aspirants in their proposition of advanced leadership roles and their personal career choices. Conceptually framed by the Theory of Planned Behavior and Career Construction Theory, this dissertation examined the attitudes, motivations and considerations of select minority female community college presidents and presidential aspirants to understand their pursuit of the community college presidency. Using purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews were used to collect narrative data from both groups of participants; submitted curriculum vitae provided the other dataset. Descriptive statistics portrayed observed attitudes and motivators regarding leadership positions and comparisons examined differences in perceptions among subgroups. Content analysis identified and summarized themes across the interviews. Document analysis compared curriculum vitae for similarities and differences.

Interview responses answered the research questions and revealed the following about attitudes, motives and perceptions of leadership. The attitudes of aspiring presidents and sitting presidents were positive and reflected small differences in qualifications to lead. Both groups were motivated to lead by an intrinsic calling to give back and the perception that their leadership can contribute to the success of future students and positively impact the higher education leadership landscape. The results of

the study produced six emergent themes that shaped the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of leadership from the participant groups. Four themes experienced or evidenced by both groups of participants include: attitudes and motivations along the varying academic career paths to the community college presidency, the effects of racial micro-aggressions, engendering an advocacy or activist philosophy, and the barriers of organizational culture and structure. Two other themes emerged, maintaining family/life balance and the importance of mentor networks/professional development, but were more prevalent to the aspiring presidents and president participant groups respectively. The results have implications on leadership development and selection of women leaders in academia as well as areas of future study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION	2
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	7
1.3 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	9
1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS	10
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	12
1.6 DELIMITATIONS	13
1.7 LIMITATIONS	14
1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS	15
1.9 ASSUMPTIONS.....	17
1.10 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY STATEMENT.....	19
1.11 SUMMARY	20
CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	21
2.1 COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENCY	21

2.2 DIVERSE LEADERSHIP	25
2.3 PIPELINES TO THE PRESIDENCY	36
2.4 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR	47
2.5 CAREER CONSTRUCTION THEORY	51
2.6 SUMMARY	57
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	60
3.1 NARRATIVE INQUIRY	64
3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY	66
3.3 NARRATIVE APPROACHES	68
3.4 UTILIZATION OF EXPERIENCE-CENTERED NARRATIVE INQUIRY	69
3.5 LIMITATIONS OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY	70
3.6 PARTICIPANTS AND STUDY SETTING	72
3.7 INSTRUMENTATION.....	79
3.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES.....	85
3.9 DATA ANALYSIS.....	89
3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.....	92
3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	97
3.12 SUMMARY	99
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS.....	101
SECTION 4.A RESPONDENT PROFILES – PRESIDENTS	102
4.1 PRESIDENTIAL DEMOGRAPHICS	102
4.2 PRESIDENTIAL NARRATIVES.....	103
4.3 SUMMARY OF PRESIDENT PROFILES	113

SECTION 4.B RESPONDENT PROFILES – ASPIRING PRESIDENTS	114
4.4 ASPIRING PRESIDENTIAL DEMOGRAPHICS	114
4.5 ASPIRING PRESIDENTIAL NARRATIVES	115
4.6 SUMMARY OF ASPIRING PRESIDENT PROFILES	123
SECTION 4.C EMERGING TRENDS AND FINDINGS	124
4.7 LET ME SEE YOUR I.D.: CAREER PATHS AND GATEKEEPERS TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENCY	125
4.8 BLACK AND BLUE: THE EFFECTS OF RACIAL MICRO-AGGRESSIONS	131
4.9 NATURE OR NURTURE: WOMEN ADVOCATING FOR WOMEN	138
4.10 YIELD: BARRIERS IMPOSED BY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND STRUCTURE	143
4.11 MOVING TARGET: FAMILY/LIFE BALANCE	148
4.12 I’M NEW HERE: THE POWER OF MENTOR NETWORKS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	150
4.13 OVERALL FINDINGS	153
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	157
5.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	158
5.2 DISCUSSION	159
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	164
5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	170
5.5 CONCLUSION	173
REFERENCES	175
APPENDIX A – PRESIDENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	197
APPENDIX B – EMERGING LEADER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	198
APPENDIX C – INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE	199

APPENDIX D – RESPONSES TO INVITATION FEEDBACK	201
APPENDIX E – CONFIRMATION OF SCHEDULED INTERVIEW	204
APPENDIX F – REMINDER OF UPCOMING INTERVIEW	205
APPENDIX G – INFORMED CONSENT FORM	206
APPENDIX H – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND SCRIPT	208
APPENDIX I – THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING.....	211

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Devising the Sample Population – Aspiring Presidents	76
Table 3.2 Devising the Sample Population – Presidents	77
Table 3.3 Crosswalk of Research Questions and Data Sources.....	84
Table 4.1 Presidential Demographics	103
Table 4.2 Presidential Career Profile: Anne Marie.....	104
Table 4.3 Presidential Career Profile: Linda.....	106
Table 4.4 Presidential Career Profile: Belle	108
Table 4.5 Presidential Career Profile: Shivani.....	110
Table 4.6 Presidential Career Profile: Yves.....	112
Table 4.7 Aspiring Presidential Demographics	115
Table 4.8 Aspiring President Career Profile: Debra	116
Table 4.9 Aspiring President Career Profile: Leilani.....	117
Table 4.10 Aspiring President Career Profile: Tracy.....	119
Table 4.11 Aspiring President Career Profile: Colleen	120
Table 4.12 Aspiring President Career Profile: Valarie	122
Table 4.13 Participant Groups Categorized by Birnbaum and Umbach’s Presidential Pathways	126

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Conceptualization of the Theory of Planned Behavior	48
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE.....	American Council on Education
CEO.....	Chief Executive Officer
AACC	American Association of Community Colleges
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HSI	Hispanic Serving Institution
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
CCT.....	Career Construct Theory
URM	Under-Represented Minority
CAO	Chief Academic Officer
CLC.....	Corporate Leadership Council
AGBUC	Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
AAU	Association of American Universities
NEA	National Education Association
API	Asian Pacific Islander

NASULGC.....National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

NAICU.....National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

AASCU..... American Association of State Colleges and Universities

CITI..... Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

IRB..... Institutional Review Board

IQ.....Intelligence Quotient

EQ..... Emotional Intelligence

PhD..... Doctor of Philosophy

LEAP..... Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics

APAEC..... Asian Pacific American Empowerment Conference

ELI.....Executive Leadership Institute

PRT..... President’s Round Table

HERS..... Higher Education Resource Services

AAUW..... American Association of University Women

ETS..... Educational Testing Services

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, institutions of higher education are deemed the great equalizer, paving the way for parity and advancement for groups with historical repudiation. Over the years, women have made strides in bridging the gap with their male counterparts. However, despite the fact that women are earning more baccalaureate and graduate degrees than men, women are still under-represented in academic leadership positions within higher education (ACE, 2012; Shults, 2001). This under-representation is widespread across colleges and universities, both public and private, and across academic disciplines from engineering to the arts.

While the majority of literature on academic leadership has identified this gender gap, few studies identify the reason(s) for its persistence (AACC, 2015; ACE, 2012; Dixon, 2007; Barres, 2006; Asking & Stensaker, 2002). Over the years, women have made some strides in bridging the gap with their male counterparts, but inadequate representation of women among the academic leadership ranks, the presidency in particular, continues to prevail and evade a resolution. The intent of this comparative study is to gain insight into one part of this issue in terms of minority female career paths, attitudes and motives toward pursuing the community college presidency.

Ethnic minority females face a double bind of both gender and racial disparity and biases. Historically, institutions of higher education have been reactive rather than proactive when it comes to gender diversity in higher education leadership. While academic leadership is often studied across the board at the macro level, few, if any, have delved into the micro level to better understand the human elements behind the data. Addressing this gender disparity at the micro level will add depth and value to previous research and clarify any misconceptions or assumptions as to why the gap exists. By contextualizing presidential leadership in community colleges through gender and ethnicity, the rationale for this study becomes apparent as the problems of practice and research are outlined and underscored through the problem statement, research questions and theoretical frameworks. As additional context for the research, the significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, key definitions, assumptions and subjectivity statement will help the reader understand the researcher's location in this study.

1.1 LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Leadership in colleges and universities takes place within an academic cultural context that is unlike that of other organizations. In 2012, the American Council on Education (ACE) convened a summit with other national organizations on women in higher education leadership in a collaborative effort to bridge the gender gap. ACE's report, *The American College President*, preceded this meeting, revealing that women hold a mere 26% of all college presidencies, including traditional universities and community colleges, and that the average president is a "married white male who is sixty-one years old, holds a doctorate in education and has served in the position for seven years" (Cook & Young, 2012). The American Association of Community Colleges

(AACC) reported similar statistics in their 2014 survey of their community college member institution's chief executive officers (CEOs) or presidents (n=390): only 28% are female, 69% are age fifty-five or older and 19% are non-white; the survey results were deemed representative of the community college population (AACC, 2015). While this presidential description has been trending for the past twenty-five years, the only significant change reported is the aging of the incumbents.

In 2015, AACC reported there were 1,123 community colleges in America with the following breakdown: 992 public institutions, 96 independent institutions and 35 tribal institutions. Demographics for students enrolled for credit are 57% women, 43% men, 37% age 21 or younger, 49% age 22-39 and 14% age 40 and older (AACC, 2015). Total enrollment across all institution types as of Fall 2103 totaled 12.4 million students for credit and non-credit programs (AACC, 2015). Recent surveys and reports from AACC (2015; 2001) reveal community colleges are facing a leadership crisis with the ballooning trend in the pending retirements of the aging president (Shults, 2001). These looming retirements present strong evidence of an impending crisis within the leadership pipeline as well as within the presidency (Shults, 2001). These retirements will create leadership opportunities for a new generation, but they will also leave a leadership gap. In order to fill that gap effectively, new leaders need to be identified and provided with the skills to lead community colleges in the 21st century.

Gender and Leadership. Over the past several years, a range of other institutions, including public flagships, liberal-arts colleges, historically black institutions, and community colleges have hired their first female presidents. Despite the rising number of women faculty, academic leadership preparation programs and

affirmative action hiring policies, women and minorities continue to be underrepresented in the top leadership roles of colleges and universities. According to ACE, about 33% of community colleges have women as presidents, compared with 23% of bachelor's and master's-level institutions, and 22% of doctoral institutions (2012). While the numbers reported by ACE for community colleges is higher than that of AACC, the difference lies in the membership count and survey responses. The fact that colleges still note, in news releases and other communications (ACE, 2008), that they have hired the first female president in their long histories is a sign that hiring women as leaders has yet to become the norm, according to Judith S. White, president and executive director of Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), a nonprofit group that provides leadership training for women in higher-education administration (HERS, 2015).

The barriers, experts say, are both external and self-imposed (Parker, 2015; Eddy, 2009; Eddy & Cox, 2008; Bain & Cummings, 2000). Gender stereotypes — sometimes held by male-dominated boards of trustees who don't think women are capable of running complex institutions or of managing family and work commitments simultaneously — can work against female candidates (Eddy, 2009; Betts, Urias & Betts, 2009). The same is true for hiring practices, particularly when recruiting is done through informal, male-dominated networks. Additionally, some women allow small deficits in skills, real or perceived, to make them uncertain about their leadership abilities and doubtful a presidency is within their reach (Eddy, 2009; Barres, 2006; Caplan, 1993). In a study of community college presidents, Eddy (2009) found that all of the men but none of the women intentionally planned to ascend to a presidency. Other women push beyond the real or perceived deficits and pursue a college presidency with positive attitudes of

strong self-esteem, high confidence levels and desires or motivations to break the glass ceiling, become a trailblazer and often to make history. Yet, still others choose not to pursue a presidency all together, seeing the job as all consuming and too stressful. Family issues remain a big barrier for women all the way through the pipeline, because the academic work culture doesn't match up with the flexibility that women feel they need to care for children or aging parents, among other responsibilities (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Bower & Wolverson, 2009; Ayman, 1993).

These and other barriers, whether real or perceived, external or self-imposed, are said to dampen the pipeline, trajectory and aspirations of female leaders in academia (AACC, 2001; Eddy & Cox, 2008). Further, a scarcity of female leaders in academe sends the wrong message to female undergraduates, who represent 56% of the total undergraduate population (Bower & Wolverson, 2009; Stripling, 2011; ACE, 2012; AACC, 2013). There are hopeful signs for women who want to be presidents, one of which is the likely wave of impending retirements among college presidents (Shults, 2001). The presidency, like the professoriate, is graying, which paves the way for women and minority hires that can diversify the field.

Ethnicity and Leadership. The number of community college CEOs who are women of color are even more staggering and represent a lack of diversity across institution type (AACC, 2013; ACE, 2012). Most Latina presidents are in the community college sector, at federally coded Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and African-American female leaders are mostly attributed to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (ACE, 2012). The 2012 *American College President* report from ACE indicated that racial and ethnic minorities represented 13% of college presidents.

Those results were quite sobering as the figures are slightly less prevalent than they were in 2006, when 14% of college leaders were members of ethnic minority groups. The drop in minority representation came at a time when colleges are increasingly paying outside consultants, mainly executive search firms, to help select their presidents.

Hispanic presidents, who represented nearly four percent of all presidents in the survey, saw the largest decline among minority presidents since 2006 (ACE, 2012). The three-fourths percentage point drop in representation of Hispanic presidents, coupled with a slight increase in the proportion of white presidents, was a key driver for the overall decline in minority representation in American colleges, the data shows (ACE, 2012; Stripling, 2011; King & Gomez, 2008; June 2007; Kubala & Bailey, 2001).

Presidents from underrepresented racial, ethnic or gender groups may also provide inspiring role models for students, employees, and community residents. Presidential diversity would also add important voices to dialogues concerning personnel issues, including staff development, curriculum changes, teaching excellence, and student success. It could also promote community relationships and commitments, enriching all associated with the college and its community (Matsumoto, 1993). The underrepresentation of ethnic minorities is a continued concern for those interested in fostering a diverse and inclusive educational environment (Brown-Glaude, 2009).

Some individuals face barriers related to the lack of diversity in the highest-level positions within universities. Gender, race/ethnicity, and nontraditional backgrounds all serve as elements of diversity for higher education leaders (Matsumoto, 1993). Although the gender, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of students have changed to better reflect the diversity of American society, this diversity has not been reflected in the demographics of

current community of college leaders (June, 2007; McCurtis, Jackson, & O'Callaghan, 2009). Today's universities, with all their challenges and rewards, face a need for gender, racial, and ethnic diversity in those who lead them in order to reflect those who seek higher learning (Amey, 2006; Betts, Urias, & Betts, 2009; Brown-Glaude, 2009; Kezar, 2009).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The underrepresentation of women in academic leadership roles has been widely studied (Cook & Young, 2012; Barres, 2006; Ayman, 1993; Uhlir, 1989) and is prevalent across institution type, function, and discipline areas. Ethnic minority females face a double bind of both gender and racial disparity and biases. Historically, institutions of higher education have been reactive rather than proactive when it comes to gender diversity in higher education leadership. While academic leadership is often studied across the board at the macro level, few have delved into the micro level to better understand the data (Cook & Young, 2012; Barres, 2006). Addressing this gender disparity at the micro level will add depth and value to the previous research and clarify any misconceptions or assumptions as to why the gap exists.

The majority of research (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Young, 2004; Twombly & Rosser, 2002; Astin & Leland, 1991; Astin & Kent, 1983) surrounding this phenomenon has identified and focused on the existence of the gender gap. The questions of why and how higher education administrators choose to pursue advanced leadership roles warrants further investigation. Previous studies (Brubaker & Coble, 2005; Rhode, 2003) examined the gender disparity issue from a qualitative perspective that provided enhanced knowledge about leadership styles and leadership attributes. Quantitative studies provide

a more data driven perspective that allows us to quantify the distribution of higher education leadership by race and gender and the changes within longitudinally. While the studies mentioned have added to the literature, none of the studies have sufficiently explained the persistence in the low number of women faculty in leadership roles or examined the attitudes, motivations and career considerations regarding academic leadership self perceptions.

In the context of diversity of academic leadership, the issue of female and ethnic minority attitudes and motivations toward leadership roles in higher education needs further examination at the community college presidency level to understand the humanistic elements involved in career choice decisions. The empirical research on administration has revealed that women have outpaced men in the number of baccalaureate and graduate degrees awarded, but are not keeping pace with regard to salaries and position types. Therefore, women who have the credentials and qualifications to move into the highest leadership levels of academe still are not found in those positions to the extent we might expect.

Current research (Mattone & Xavier, 2013; Brubaker & Coble, 2005; Rhode, 2003) focuses extensively on the attributes of administrators or leadership style employed to explain the gender gap. Thus, the personal choices an individual has to make when considering academic leadership roles are generally not articulated by the current research. While much of the research has focused on the aspects of life and traditional gender roles as limitations of success and presume these factors inhibit women and underrepresented groups from academic leadership positions, few scholars have asked administrators directly if these assumptions are true. What is still unknown is whether the

issue is in the pipeline as a whole or with the interest level of women and ethnic minorities in community college presidencies (Asking & Stensaker, 2002). This study attempted to address the unknown why as outlined in the purpose, research questions and significance sections of this chapter.

1.3 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this inquiry-based qualitative study was to discover how the perceptions, attitudes, motives, and leadership potential of minority female community college presidents compared with minority females who are well prepared for community college presidencies, but are not yet in those positions. The first phase was a qualitative exploration of attitudes and motives by collecting two sets of categorical data. One dataset was collected from sitting or recent past minority female presidents at public community colleges in the United States; the other dataset was collected from minority female emerging leaders or aspiring presidents. The reason for collecting qualitative data initially is that the attitudinal and motivational variables are unknown and current leadership instruments are inadequate to measure interest level. The second phase of the study examined the curriculum vitae of both groups of administrators.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- RQ 1. What are the attitudes, motivators and perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders toward academic leadership roles?
- RQ 2. What are the perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders on their own leadership potential?

RQ 3. For what reasons do minority female emerging leaders pursue or not pursue the community college presidency?

RQ 4. Are there attitudinal or motivational differences between actual and aspiring minority females for the community college presidency?

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Women face many challenges in not only obtaining positions of leadership but also in maintaining positions they have achieved. The social psychology and career choice aspect of academic leadership lends itself to understanding behavioral intentions and aspirant considerations to pursue the community college presidency. The Theory of Planned Behavior is useful when studying the contributing variables that lead to intended and actual behaviors. Similarly, the Career Construct Theory is useful when studying the personal considerations undertaken and understanding one's career choice overall. Both theories are introduced below and elaborated upon in chapter 2.

Theory of Planned Behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by well-known social psychologists Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein, started as the Theory of Reasoned Action in 1975 with the objective of predicting an individual's intention, or motivation, to engage in a behavior at a specific time and place. Planned Behavior, a theory of social and cognitive processes, proposes that a person's performance of a specified behavior is determined by that person's behavioral intention to perform such behavior. Through later developments, TPB now reflects three motivational influences: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980). The first determinant is the attitude toward the behavior and refers to the degree to which the person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in

question. The second predictor is a social factor termed subjective norm and refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior. The third antecedent is perceived behavioral control, defined as the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. Perceived behavioral control is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles. As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm with respect to a behavior, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger should be an individual's intention or motivation to perform the behavior under consideration (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, 1980).

Career Construction Theory. Mark Savickas, a vocational psychologist and career counselor, developed the Career Construction Theory (CCT) to explain a person's career within the broader context of his or her life, and used stories as a concrete way to elicit and interpret career choices (2011). Savickas (2001) advocated a postmodern, narrative approach that involves invoking client life stories, which are fundamental, retrospective narratives. These narratives usually include reflective descriptions on adapting to undertakings and distresses. Career construction theory is one of many career theories that seek to explain occupational choice and work adjustment, each interrogating a different aspect of ultimate vocational behavior. Thus, CCT is an applied form of constructivism. In Savickas's approach, these personal accounts, or life narratives, are contextual and interpretive. By recalling their own agency, individuals construct a narrative of their career that moves forward with themes and subplots providing insight and context on their choices. Through the use of Career Construct Theory, these recollections become a means by which to confirm identity, to substantiate choices, and

to adapt to life's events and extrapolate from the career path(s) undertaken (Savickas, 2001).

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research study proved significant to understanding the attitudes and motivations of minority female presidents and aspiring presidents as they consider academic leadership roles at the micro level rather than at the macro level as seen in the higher education administration and leadership literature. It is no longer sufficient to identify that gender and diversity disparities exist within community college leadership; rather, it is imperative to answer the question of why. Given the looming retirements pending in the community college presidency and continued efforts to diversify and fill the presidential pipeline, the current study provided a greater understanding of the career choices and personal considerations of under-represented minority females toward the presidency. The outcomes of this study can contribute to the body of knowledge in gendered leadership, higher education administration, and academic diversity by illuminating some elements that address the “why” question.

The present study may also aid university administrators by examining the driving forces behind minority female faculty pursuit of academic leadership positions at community colleges. The results have implications for redeveloping and diversifying the pipeline of future administrators (internal or external). Assessment of attitudes and motives for apparent or perceived differences led to a greater understanding of the existing gender disparity. This newfound perspective has implications on recruitment of faculty, retention, leadership development programs, and succession planning at community colleges across the United States.

1.6 DELIMITATIONS

Delimitations are the decisions a researcher makes about the study that limit the scope or boundaries of the research (Creswell, 1998, 2003). The selected population, theoretical framework, and methodology delimit this study. While a comprehensive examination of administrators' interest in the community college presidency may be ideal, this study was delimited to sitting minority female community college presidents and minority female community college leaders with presidential aspirations. Minority females who have secured presidencies are extremely relevant to the purpose of the study. The population of minority female community college presidential aspirants was further delimited by evidence of their participation in a national leadership development program like the League for Innovation in Community College's Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) or the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, both professional development programs for community college presidential aspirants.

The sample size was also delimited to a small number of informants. Due to the nature of narrative inquiry, small sample sizes were deemed appropriate to collect the stories and experiences of the participants. The ELI serves as an externally established filter to identify high-potential emerging leaders with suitable backgrounds, experiences, and potential presidency interests of relevance to the purpose of the study. Participants of these national leadership development programs like ELI or Lakin Institute contemplate their leadership journeys and may be more likely than others to be able to adequately reflect on and articulate their lives sufficiently to support this study. Thus, the expectation for this study was that all participants were willing and able to narrate their career lives,

including their intentional pursuit of leadership roles and their own development as leaders.

1.7 LIMITATIONS

It is important for researchers to address the limitations related to the population and methodology so that readers have context for the study's interpretation (Creswell, 1998, 2003). Three primary limitations were anticipated with this study's population and methodology: (a) its focus on its minority females in community college leadership as a population, (b) its focus on participants from national community college leadership development programs, and (c) the fact that individuals often do not reflect on their careers. Alumni from the Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) and the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership were chosen as a subpopulation for this study because it filtered and provided access to a pool of high-potential emerging leaders with characteristics of interest for this study. While the ELI and Lakin Institute are known for their comprehensive and intensive approach to developing leaders, and both are well respected for that quality, there are other leadership development programs in higher education, which are detailed in the literature review (Kezar, 2009). Using formal leadership development programs as a filter for the subpopulation of aspiring candidates also likely excluded some who may be informally pursuing a community college presidency or lack the personal or institutional resources to participate in said leadership development programs.

Second, researchers have also noted people's lack of reflection about their careers (Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Savickas, 2001; Borges, Navarro, Grover, & Hoban, 2010). Cohen and Mallon state that "we should not be surprised that people apply hindsight to

telling the stories about their own lives or that they look at past events in light of the present” (2001, p. 65). Another limitation of the study, then, was the ability of the presidents and aspiring presidents to reflect on and articulate their career stories. Efforts to mitigate these limitations are addressed in chapter three; any resulting impact on the study are addressed in chapter five. Due to the unique qualities and experiences of minority females, the findings may not be generalizable to the paths and decisions of other sitting presidents or aspiring candidates. Community colleges, like most other higher education institutions have very unique features that may vary from state to state or region to region. Therefore, the preliminary findings may not be generalizable to the entire population of community, technical or junior colleges or other higher education institutions.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The following terms are defined for the purpose of this study:

- **Academic leadership** – a senior administrative post within an institution of higher education (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002).
- **Attitudes** – a habitual feeling or opinion from which responses were formed; a residual effect of the action; a mind-set that determines one’s response to a particular situation; a predisposition to react negatively or positively based upon personal tendencies and external tendencies; an acquired predisposition to ways of responding (Fishbein, 1963, 1979; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).
- **Career Path** – the evolving sequence of work activities and positions that individuals experience over time as well as the associated attitudes, knowledge and skills they develop throughout their life. The sequence may move vertically

most of the time but also move laterally or cross functionally to move to a different type of job role. (El Sabaa, 2001)

- **Emerging Leader** – a higher education professional who has developed the skills, are already recognized for leading, and may now want expanded scope, new challenges, more diverse skill development to grow their span of influence in a meaningful way; one whose leadership, or leadership potential, comes forth into view or notice, as from concealment or obscurity.
- **Gender gap** – the differences between women and men, especially as reflected in social, political, intellectual, cultural, or economic attainments or attitudes (Barres, 2006).
- **Leadership potential** – an employee with high-potential talent perceived as having the ability, organizational commitment and motivation to rise and succeed in more senior positions within the organization (CLC, 2005).
- **Motives** – the drive, want or need within an individual (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, 1979).
- **President** – the chief executive officer of a college or university campus; may also be interchangeably referred to as chancellors, presidents, and campus presidents.
- **Under-represented minority (URM)** – Generally, an individual from a racial and/or ethnic group that is considered inadequately represented in a specific profession or area relative to the numbers of that racial and/or ethnic group in the general population. The federal government’s definition of a minority employee includes all U.S. citizens, both naturalized or permanent residents that have

African, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander or Native American (American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians) heritage.

1.9 ASSUMPTIONS

There were three key assumptions undergirding this study. First, while some researchers have noted a general lack of reflection about careers, this study assumed that leaders in higher education have the ability to reflect on their careers and tell stories about their lives. Second, this study assumed that readers will have the ability to understand, interpret and relate elements of the participants' stories to their own. This assumption were derived through popular writings about human development, how people explain their lives and leadership through their stories, and what stories can mean for their audiences (Savickas, 2011). Successful leaders draw from their past experiences. Events early in these leaders' lives shaped lessons for them that they used in the future. Tichy asserted that everyone has a usable past, but that leaders just employed theirs better because they recognized defining moments in their lives and communicated the lessons learned from these moments through words and actions (Tichy, 1997).

Third, with the emphasis of the supporting literature on pathways to the presidency and interest of this study on how high-potential emerging leaders make career decisions, it was assumed that the successful track records of the ELI and Lakin Institutes in preparing community college administrators with presidential aspirations would provide an appropriate sample of interest for the research questions of this study. As reported on the League's website, nearly 700 community college leaders have graduated from the ELI Program since 1988, with more than 43% of ELI graduates accepting appointments as chief executive officers of community colleges (ELI, 2015). The

Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership shares similar statistics. The Institute is designed to prepare senior-level executives for positions as community college chief executive officers and has graduated the highest number of African Americans who have gone on to CEO positions over any other leadership institute in the United States. Over 25% of current African-American community college presidents are alumni of the Lakin Institute (Lakin, 2015). This demonstrates that a large number of ELI and Lakin Institute graduates indeed contemplate themselves as leaders and make choices about their career possibilities, which are core questions of this research study. Also, the close tracking of alumni and maintenance of a highly accurate database of contact information assured the greatest probability of successfully contacting these people to solicit study participation. Thus, it was assumed that the ELI, Lakin Institute, President's Round Table (PRT) and others programs geared toward the community college presidency efficiently provided access and accurate contact information concerning an externally validated population of high-potential emerging leaders or aspiring presidents suitable for this study.

Given the potential hundreds of thousands of emerging leaders within higher education, it would have been challenging to identify such individuals, externally verify their high potential for leadership advancement, and efficiently track down these individuals for a research study. The reputation of the League for Innovation in Community College's Executive Leadership Institute (ELI), the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, the President's Round Table (PRT) of African-American CEOs, and other professional development programs attract precisely this population and provide through rigorous selection processes external validation of the high-potential nature of the participants.

1.10 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY STATEMENT

While a positivist approach seeks to understand the world through a values-free lens, the interpretive approach is bounded by values of the researcher (Rodwell, 1998). Accepting the notion that research is inherently values laden is foundational to qualitative research and to the constructivist paradigm (Rodwell, 1998). The choice of the research problem and its framing, the paradigm of inquiry and theoretical framework, the context of the data collection, and the interpretation of findings represent values in action (Rodwell, 1998). As Rodwell (1998) noted, researchers should be explicit and congruent if the inquiry is to produce meaningful results. The researcher's values also are to be considered in the process, and a researcher subjectivity statement addresses these values in action.

Two of my primary values are interwoven into the study: the value of people's lives and stories and the contribution I want to make to leadership in higher education. Beneath all the bureaucratic layers of higher education are two central ideals, people and their desires to improve their lives through education. The people within the community of higher education, as students, faculty and administrators, have unique stories that contribute to everyone's academic and professional growth. One of my sustaining values is to support people and their desired path - this value bears greatly on this study.

This dissertation also is directly related to my professional goals. As a woman of color, I anticipated that completing a terminal degree would eliminate any barriers in my own pursuit of a senior-level leadership role at a college or university. Thus, I was interested in what pathways I could consider based on my own non-traditional work life with multiple roles in academic and student affairs working with undergraduates, student-

athletes and professional school students in the course of my higher education career. Considering my own career in higher education administration, it made sense to combine those professional interests with my research interest in gendered leadership, organizational behavior and leadership development. This has become an incidental event, in that scholars have viewed leadership as a something to aspire to rather than an intrinsic component of one's personality, and higher education scholars have studied leadership theories and characteristics and not necessarily the leaders themselves in a humanistic way. I hope that this dissertation enhances the current literature and practice by connecting leadership and career development in an intentional manner, to assist both aspirants and accidental higher education leaders in their career intentions and choices.

1.11 SUMMARY

The higher education community faces a crisis of finding sufficient numbers of emerging leaders experienced and willing to ascend to the community college presidency. A series of recent studies have documented the demographic shifts in the presidency and presidential pipeline that cause this leadership gap to become imminent. A variety of individual and industry-wide barriers create a complex landscape that diminishes the size of the emerging leader pipeline at a time when the largest number of community college presidential slots will be available. Research and industry practices continue to document the lack of presidential diversity and a dearth of qualified leaders willing to pursue a college or university presidency.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The role of the university president has evolved and morphed over the years. The university president, traditionally male, began as a paternal image of the college professor (Cohen & Kisker, 2010; Kubala, 1999; Vaughan, 1989, 1986). The university presidency began from the ranks of faculty, was highly visible to the students and strongly maintained that connection to campus life (CLC, 2005; Cohen & March, 1974). Later, the college or university presidency position morphed into a bureaucratic “off-campus celebrity” of sorts (Shults, 2001; Rudolph, 1990). With new duties of fundraising and lobbying, the university president was less visible on campus and lost that bond with the faculty. The perception of the president is akin to an administrator rather than a regular faculty member. The role of the presidency remains constant even though specific responsibilities and duties may vary according to the mission, size, and complexity of the institution. The review of the literature and theoretical frameworks are presented in the following sections: community college and university presidencies, diverse leadership, pathways to the presidency, Theory of Planned Behavior, and Career Construct Theory.

2.1 COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENCY

The community college presidency has been described generationally into four segments: founding fathers, good managers, collaborative partners and tech-savvy millennials (Schmitz, 2008; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007, 2002). As the only true expression of innovation in American higher education, community colleges have

focused on creating success for all students through its philosophy of open access (Mellow & Heelan, 2008). The founding fathers were democratic in their approach to higher education while the good managers maintained the status quo initially developed. The exodus of good managers due to retirement in the 1990s made way for the collaborative partners, who utilized internal and external partnerships to leverage resources and provide universal education (Schmitz, 2008). This segment of leaders saw an increase in gender and ethnic diversity, drawing disparate groups together as a reflection of the changes in society (Weisman and Vaughan, 2002, 2007). The tech-savvy millennials are an emerging group of leaders, with a keen understanding of the interconnectedness between education, commerce and the workforce (Sullivan, 2001). Over the years, there is a disturbing decline in the number of qualified candidates willing to seek the presidency (Fain, 2004) and an increase in the turn-over in the tenure of presidents (Padilla, 2004). Additionally, the average age of college presidents has risen in recent years. In 1986, when ACE first conducted its survey of presidents, 42 percent of campus leaders were fifty or under, and only 14% were sixty-one or older. By 2006, nearly half of presidents (49.5%) were sixty-one and over; the 2011 ACE survey shows that same category of sixty-one or older rose to 58% of surveyed presidents (ACE, 2012).

The literature on academic leadership offered recommendations for building a larger pipeline of eligible faculty as a method to achieve diversity. Much of the research (Eddy, 2007; Kubala, 1999; McFarlin & Ebbers, 1997; Vaughan, 1989; Cohen & March, 1974) focused on the aspects of presidential life and traditional gender roles as limitations of success and presumes these factors inhibit women administrators and women faculty from academic leadership positions, including the presidency. The same is true for

research specific to community colleges with a focus on minorities and women as leaders. The changes faced by community college presidents have been explored in various ways in the literature (Eddy, 2009; Weissman & Vaughan, 2002). Some research studies, based primarily on surveys and interviews, have been completed; but for the most part writings on the subject have been based on personal experience, anecdotal evidence, reviews of the literature, or combinations of these kinds of information (Thompson, Cooper, Ebbers, 2012; Dixon, 2007; Shults, 2001; Lewis, 1989).

Much of what is known about community college presidents has been gathered through community college presidential survey and interview research. Vaughan and associates performed a national study in 1986, followed by updates in 1991, 1996, and, most recently, in 2001 (Vaughan, 1986; Vaughan & Weisman, 1998; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). The vast majority of Vaughan's work gathered data on presidential characteristics from the full spectrum of United States public community college presidents whose institutions are members of the American Association of Community Colleges, although some include separate evaluations of selected items by gender. Results over the time span have shown an increase in the numbers of female presidents, highlighted in the change from approximately 11% in 1991 to just under 28% in 2001 (Weisman and Vaughan, 2002).

In other research Vaughan highlights gender differences more explicitly. For example, responses from 35 female presidents reported in "Female Community College Presidents" (1989), notes female stereotyping, double standards, lack of access to the "good old boys" network, interview questions relating to gender, identification with certain female characteristics, and, to a very limited degree, working spouses as

challenges to seeking and obtaining the presidency. Community contacts and professional association memberships were mentioned as positively contributing to movement into the presidency by 22 and 25 of the females respectively. Fifteen of the women participated in leadership training of one type or another, but 24 had no peer group affiliation. The Vaughan studies are important to the understanding of existing presidents, but have limitations. All data were presented in descriptive format and statistical significance evaluation is not presented for gender findings. Respondents ranged across the experiential spectrum, yet new president responses were generally not highlighted.

New community college presidents were targeted by Kubala and Bailey (2001) in national surveys. Responses relating to pathways to the presidency and the search process, motivation, first impressions, governance, and learner-centered education were gathered in 2000 for a comparative analysis in the national surveys. Pertinent findings included the academic or instructional route as the most common pathway, making a difference as the primary motivation to become a president, and, on average, one year needed to secure a presidency.

What is still unknown is whether the issue is in the pipeline, the pathway or with the interest level of women faculty and women administrators in academic leadership (Asking & Stensaker, 2002; Sagaria, 1988). Many individuals face institutional and societal barriers related to the lack of diversity at the presidential level within community colleges; institutions are also aware of their own diversity issues and potential barriers to overcoming the odds. With an open mind to who can lead, what characteristics are needed in an effectual leader and where leaders come from, both individuals and institutions can move forward through the changing landscape of higher education leadership. As a result,

diversity remains a multidimensional, complex enterprise critical to academic excellence in higher education (Moses, 2009; Brown-Glaude, 2009; Dixon, 2007).

2.2 DIVERSE LEADERSHIP

Gender, race/ethnicity, and nontraditional backgrounds all serve as components of diversity for higher education leaders and presidents. While the gender, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of students have changed to better reflect the diversity of American society; this rate of change is not reflected in the demographics of current community college presidents (AACC, 2012; ACE, 2012; Dixon, 2007; June, 2007; McCurtis, Jackson, & O’Callaghan, 2009). Twenty-first century colleges and universities, with all their intrinsic challenges and external rewards, face a greater need for increased gender, racial, and ethnic diversity in their leadership ranks to better reflect the population of constituents (Amey, 2006; Betts, Urias, & Betts, 2009; Brown-Glaude, 2009; Kezar, 2009). Likewise, the challenges and opportunities to develop and prepare the next generation of community college leadership are ever present.

Gender and Leadership. Women’s progress in obtaining positions of leadership in higher education has been slow. Rhoades (2005) indicates that for most of recorded history, women have been largely excluded from institutional leadership positions in general. While women today obtain positions in every discipline, including those reserved in the past for men, such as medical and engineering fields (Nidiffer, 2001), women are highly represented at the lower levels and not well represented at the top executive level (Nidiffer, 2001; Sagaria, 1988). Over time, women have been and at times, continue to be perceived as lacking leadership abilities due to the stereotyping of femininity as dependent, submissive, and conforming (Hersey, Blanchard, Johnson, 2000;

Burns, 1978). Traditional views of leadership have been based on people's need for a strong leader to help them master change, create a vision and not feel powerless (Irby, et.al., 2002). The privilege of leadership and power are often assigned to men in a patriarchal society.

Rhode's (2003) anthology also helps point out some of the issues women face in promoting to upper administration. This meta-analysis study examined gender differences in negotiations. The results revealed varied the bias of women's performance ratings to look at promotion rate. They hypothesized that given the pyramid structure of most organizations and the fact that early success is necessary for subsequent opportunities; even a very small bias in performance ratings would be meaningful. The study revealed that promotion rates for women were lower even when male-female differences in performance ratings created by the bias were very small. Results also revealed that substantially fewer women were promoted to senior leadership positions.

A negative connotation is given to a woman with the same leadership attributes as a "good" male leader (CLC, 2005). While a male leader who is forceful, logical, direct, masterful, and powerful has a positive connotation, a female leader who is referred to in the same manner puts herself at risk of devaluing herself as a woman (CLC, 2005). She is thought to be aggressive and unfeminine, while the male is considered strong and masculine (CLC, 2005). Understanding traditional views of leadership and their tie to masculine traits is important because it helps explain the challenges women have faced in obtaining positions of leadership in higher education. As women are not achieving the same participation rate as men in presidential leadership positions, it is important to understand the values, beliefs or obstacles that may contribute to their attitudes and

motives for their avocation choices and understand the decision making along their administrative career path.

One aspect of a diverse institution is gender balance in terms of students, faculty, and leaders. The idea of women pursuing a college education was not even considered a possibility during the Colonial era of higher education (Solomon, 1985; Lewis, 1989). Once forbidden from educational pursuits, women generally represent more than 50% of college attendees and recently received 59% of master's degrees and 50% of doctoral degrees (Rainey, 2011; Merriam, 1998). According to the White House Project (2009), AACC (2012), ACE (2008, 2012) and other studies from national organizations, women comprise approximately 57% of all college students but only 26% of full professors, 23% of university presidents, and 14% of presidents at doctoral degree-granting institutions. Since 1999, the number of female presidents has not changed and women account for fewer than 30% the board members on college and university boards. From 1991 to 2001, there was an increase in the number of women community college presidents, but women still account for less than 30% of all community college presidencies (Eddy, 2007; Kubala & Bailey, 2001; Merriam, 1998). Additionally, little to no progress has been made in closing the salary gap between male and female faculty. At the time of the 2009 White House Project, women made 82% of what male faculty made, compared to 83% in 1972. Thus, the literature documents several disadvantages for women, despite increasing parity in their sheer numbers in colleges and universities (Rainey, 2011; White House Project, 2009).

Furthermore, societal and institutional barriers may limit a woman's career mobility (Parker, 2015; Conley, 2005). Caplan (1993) elaborated on a number of

paradoxes related to women's experiences in academe based on interviews with students, faculty, and administrators. Childbearing and child rearing continues to be a societal barrier for working females across all industries, including higher education. If a woman faculty member has children, others may perceive her as not taking her career seriously; however, if she currently has no children, the possibility of bearing children one day also works against her (Caplan, 1993). Thus, whether one has children or not, women are placed in a double bind as her professional upward mobility in academic leadership can also be limited by her womb (Moses, 2009; Caplan, 1993).

Women also face social costs for career success because women also operate in other critical roles like wife/partner, mother, and caregiver (Uhlir, 1989; Astin & Kent, 1983). The opportunity costs of being successful in one's career include, for example, balancing household responsibilities, an increased risk of being single or divorced, fewer children, and less time available for family. Researchers note that because careers are largely structured based on male gender roles, women can experience role overload and debate on the opportunity costs of professional growth and advancement (Moses, 2009; Tower & Alkadry, 2008; Barres, 2006; Uhlir, 1989). Moreover, the hierarchical nature of organizations reflects a masculine context and values, whereby career success involves a linear trajectory toward the highest leadership position (Tower & Alkadry, 2008). Women frequently choose more varied and less linear career paths through academe to accommodate various personal goals and values. These personal commitments are often dissimilar with traditional, mainstream career advancement trajectories (Conley, 2005; Merriam, 1998). In addition, women's progress in the academy hinges on advancing societal ideals about the role of women in general. Furthermore, progress is largely

dependent upon women who acquire administrative experiences and demonstrate scholarly productivity necessary to be perceived as a qualified peer and an emerging leader. However, progress will likely be limited to organizations whose structures positively influence, support and allow the advancement of women, despite the perceived or actual lack of career mobility (Moses, 2009; Lester, 2009; Bain & Cummings, 2000; Caplan, 1993).

Various studies on community college leadership recruited participants serving as executive leaders, like vice presidents and presidents (Gill & Jones, 2013; Eddy, 2009; Gonzalez Sullivan, 2009). Other community college researchers recruited deans, provosts, and chancellors along with vice presidents and presidents for their participants (Montas-Hunter, 2012; Ballenger, 2010; Gerdes, 2003). Some studies were specific to women, others were not. For example, Eddy (2009) interviewed five men and four women and Gill and Jones (2013) interviewed four women, two presidents and two vice presidents. Both studies, however, sought to examine the influence of gender and position within the university; they did not examine the attitudes, motives or perceptions of self in connection to pursuing a community college presidency. Research on women in mid-level leadership positions in higher education is underdeveloped compared to the research on women in senior-level roles. Although the research is more scarce, studies specific to women who could potentially be in the pipeline to senior-level administration has provided insight into career experiences including (a) individual perceptions, satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Rosser, 2004); (b) negotiating the dual role of administrator and mother (Bailey, 2012); (c) the career decision making processes of mid-level student affairs professionals with young children (Hebreard, 2010); (d) the influence of

supervision on career mobility (Donohue-Mendoza, 2012); and (e) the implications of performance appraisals on career development (Corral, 2010). While these studies provide many insights, they provide no information about the considerations made in career decision-making nor the attitudes, motivators or self-perceptions of these women on their potential to ascend to senior-level positions.

While women have made small gains in executive leadership in academia, researchers note that the progress is not equivalent to parity with their male counterparts (ACE, 2008; Madden, 2002). While the number of women presidents has increased from 1986, when only 9.5% of college presidents were women, to 2011, when 23% were women, the number is still not proportional to the number of women students today, who comprise the majority of enrolled students in colleges and universities (ACE, 2012; Cook & Young, 2012; White House Project, 2009). All in all, women remain underrepresented in higher education leadership roles, especially at the chief executive officer level. More research is needed to understand the continued disparity and the uniqueness of women that have overcome the varied societal, institutional and personal barriers.

Ethnicity and Leadership. As students, faculty, and staff have become more racially diverse, it has become increasingly important to develop a more diverse pool of senior leaders (ACE, 2012; AACCC, 2014). According to the most recent study of the university presidency by ACE (2012) and others, 87% of presidents were Caucasian and 77% were male (Cook & Young, 2012). In 1986, people of color filled 8% of college presidencies, and in 2006, the number of minority presidents peaked at 13.5%. Since that time, the ratio of minority presidents declined one percentage point, which ACE and other scholars noted as a concerning decline (ACE, 2007, 2008; Cook & Young, 2012).

Although colleges strive for diversity at all levels, data show a gender gap when comparing executive, administrative, managerial positions and the presidency. In 2011, 56% of community college executive/administrative/managerial staff were women, but they comprised only 36% of college CEOs. Among female community college CEOs (36% nationally), African-Americans and Hispanics represent 43% of female community college presidents (AACC, 2013).

While the number of college students from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds has steadily increased, the same level of diversity has not been achieved for those holding leadership roles in higher education (Harvey & Anderson, 2005) and certainly not for positions that traditionally lead to the community college presidency (Jackson, 2004; Jackson & Phelps, 2004; Kubala, 1999). Affirmative action and other diversity efforts have had a positive effect in increasing the number of minority and women leaders in academe, although more work is needed to achieve greater representation approaching parity (Moses, 2009; Eddy, 2007). When diversity is lacking in the upper levels of leadership, it is more difficult to create a multicultural campus (McCurtis et.al., 2009).

In addition to the challenge of balancing personal and professional life roles, women and administrators from underrepresented groups face additional challenges including (a) issues with the current structure of promotion and tenure, (b) divides between junior untenured and senior tenured faculty members, (c) unclear pathways connecting faculty and senior administrative roles for those with aspirations, (d) policies and practices that are unfriendly toward families, and (e) unsupportive environments that condone overt and covert racism and/or sexism, institutionally and through personal biases (Moses, 2009). While the challenges listed are not unique to any one group or gender,

Moses concluded that underrepresented minority females had much to overcome as they contemplate the pursuit of executive-level leadership roles in academia (2009). Campbell, Mueller and Souza (2010) also noted similar challenges for women community college presidents. Using a collective case study of six women community college presidents, Campbell, Mueller, and Souza (2010) sought to describe women's paths to the community college presidency. Findings revealed that in addition to a strong educational background, individuals must be willing to pursue advancement opportunities and have the support and encouragement of mentors and family (Campbell et.al., 2010). However, the gatekeeping and hierarchy that accompanies criteria for tenure and promotion can be alienating. While pathways are not the focus of this study, the Campbell, Mueller and Souza study provided insight on the experiences of women in pursuit of the presidency.

The research suggests that women and underrepresented minority groups find an institution that fits their personal goals and values, select a pathway to leadership early in their career, strategically seek opportunities for challenges outside of their goals and scope, build professional networks, and invoke self-care strategies (Moses, 2009; Dixon, 2007). Moses (2009) also advocated that personal agency, confidence and calculated risks are critical in advancing into leadership roles, particularly for women of color who are emerging leaders.

Despite these concerns, the literature on female community college presidents from underrepresented minority groups, their preparation for executive leadership roles, and strategies for advancement is incremental and mainly in the form of dissertations and white papers (Fong-Batkin, 2011; Hartley & Godin, 2010; McCurtis et.al., 2009; Harvey & Anderson, 2005). Scholars further noted that the central criticism of leadership literature

in post-secondary education has been the singular focus on current presidents and, given the demographics of higher education, that the documented stories, ideas, and philosophical truths are those of old white men (Stripling, 2011; Eddy & Cox, 2008). As a result, the available literature and research, by way of those who are surveyed does not reflect any greater diversity than its demographics. The scholarly consensus purports that the perspectives of current and emerging women leaders from underrepresented minority groups have been introduced in the literature slowly and unevenly (Amey, 2006).

One recent study (Leon & Jackson, 2009), through an examination of the 1999 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty determined that on an individual level, diversity is lacking among underrepresented minority groups in administrative leadership roles in general and in upper-level roles in particular. The study found that Asian faculty were the most likely to become leaders, women were making small incremental gains in advancement into leadership positions, the likelihood of securing an executive level leadership role increases with age, and individuals with higher academic degrees were more likely to be found in positions of executive leadership (Leon & Jackson, 2009). Fong-Batkin (2011) uncovered similar findings for women of color administrators in California community colleges. Fong-Batkin's study examined the career trajectories of 13 women of color administrators at the dean, vice president, and president levels in the California community college system with particular attention on the specific opportunities and challenges that some of these women have encountered on their leadership career journeys. The study evaluated the following factors: education, career history, community college experience, strategies, and sources for support. Findings included three themes: an untraditional experience due to the racism, sexism, and cultural differences that affected their journeys; strategic support

of mentor networks; and gendered and racialized positioning of women of color as administrators with pressure to assimilate to a white male culture and leadership style.

Institutional-level analysis revealed that diverse faculty interested in administrative roles fared better in regions of the country with more colleges, were more likely to become leaders at smaller institutions focused on teaching, and had a higher probability in public institutions of obtaining an executive-level position (Fong-Batkin, 2011; Leon & Jackson, 2009). In correlation with job satisfaction, the acceptance of a new job, and/or moving to another institution for a new position are all attributable to attaining an executive level leadership role.

Leon and Jackson (2009) arrived at a tentative model for understanding the representation of underrepresented minority groups in higher education administration. Similarly, other scholars (Donohue-Mendoza, 2012; McCurtis et.al., 2009) have called for an increased focus on developing mid-level leaders of ethnic diversity, with an imperative for effective supervision, formal development programs and research on leaders from underrepresented minority groups at all levels in organizations. For example, in Donohue-Mendoza's study of supervision and the career advancement of mid-level administrators, participants responded to interview questions about the supervision relationship and how that relationship functions to promote career advancement (Donohue-Mendoza, 2012). Results indicated that through the supervision relationships, mid-level administrators receive encouragement and learn about the institutional culture, and their supervisors provide support in navigating the gatekeeping functions of administration (Donohue-Mendoza, 2012). These scholars postulate that in order to thrive in an increasingly competitive and diverse global market, institutions of higher education cannot leave

leadership development for people of color to chance (Leon, 2005). Developing leaders from underrepresented minority groups requires special attention and focus because racism and inequities in society and in the workplace are still a prevalent issue in the United States. Thus, higher education faces an imperative to select and develop leaders who reflect the changes in their student bodies and can ultimately contribute to the industry's competitiveness in the current and future environment of higher education. Numerous studies used national survey data to examine the career paths and backgrounds (Moore, Martorana, & Twombly, 1985; Vaughan & Weisman, 1998; Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002) as well as to address how aspiring presidents and emerging leaders are prepared for a community college or university presidency.

Most recently, Montas-Hunter (2012) interviewed eight Latina women in leadership positions (dean, provost, vice president, president, and chancellor), all of whom had doctorates and served at four-year public institutions. Four themes emerged from the interviews indicating that participants attributed their success in leadership to support, self-awareness, professional experience, and values that aligned personally and professionally (Montas-Hunter, 2012). In another study, Kamassah (2010) recruited 16 women who identified as South Asian and African for interviews about their self-perceptions and their perceptions of key factors to their success in higher education. Themes that emerged from participants included the importance of relationships and support and the value of trust, respect, and honesty (Kamassah, 2010). In a study of women community college presidents, Gonzalez Sullivan (2009) recruited two African American women, two Hispanic women, and two White women for interviews about

their learning strategies, stance toward lack of knowledge, and possible cultural influences. Participants identified personal needs, including communities of practice and mentoring, as well as institutional factors, such as power issues and culturally derived expectations of competence, that influenced their leadership experiences (Gonzalez Sullivan, 2009). These studies shared a common focus on factors that contributed to success, according to the participants, and highlighted the need for ongoing changes to the higher education environment to support recruitment and retention of diverse women in leadership. These studies have also addressed the unique and complex roles of gender and ethnicity and how those characteristics influence leadership and workplace climate. However, neither of the studies delineate those mid- or senior-level administrators who are actually aspiring to a community college presidency. The assumption or implication that all mid- or senior-level female administrators are seeking advancement to the presidential position is misleading. This assumption was not accepted as fact by the current study and was outlined as a limitation in the available literature.

2.3 PIPELINES TO THE PRESIDENCY

The chief academic officer (CAO) position, or provost, as an extension of the faculty, remains the primary route to the college or university presidency (Cook & Young, 2012; King & Gomez, 2008; Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002). According to the ACE study of the presidency (2012), 70% of presidents had experience as a faculty member, with 54% coming to the presidency from either a CAO or previous presidency. Of the remaining presidents, only 23% were other senior executives prior to their presidencies, and 11% came from outside higher education. Most presidents have ascended through the traditional faculty ladder, starting from an entry-level faculty position and taking

administrative roles with increasing responsibility until becoming a CAO, the traditional stepping-stone to a university presidency (Cook & Young, 2012; Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Wessel & Keim, 1994).

Universities have yet to fully embrace nontraditional candidates or those who come to leadership from positions other than the faculty or from outside higher education, but there is a growing interest in this pool of potential leaders. Today nearly one-third of small liberal arts college presidents have never been faculty members, and 20% come from outside of academe. Those proportions are rising and are expected to continue in an upward trajectory. With provosts increasingly saying they don't want to be presidents, search committees will have little choice but to consider candidates from nontraditional backgrounds (Selingo, 2013). This might mean selecting candidates from business, politics or another non-profit leadership position. While there is not a definitive definition of what constitutes a nontraditional president, for this research study it was determined to use the description offered by Birnbaum and Umbach (2001). In their 2001 study of the president, Birnbaum and Umbach posited that to be considered a nontraditional president one would need to meet at least one of the following requirements: (1) have no faculty experience; (2) not hold a doctorate degree, or (3) come from a position outside of the academy. While much has been written and researched about college presidents in general terms, especially their various leadership styles, their aging demographics and their rising salaries, little appears to have been undertaken to examine the career paths of nontraditional college presidents.

Professional administrators, offering a different type of diversity, comprise another potential pool of leaders that could fill presidential roles. However, presidential

search committees and university or state governing boards seem less likely to view leaders from non-academic areas of the university as feasible presidential candidates because of the lack of faculty experience (Wessel & Keim, 1994; ACE, 2007, 2012; Barden, 2009; Cook & Young, 2012). Underscoring the tendency to hire from the faculty line, Wessel and Keim (1994) concluded that the nonacademic career path is a less predictable path for presidential aspirants. In *Renewing the Academic Presidency: Stronger Leadership for Tough Times* (Kerr & Gade, 1986), a national commission of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGBUC) recommended that institutions be open to presidential candidates from nontraditional backgrounds as well as administrators in the ranks (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1996). The larger concern is whether institutions of higher education are prepared to take full advantage of the depth and richness of its talent pool to fill these presidential positions (King & Gomez, 2008).

As the presidential role increases in complexity, most two-year institutions continue to show a preference for traditional candidates, or those with direct and increasing administrative experience in community colleges over candidates with other backgrounds (e.g. nontraditional candidates), thus not completely embracing the full diversity of candidates eligible for community college presidencies (Cook & Young, 2012). The looming and pending presidential retirements faced by institutions of higher education are an opportunity for higher education to diversify its leadership (King & Gomez, 2008; Shults, 2001). Higher education's traditional view of leaders in concert with the evolution of the presidency has limited the notion of what constitutes viability for

the presidential leadership role. As a result, the pipeline of presidential candidates remains diminished with the untapped potential of emerging leaders.

Succession Planning. The looming retirements of community college presidents has been a significant topic of concern for researchers and practitioners. In a 2010 study, 26% of survey respondents planned to retire by 2013 and 54% by 2016 (LaFond, 2010). To address the gaps in the presidential pipeline, one proposed solution is succession planning and talent management (Barden, 2009; Hartley & Godin, 2010; Mead-Fox, 2009). Succession planning identifies and trains employees with high potential to assume leadership roles at a future date (Stevens, 2008). A common strategy for executive-level roles in other industries, succession planning is appropriate for all levels of employees in an organization (Fusch & Mrig, 2011; Stevens, 2008). Succession planning produces a surplus of talent by helping organizations realize the potential of internal employees (Gonzalez, 2010). Traditionally, corporations intentionally develop talent and succession plans for their leaders; however, colleges and universities rarely engage in talent development or plan for executive leadership succession (ACE, 2006, 2007; Barden, 2009; Hoppe, 2003; Mead-Fox, 2009; Stripling, 2011). Gonzalez (2010) further pronounces that while academia is now known as big business, institutions of higher education have yet to borrow the best attributes of business culture: its tradition of developing leadership through succession planning. As a result, much of the potential leadership talent in higher education is underutilized.

Schiemann (2009) explained that talent management utilizes human capital management and resource activities that support three essential functions in an organization: talent acquisition, training and development, and retention. Talent acquisition

focuses on identifying, recruiting, and selecting qualified employees. Talent development involves training, managing performance, and rewarding employees. Retention efforts require effective utilization of compensation packages, recognition and rewards, professional development, and supervision. These activities support corporations' efforts to maintain human capital. Higher education has underutilized all of these strategies (Gonzalez, 2010). Barriers to invoking these strategies have included the egalitarian nature of colleges and universities, general faculty dislike of administrators and administrative work, and the seldom nature of handpicking a successor because of the complex process of presidential selections (Barden, 2009). Despite this, internal hires continue to be the most common means of appointing higher education administrators outside of the presidency (Carroll, 2004). The egalitarian philosophy across the higher education sector has left a dwindling pipeline of leaders. The leadership crisis in higher education is exacerbated by the disinclination to develop the leadership talent and succession planning as a strategy for filling presidential vacancies. As an industry, higher education does not address succession planning and talent management, leaving individuals to their own devices, but does offer leadership development for those who self-identify interest in advancing through the leadership ranks.

Calling. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, a “calling to a career” was a collective way to explain why men pursued the ministry as their vocational pursuit and later why women pursued teaching (Savickas, 2002). Interestingly, the history of higher education shows that the pursuit of higher education was a step along the path to man's calling; those seeking ministry positions would attend college until a clergy position was secured (Cohen and Kisker, 2010). A calling can be defined as “a transcendent summons,

experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation” (Dik & Duffy, 2012, p. 11). Although calling can be applied to a variety of life roles, it has particular relevance in occupations and work (Dik & Duffy, 2012). According to Dik and Duffy, “a calling has little to do, in fact, with a person’s actual job and everything to do with how that person approaches that job” – ergo their attitudes, motivations and personal beliefs (2012, p. 12). Current research on calling focuses on meaningful work, career choice, and career development (Dik & Duffy, 2012). While it is slowly gaining traction in other fields, calling remains a modern conception for academic careers and advancement (Dik & Duffy, 2012).

Having a calling recently framed how African American women come to accept a university presidency as part of their careers. In their recent work, *Answering the Call*, Bower and Wolverson (2009) profiled presidents who expressed a “sense of calling as a fundamental element of leadership” (p. 143). For these women, the calling to the presidency involved more than passion and enthusiasm. The subjects expressed a sense of certainty that their lives were part of a larger purpose. This larger purpose allowed them to view higher education as a mission that drove their lives and professional pursuits (Bower & Wolverson, 2009). Considering leadership as a higher purpose of presidents and emerging leaders may reflect their perspective as a “calling” that aptly describes their integration of leadership and avocation.

Leadership Development Programs. Leadership development programs—either institutionally or nationally based—offer at least a partial solution to the support needed to

develop a robust pool of potential leaders who may one day pursue presidencies. For example, the CLC study (2005) found that fewer than 30% of the chief academic officer respondents participated in a formal leadership development program prior to assuming that role (Hartley & Godin, 2010). Although leadership development programs exist to support emerging leaders, the pool of emerging leaders does not appear to take advantage of these programs to assist in their leadership development. Amey et.al. (2002) supports the creation and adoption of leadership development and recruitment of qualified and diverse groups of future leaders. These scholars suggest the need to develop more programs to prepare faculty leaders for the community college presidency.

Participation in leadership development programs is often at the discretion of the supervisor. At best, 20% of higher education institutions offer some semblance of formal coaching/mentoring program and approximately 33% offer any kind of in-house leadership development program (Fusch & Mrig, 2011). Local leadership development programming efforts appear few and far in between, but are likely unreported due to their short-lived tendencies related to funding fluctuations and senior-level or institutional endorsement. According to studies on presidential retirements, 71% of the presidents were aware of leaders on campus who had presidential aspirations, yet a potential leader's development rested with the individual supervisor's willingness to support this interest in leadership development (Fusch & Mrig, 2011; LaFond, 2010; Shults, 2001). The leadership programs were not reported to be part of a larger institutional strategy to grow, shape and propagate future leaders. If leadership programs were created with such an intention, these programs could play an important role in cultivating a local pool of

emerging leaders to fill senior administrative and executive-level position openings as they become available (Barden, 2009; Ekman, 2010).

Leadership development programs at the national level exist primarily through sponsorship by national nonprofit organizations. The 'Big Six' in higher education, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the American Council on Education (ACE), the Association of American Universities (AAU), the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), all sponsor some form of leadership development program related to their missions. Most national programs target various affinity audiences (e.g., presidents, chief academic officers, deans, department chairs, mid-level aspirants or emerging leaders, women, and underrepresented minority groups). These national leadership development programs differ in structure, length, components, class size, and emphasis (Kezar, 2009; Turner & Kappes, 2009). For example, the Bryn-Mawr HERS program targets women, the Harvard Institute for Educational Management program solicits senior-level leaders with at least ten years of administrative experience, the ACE Fellows Program attracts middle administrators and high-potential emerging senior leaders, the League for Innovation's Community College Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) targets administrators in senior leadership positions in community colleges who are qualified for a community college presidency by their educational and experiential backgrounds, and the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership is designed to prepare senior-level executives for positions as community college chief executive officers.

Similar to the ELI and Lakin Institute, other emerging leader programs include the American Council on Education's Emerging Leaders Group, the National Education Association's (NEA) Emerging Leaders Academy, the University Professional & Continuing Education Association's Emerging Leaders Program, the Chicago Booth Executive Program for Emerging Leaders in Higher Education, the Association for Continuing Higher Education's Emerging Leaders Institute and the Institute for Higher Education Policy's Global Policy Fellows Program, to name a few. These programs range from a series of intensive weekends, to one week or longer residential experiences, to extended engagement including an internship-like placement with a presidential mentor at another institution. Although no accurate totals exist for how many emerging leaders participate in national leadership programs each year, scholars would argue the numbers are still low compared to the potential size of the pool of emerging leaders.

Understanding Presidencies from a Narrative Perspective. Three research studies on presidential careers utilizing a narrative approach provide additional but limited understanding of the experiences of presidential leaders in higher education. Although it was not specific to community colleges, the Walton (1996) study profiled women presidents' journeys, offering each individual's full narrative account of her career, the pathways taken, and some considerations as part of the decisions made in selecting certain roles. Using twenty autobiographical stories or "profiles" that reflect on women's leadership and the role of gender in higher education in the United States and Britain, Walton explored the career trajectories of women working as university executives (presidents, vice-chancellors, and college principals in Britain) and to highlight commonalties and contrasts within their careers. The study participants

represented diverse institutional cultures in which the women work and diverse backgrounds. Diverse factors included institution of employment, types of institutions from which the women received their undergraduate training; the income, education, and ethnicity of their parents; terminal degrees received; and patterns of recruitment into and advancement within academe. The study, while novel at the time, did not attempt to identify any significant or compelling themes about the causes of development, advancement, or leadership across the women's careers.

The Padilla (2005) study differed in that it was a biographical case study of six university presidents; however, it presented the presidents' stories based on interviews that were triangulated with other sources. Padilla used a qualitative approach that included document analysis and interviews, not only with the six presidents in question, but also with many of their associates and colleagues. The selection of participants was based on a number of factors, including a desire to look at various types of institutions, diversity of race and gender, and availability of triangulating sources. Results of the study revealed the following shared qualities: resilience in childhood, extraordinary attention to education in the home, exposure to different cultures before adulthood, connectedness to their (leaders') respective organizations, and early access to top leadership. One of Padilla's main conclusions is that it is important for universities to develop internal talent by identifying and mentoring people who show leadership promise, as they might become the best presidents of the future.

The Frankland (2010) study examined the impact of a particular undergraduate major on professional pathways. The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to discover how six community college presidents who were undergraduate English majors

constructed the stories of their academic and professional journeys. Findings were synthesized as an interpretive framework and revealed three themes—boundaries, connections, and transformations. The selected presidents crossed boundaries, made connections to ideas and people, and transformed their thoughts and actions as found in the descriptions of their academic and professional experiences. Data analyses determined that the content and context the presidents' stories uncovered relationships between their experiences, their beliefs about higher education's purpose, and their understanding of the community college mission.

The Padilla and Frankland studies used an experience-centered narrative to explore the president's journey through their academic lives. All the studies looked at the presidents' lives as leaders. While both the Walton (1996) and the Frankland (2010) studies discussed the presidential journey through an individuals' narrative, Frankland emphasized the role of a liberal arts background in a president's ascension to the helm. Frankland interpreted the narratives in an attempt to provide an overall understanding of their experiences, while the profiles in Walton (1996) remained unconnected by the author. The Padilla (2005) study presented a cross-case analysis, arriving at 21 elements of exemplary leadership, but did not examine the personal and social criterion considered in pursuing presidential leadership. The Walton and Frankland projects could have benefited from stronger theoretical or conceptual frameworks undergirding their interpretations. Padilla brought in the conceptual frameworks of leadership and organizational complexity to anchor the study. Limitations from the three studies include: a reflective approach from current presidents only, thereby excluding the perspective of aspiring presidents; the Padilla and Frankland studies failed to examine career choice and

personal considerations; the studies failed to address the gender and racial gaps in the current population or address how to diversify the pipeline for the future. Major observations from these previous studies that benefited the present study were: (1) the usefulness of narrative inquiry to evaluate university and community college presidents by offering the stories of research subjects as profiles; (2) triangulating the narratives with other sources for credibility; and (3) the need to connect the narratives using a sound theoretical framework and methodology that can fully support the interviews and their interpretations. Thus, this study utilized two theoretical frameworks to ground the research, the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Career Construct Theory. Chapter 3 addressed the usefulness of narrative inquiry as a research design and methodology.

2.4 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

Martin Fishbein & Icek Ajzen have used the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to investigate influence of beliefs and attitudes towards several social and personal behaviors, for example, technology use, hunting, weight loss, committing traffic violations, pursuing post-secondary education, use of preventative health practices, willingness to vote, luxury purchases, and use of public transportation (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980). Therefore, the TPB provided a useful framework for examining the personal and social constructs of attitude, motives and perceived behavioral control that lead to behavioral intentions. The theory was useful in examining the attitudes and motives of community college presidents and emerging leaders towards the pursuit of the community college presidency, as the behavioral intention. According to the theory, human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: beliefs about the likely consequences of the behavior (behavioral beliefs), beliefs about the normative

expectations of others (normative beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior (control beliefs). In their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior; normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm; and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control. In combination, attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of a behavioral intention.

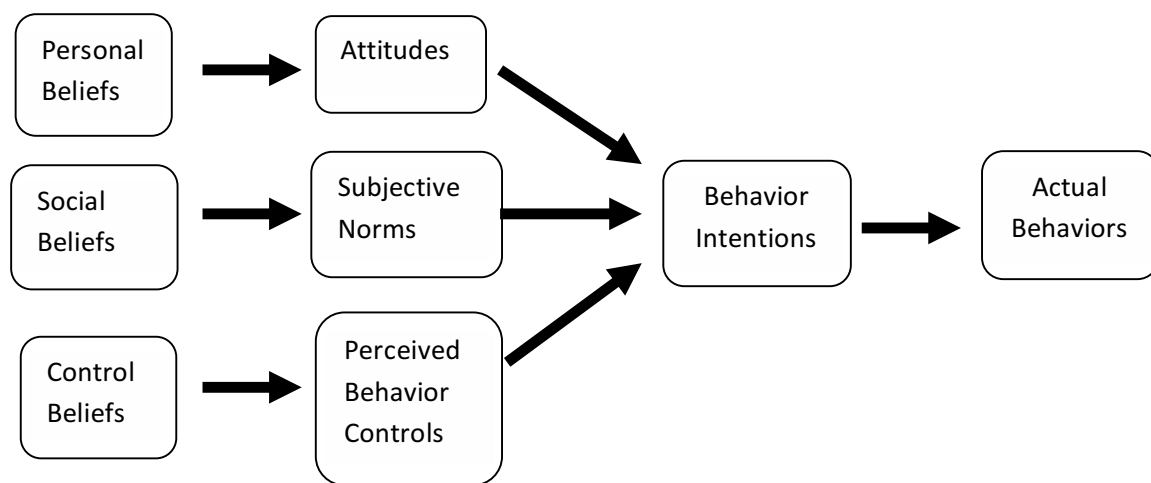


Figure 2.1: Conceptualization of the Theory of Planned Behavior

As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be the person's intention to perform the behavior in question. Finally, given a sufficient degree of actual control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises. Intention is thus assumed to be the immediate antecedent of behavior. However, because many behaviors pose difficulties of execution that may limit volitional control, it is useful to consider perceived behavioral control in addition to intention. To the extent that perceived behavioral control is veridical, it can serve as a proxy for actual control and

contribute to the prediction of the behavior in question. Figure 2.1, above, is a schematic representation of the theory.

Personal Beliefs. Beliefs have been widely acclaimed to be at the core of attitude formation. In Fishbein's (1963) expectancy-value model, attitude was a function of beliefs and the evaluative aspects of those beliefs. Double negatives were later a key component of the expectancy-value theory and the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1963; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1972, 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) where a double negative belief (not believing in a negative outcome or characteristic) will contribute positively to the attitude toward that object or situation. Some critics (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Chaiken & Stangor, 1987; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Herr 1995) claim that not all beliefs were cognitive and that some of our beliefs were inherent and stem from our subconscious. Thus there are two "paths" that lead to attitude formation, one primary and the other secondary.

Fishbein (1979) calls these secondary beliefs subjective norms in his theory of reasoned action. Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) countered the non-belief based theorists by stating that attitude cannot be measured without acknowledging the cognitive structure or salient beliefs that underlie the said attitude. Therefore, in the context of this study, the community college president's or emerging leaders attitude toward academic administration and leadership should influence their judgment about whether or not they are capable of leading a two-year institution.

Additionally, attitudinal differences between groups have been previously studied in the health, sociology and education fields on topics such as racial perceptions, self-attitudes and social opinions (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954; Mastumoto, 1993; DiMaggio,

Evans & Bryson, 1996). Attitudes by groups have been studied to determine if any variance in a measured attitude was attributable to group differences. Likewise, this study aims to examine variance in attitudes toward community college presidential leadership, to determine when and why one pursues the highest academic leadership position.

Normative Beliefs. Attitudes, beliefs and behavior are linked, with roots in emotions, behavior and social influences (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1972, 1980; Chaiken & Stangor, 1987; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). They are described in dimensions such as good-bad, likeable-dislikeable, harmful- beneficial, pleasant-unpleasant. Behavioral patterns, such as advancing one's career, are formed from one's attitudes, and may have already developed regarding the plausibility of becoming the CEO of an academic institution. This study investigated the attitudes that coincide with those behavioral patterns. Motivational theories can be found across various disciplines from sociology, psychology, education and business, each of which professes a different definition of the term. Mitchell (1982) defines it as “the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain behaviors,” (p. 82). Other researchers define motivation and motives through intention and performance (Lewin, 1951; Kelman, 1958; Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). A lack of differentiation between the psychological aspect (needs), the behavior itself and the performance of that behavior has led to each term and concept (need/motive, motivation and intention) being used interchangeably to represent motivation. As Deci comments in his 1992 review, the past and present theories that ignore the issue of activation were better described as “cognitive theories of behavior control,” (p. 168). Thus, normative beliefs are a proxy measure for behavior. It represents a person's motivation in the sense of her or his conscious plan or decision to perform

certain behavior (Conner & Armitage, 1998). Generally, the stronger the intention is, the more likely the behavior will be performed or pursued.

Control Beliefs. This refers to the individual's perception of the extent to which performance of the behavior is easy or difficult (Ajzen, 1991). It increases when individuals perceive they have more resources and confidence (Ajzen, 1985; Hartwick & Barki, 1994; Lee & Kozar, 2005). When applied to academic leadership, the Theory of Planned Behavior suggests that intentions to pursue academic leadership roles like the presidency is influenced by attitudes towards advancing one's career, perceived social pressure to do so and by perceptions of control over pursuit of the presidency. Glass ceilings, institutional and societal barriers all affect our control beliefs.

Using the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study examined the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of underrepresented women faculty and women administrators who are community college presidents or are emerging leaders for a future community college presidency. Favorable attitudes toward academic leadership will result in an increased likelihood to pursue advanced leadership roles. Subjective norms influences will discourage or encourage one's pursuit of presidency. One's control beliefs in their own leadership potential contribute to the perceived ease or feasibility of ascension to the community college presidency.

2.5 CAREER CONSTRUCTION THEORY

Career Construction Theory (CCT) is both a framework and a conduit by which career metaphors and presidential pathways adjoin. Mark Savickas, the vocational psychologist and career counselor behind CCT, implores that "individuals build their careers by imposing meaning on vocational behavior" (Savickas, 2011, p. 26). Career

reflections and the meanings derived from career decisions is predicated on one's ability to narrate their own work lives. Through this constructivist paradigm, researchers can use CCT to analyze career narratives, reflect these narratives back to the individual, and evaluate the individual's movement through their careers. The central principle of CCT is that one's career identity can be storied and that people derive meaning from reflecting on and narrating their career stories. Narration is then foundational to CCT and is contingent on one's the ability to retell the backstory behind one's career trajectory. (Hartung, 2011; Savickas, 2011). Career identity oscillates with a person's experiences; an individual repeatedly revises his or her identity to adapt and integrate new professional experiences into a career story. Changes, ordeals, and unexpected events, contribute to these revisions of identity and career as part of that identity. Processing a narrative of identity involves gathering small stories, which highlight important incidents and episodes, and integrates these short episodes into a large story with broader meaning (Savickas, 2011).

While career development theories are explanations of how people develop certain traits, personalities, and self-perceptions and the ways in which these developments influence decision-making, CCT focuses on the context in which people live and how various aspects of those contexts interact with personal characteristics to influence development and decision-making (Savickas, 2011; Brown, 2002). Since the first published theory on careers in 1909, psychologists have posited many theories about career choice and development (Brown, 2002). Although there has been discourse on an integrative theory, there is not yet one comprehensive way to explain the ways in which people understand their work lives (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989; Brown, 2002; Savickas, 2001).

Advancement of CCT. As the concept of career advancement evolves, so do the theories by which psychologists explain a person's occupational role, decisions, and identity. The theories have moved from a positivist orientation of using scores from various career assessments to obtain the fit of a person with a job role to a postmodern view of careers as personally understood and constructed (Brown, 2002). While the historical career identity in American society was formerly a lifetime of work with one company, moving up through the ranks of the organization, that storyline is less prevalent in today's agile and transitional work world with greater focus on the individual than the organization. "Rather than living a narrative conferred by a corporation, people must author their own stories as they navigate occupational transitions in the postmodern world" (Savickas, 2011, p. 11). CCT was introduced at the beginning of the millennium to reflect the current postmodern era of careers and emphasizes the agency of the individual in authoring their own work life (Savickas, 2001).

Individuals must construct their own career identity capital by knowing, liking, and accentuating their own career stories. Savickas offers a new configuration that requires workers to be flexible and adaptable in their work and the identity constructed through their occupational activities. One general critique of career development theories is that although they explain certain aspects of careers, they do not directly facilitate the work of a career counselor with a client (Hartung, 2011). As both a researcher and practitioner, Savickas (2011) developed CCT to bridge the theoretical world of careers with a practical theory for counselors to employ in eliciting a client's career narrative and then supporting career decisions and transitions through extending the story. CCT, as a newer theory, has been designed for application in career counseling, but has had limited use thus far in

research studies as a theoretical framework (Hartung, 2013; Savickas, 2011). Thus, CCT is one of the first career counseling theories in vocational psychology and, as a newer theory, it has not yet been extensively applied in research (Savickas, 2011).

Tenets of CCT. Savickas (2011) elaborated four foundational tenets related to language, identity, identity development, and the expression of identity through one's career. A foundational element of CCT is that a person constructs the self through language. This self-identity occurs as part of a lifelong developmental process and occurs through language and conversation. Thus, identity construction is an individual process that occurs as part of a social context over the life span of an individual. Identity is part of the larger concept of self (Savickas, 2011). In CCT, occupational choice involves constructing a niche by seeing one's identity as part of a community or social group (Savickas, 2011). Identities are constructed using salient social cultural scripts that emulate one's personal values. Savickas (2011) theorized that identity solidifies when individuals join a social group that provides a social niche, like an occupational niche, because it is a way to project the self in an outward direction. The occupational role is in effect, identity in motion; work and identity work in tandem to support constituting the whole self (Savickas, 2011).

Careers are more flexible now than in the past, as people move through organizations and change occupations multiple times in the course of their lives which requires individuals to be more adaptable in their work and the identity they construct through their occupational activities. This constant change has implications for careers and identities. Since this change and mobility reflects transitions, traumas, and unexpected events, individuals repeatedly revise their identities and their accompanying career stories

to adapt, incorporating an explanation of the impact of these events and experiences on the meaning of that life story. The final tenet is the belief that a person's identity is often expressed in narratives, that is, a person tells about the self through stories. As Savickas (2011) noted, narrative processing of identity gathers small stories at key intersections, which are about important incidents and episodes, and integrates them into a large story with a broader meaning. In using these elements of self and identity to weave a career narrative together, the teller, using language, stories an occupational plot of a sequence of events, may include disruptions and gaps (Savickas, 2011). To counter the arbitrariness of storytelling and reflection, explanations and time values add structure to sequence the narrative into a whole composite with a beginning, middle, and end to add meaning to the collective sequence of events.

Elements of CCT. CCT's four basic elements are occupational plot, career theme, subjective and objective career components, and character arc (Savickas, 2011). The first element, occupational plot, contains the explanations that structure career experiences into a cohesive whole with a beginning, middle, and end, similar to any other type of story. Secondly, career themes are the patterns implicit in the occupational plot that reflect the meaning a person is making about his or her career. The theme explains the meaning of the story. Also, in CCT, every person has both an objective career and a subjective career (Savickas, 2011). An objective career is one that may be observed across time through positions held in organizations, as in a sequence of events. An objective career is a chronicle of work that can be represented through documents. Resumes, curriculum vitae, or job applications all capture this record of experience (Savickas, 2011). Connecting and relating one's series of employed positions allows one to construct a

subjective career identity. The career themes reflect the subjective components of a career: those emotions, feelings, and thoughts that comprise the meaning of the person's career. When taken together with identity formation, which is essential to the theory, a holistic picture about an individual's career emerges through a comprehensive narrative.

Strengths and Weaknesses of CCT. CCT has two major strengths and a primary weakness. Its strengths include a postmodern outlook on the individual and its espousal of a holistic view of a career. CCT approaches a person's work life in its social context, taking an integrative perspective of career as part of many life roles. Therefore, instead of parsing out elements such as self-efficacy, personality, and developmental life stages as other theories do, CCT attempts to integrate career into a holistic view of the person. Its constructivist outlook, where the individual derives and interprets his or her own meaning, is also a strength. Rather than relying on traits, stages, or various analytical data, individual agency is central to occupational life and development (Savickas, 2011). CCT reflects a fluid world of work where the worker must take an active role in designing his or her career (Hartung, 2011).

A weakness of the theory is that it privileges qualitative data over quantitative data. Previous theories have attempted to quantify career development and decisions through individual assessments (Holland, 1973; Super, 1990). While quantitative assessments may offer concrete data, Savickas (2002) emphasizes limitations of these studies in their ability to offer a complete picture of a person and postulates that narratives are more than adequate as a tool to understand career trajectories.

Narrative Methodology. CCT uses a narrative paradigm where career counselors gather, interpret, and reflect the stories their clients tell about their careers, so that the

clients may make decisions about future career actions and build intentions into action. Narrative inquiry is a formal methodology for understanding individuals' stories (Hartung, 2013). As a research methodology, narrative inquiry places a person's story at the center of the research. CCT and narrative inquiry align in their focus on individuals' stories. In this postmodern era, there is an imperative for workers to enact a greater amount of personal agency in their own careers as both employees and organizations no longer operate on longstanding loyalty. CCT allows researchers to understand and relate to participants' careers through stories. Additionally, CCT allows for a holistic perspective of a person's career where the individual derives and interprets his or her own meaning through the career story she or he tells. Thus, even as a newer theory, CCT is an appropriate theoretical framework to invoke for studying the careers of higher education presidents and emerging leaders.

2.6 SUMMARY

In conclusion, the foundational literature from community colleges, academic leadership, gender and diversity within the presidency convened to support the basis of this study. The pathways to a university or college presidency demonstrated there are several internal and external factors that can either support or inhibit one's pursuit and ascension to a community college presidency, including leadership development programs. These training programs served as a means of supporting a person's leadership considerations. These concepts have not been explicitly connected in theory, research, or practice. The theories of Planned Behavior and Career Construct served as the theoretical framework for this study and helped to identify those internal and external factors that are of consequence for underrepresented minority women faculty or women administrators.

Career Construct Theory detailed a new, postmodern framework for learning about and supporting individuals' careers through the narratives they relate, while TPB examined attitudes, motives and perceptions related to performing a behavior.

The literature revealed gaps in practice and research that can be addressed through the operationalization of this study. First, while perhaps implied, career development was not prominent in the literature on leadership development; similarly, leadership was rarely included as a construct within the career theories. Yet, leadership frequently occurs in a person's work life. Also, leaders were studied once they were in their positions, not along the way. Thus, more work was needed to understand the decisions and considerations individuals make on their way to a presidential role. Moreover, the journey to a presidency may include participation in a national leadership development program. A number of national programs support leadership development at primarily mid- and senior-level roles. These programs provide training for aspirants and those already in positions. However, the programs and their participants have not been well studied. Invoking CCT and narrative inquiry to examine the paths and considerations of individuals who were in the process of considering senior leadership roles in higher education vis-à-vis participation in a leadership development program was a primary contribution of this dissertation.

Based on the literature overviewed, three primary implications for this study arose: (a) understanding the complex contexts of leadership, (b) attending to the call for diversity, and (c) addressing the gaps in the literature. First, leadership is not easy, based on the issues modern higher education organizations face, to the point that the challenges can discourage faculty from considering these roles. Understanding the perspective of

leadership as an endeavor that should be avoided was an important consideration for the researcher to address. Secondly, the various calls for leaders to reflect the gender, racial, and ethnic diversity increasing on campuses are equally important implications. Part of this diversity included the nontraditional backgrounds a leader can bring to the senior-level roles in higher education. Paying attention to the diversity of leaders that comprised this sample was an important consideration. Finally, there were some gaps in the literature that warrant attention: (a) understanding individuals' decisions and considerations about career choices within the community college presidency, (b) knowing how participation in a national leadership development program informs these decisions, (c) examining candidates from nontraditional pipelines, (d) applying current career development theory, and (e) profiling individual considerations about their own leadership potential.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to discover the ways in which the perceptions, attitudes and motives shape the leadership potential and career considerations of minority female administrators pre- and post- community college presidencies, using sitting presidents and alumni of several prominent community college leadership development programs as a microcosm for investigation. The two-phase study qualitatively explored attitudes and motives by collecting two sets of categorical data. One dataset was collected from sitting or recent past minority female presidents at public community colleges in the United States; the other dataset was collected from minority female emerging leaders as evidenced by their participation in the League for Innovation in Community College's Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) or the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. Since current leadership instruments are inadequate to measure interest level, attitudes and/or motivators, a qualitative-based inquiry was most appropriate. The chapter is organized in the following sections: the characteristics, approaches and limitations of narrative inquiry; participants and study setting; instrumentation; data collection; data analysis; validity and reliability; and ethical considerations.

The study addressed the following research questions and sub-questions:

- RQ 1. What are the attitudes, motivators and perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders toward academic leadership roles?
- a. What do the administrative careers of minority female college presidents look like before, during, and after their academic leadership roles, as conveyed through their curriculum vitae and their personal narratives?
 - b. What do the administrative careers of minority female emerging leaders look like before and during their pursuit of academic leadership roles, as conveyed through their curriculum vitae and their personal narratives?
- RQ 2. What are the perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders on their own leadership potential?
- a. How have presidents and ELI or Lakin alumni incorporated leadership considerations into their careers?
- RQ 3. For what reasons do minority female emerging leaders pursue or not pursue the community college presidency?
- a. What career decisions did sitting presidents and ELI or Lakin alumni make before, during, and after their leadership training?
 - b. What considerations went into making these decisions?
- RQ 4. Are there attitudinal or motivational differences between actual and aspiring minority females for the community college presidency?
- a. How do sitting presidents and ELI or Lakin alumni consider the future

of their careers?

- b. What interpretations can be made from the narratives of sitting presidents and ELI or Lakin alumni that can assist other leaders in their career development?

This study was designed using a qualitative approach, which is appropriate for use in this study to counter the methodological shortcomings of previous studies (Barres, 2006; Asking & Stensaker, 2002; Uhler, 1989; Astin & Kent, 1983). Other researchers (Dixon, 2007; Shults, 2001; Vaughan, 1986; Cohen & March, 1974) have analyzed higher education administration career paths and trajectories primarily using quantitative methods to portray the hierarchical career path of leaders in higher education. Yet, their findings are inadequate to satisfactorily explain the reasons women faculty and administrators seek senior leadership roles in higher education, examining only past roles, leadership styles and the ability to move upward. Furthermore, the traditional career ladders or pathways no longer prevail as the allegory for a successful career, which is also not accounted for by the body of current literature on higher education presidential careers (Eddy, 2007; Shults, 2001). Thus, the limited current knowledge of the considerations made when choosing to pursue a community college presidency supports the need for a different approach in their examination.

Overall, qualitative approaches are appropriate for researching career progression and trajectories due to their usefulness in understanding how career decisions are formed (Hatch, 2002; Maxwell, 1996). The qualitative approach allowed for the exploration of the motivations that underlie one's attraction to or detraction from occupational pursuits and advancements. These career-changing decisions are also important to understand how

career hierarchy changes occur in higher education leadership roles. For this study, a qualitative approach allowed for new career patterns and trajectories to emerge, along with the attitudes, motives and perceptions that informed those career decisions. Employing this qualitative approach allowed for gaps in the literature to be addressed (Hatch, 2002). The CCT framework (Savickas, 2011) outlines the subjective and objective components of careers —the objective being the compilation of professional experiences and the subjective being the meaning derived from said experiences. This study gathered both elements by first reviewing participants' curriculum vitae to understand the objective component of their careers and then conducting narrative interviews with the participants to understand the subjective components of their careers, including their interpretations, perceptions and derivatives.

The research was significant to understanding the attitudes and motivations faculty have when considering an academic leadership role at the micro level than at the macro level as seen in the higher education administration and leadership literature. It is no longer sufficient to identify that a gender disparity exists within academic leadership; rather, it was imperative to answer the question of why. The outcomes of this study contributed to the body of knowledge in higher education administration, academic leadership and mixed methodology.

The present study also added depth to the educational leadership literature and aid university administrators by examining the driving forces behind faculty pursuit of academic leadership positions. This had implications for redeveloping the pipeline of future administrators both internal and externally. Assessment of attitudes and motives for gender differences led to a greater understanding of the existing gender disparity as

well as the career considerations under-represented minority females make in pursuit of the community college presidency. This newfound perspective has implications on recruitment of faculty, retention, leadership development programs, and succession planning at colleges and university across the United States.

3.1 NARRATIVE INQUIRY

A narrative qualitative approach for this project permitted the researcher to address the limitations found in the current research on community college presidential pathways and careers. Taken in the context of social science research, narrative inquiry offered stories as a way to understand individuals' lives, in an effort to draw some conclusions about a problem or issue being explored (Savickas, 2011; Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) noted the main purposes of narrative research was to achieve an understanding of how people make sense of their lives, delineate the process of their decision-making and describe how people interpret what they experience (Creswell, 2007; 2009). First, qualitative approaches sought to understand the phenomenon from the participants' viewpoint, rather than from the researcher's perspective (Merriam, 2009). As personal considerations about decisions to pursue leadership roles were unaccounted for in the literature, seeking the viewpoints of the participants was critical to our understanding of underrepresented women in the leadership pipeline. Narrative inquiry examined a phenomenon using stories that relate individuals' lived experience and the meaning they derive through the stories they tell about their experiences (Creswell, 2009). As a result, narrative research was ideal for capturing the detailed life experiences of an individual or small group of individuals (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, narrative inquiry included a narrative approach to analysis and reporting thereby serving as a platform for the entire

study.

Whereas other qualitative methods are primarily concerned with occurrences at particular junctures, narrative inquiry attempted to capture complete stories with the intent of analyzing underlying assumptions and insights to further a greater understanding of the complexity under study (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Webster & Mertova, 2007). It allowed for viewpoints and perspectives to be expressed more openly than would be possible in a standard questionnaire. Careers and the decisions people make about them are highly personal constructs that can be storied (Savickas, 2011). Stories were also interpretative, allowing for the meaning these leaders derive from positions they have held during their careers to unfold, putting voice to what was known from the quantitative research. Stories and their elements were the central focus of narrative research. Narrative inquiry, then, had the ability to reflect a complex plot, specific characters, and themes embedded in a person's story. More than verbalizing the beginning, middle, and end of an interesting tale, the life stories individuals construct for themselves are powerful and became a self-fulfilling prophecy, thereby profoundly affecting their psyche and their way of life. Narrative inquiry also has the ability to guide a person's future decision-making and considerations (Savickas, 2011; Webster & Mertova, 2007; Sheehy, 1995). Narrative inquiry reflected current and past plot lines and project future decisions and life themes.

Even with its ability to address life's complexities to generate knowledge, narrative inquiry was an emerging qualitative methodology, having just come into greater use within the past 30 years and becoming a research methodology in its own right (Spector-Mersel, 2010; Squire, 2008a; Webster & Mertova, 2007). As such, narrative inquiry was not as well defined as other more established qualitative methods.

Standardized approaches to narrative inquiry are not yet prevalent, resulting in a diversity of narrative approaches (Squire, 2008a, 2008b; Webster & Mertova, 2007). Thus, narrative inquiry, while still developing in comparison to other qualitative methods, had some unique features and strengths that outweigh its limitations.

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Narrative inquiry has certain characteristics, including a multidisciplinary approach to research that is defined as talk or discussions organized around consequential events (Riessman, 1993). The object of investigation is the story, which imposes order on a series of events and includes interpretation to make sense of the events with story plots that include tragedy, comedy, romance, and satire (King & Horrocks, 2010; Riessman, 1993). Human agency and imagination determine what is included and excluded in constructing and interpreting narratives, not fact and fiction. This concept of human agency is supported by Riessman who stated, “individuals construct past events and actions in personal narratives to claim identities and construct lives” (Riessman, 1993, p. 2). Although narrative inquiry was an emerging methodology, there are some distinct features of narrative inquiry that make it quite useful, including unit of analysis, temporality, and focus of the story, about which a researcher must make determinations as part of the inquiry process (Riessman, 1993).

Unit of Analysis. In narrative analysis, individuals’ stories are typically the unit of analysis. All participants have their own interpretation of events, and each interpretation is equally valid; thus, relativism was an accepted and implied aspect of participants’ stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquirers maintain awareness of the multilayered stories and imagine intersections and emerging threads to

attempt not only to capture a story, but to make sense of the life as the person is living it (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry, however, was also broader than the single unit of analysis, acknowledging that both participant and inquirer come to the research in the middle of living their own stories, along with their particular contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The story, then, cannot stand alone. While stories are the unit of analysis, it was important for the researcher to seek and provide the context of the stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Temporality. Time was a critical context for narrative research. While traditional, empirical approaches to research perceive phenomena as timeless, time was an essential feature of narrative inquiry and provided context for the meaning derived from narrative work (Webster & Mertova, 2007). According to Clandinin and Connelly, “narrative inquirers also work in three dimensional spaces—past, present, future. We tell remembered stories of ourselves from earlier times as well as more current stories. All of these stories offer possible plotlines for our futures” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 60). Narrative research was time-bound as a context for the phenomenon under study, while in other empirical paradigms time was far less a consideration. Thus, temporality was a central feature of narrative inquiry and the stories researchers elicit when working in narrative methods (King & Horrocks, 2010). The implication of time for this study was to gather and consider the past, present, and future elements of participants’ career stories.

Focus of the Story. The focus of the story was another feature of narrative work. Three theoretical divisions currently existed in narrative research to describe the focus: event-centered, experience-centered, and pragmatic (Squire, 2008a, 2008b). Event-centered narrative work involved analyzing the language structure of a narrative (Squire,

2008a, 2008b). Experience-centered narratives employed a holistic approach and emphasize the agency of the storyteller. The third approach to narratives, called pragmatic, is less interested in personal agency and more interested in building social patterns with the construction of stories and their contexts (Squire, 2008a, 2008b). Event narratives focus on a story's structure; experience narratives emphasized transformation, agency, and meaning; and pragmatic narratives accounted for the co-construction of the story.

3.3 NARRATIVE APPROACHES

There are three approaches to narrative inquiry, event-centered narratives, experience-centered narratives and pragmatic narratives. This study will focus on experience centered and pragmatic narratives. Additional details are provided below on the usefulness of each narrative approach.

Experience-centered Narratives. In contrast to event-centered narratives, experience-centered narrative research was more interested in the agency of the storytellers and the meaning they derived from their experiences than in the structure of the story (Squire, 2008a, 2008b; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Experience-centered narratives, then, involved transforming the stories related by the narrator into an understanding about an experience that involved a person's change or improvement (Squire, 2008a). This focus included both positive and negative revelations, actions, missteps, and resolutions (Squire, 2008a). In addition to understanding change, Squire (2008a) offered that narratives are meaningful, sequential, human, and both mirror and reconstitute a person's experience. Moreover, experience-centered research stressed that representations vary over time and are contextual (Squire, 2008b). This type of narrative

inquiry was hermeneutic in that it attempted to reach a full, cohesive understanding of an experience, not just structural analysis (Squire, 2008b). Experience-centered narratives, then, took a holistic view of the person.

Pragmatic Narratives. The pragmatic focus emphasized the context of the interview, including spoken or written conversations between people, and the representation of social and cultural patterns as part of the context (Squire, 2008a, 2008b). In the pragmatic approach, the researcher focused on interpersonal language, interpersonal relations, or lenses (sociocultural or historical) of the researcher and participant (Squire, 2008a). With the pragmatic approach, the context of the interview and all that the researcher-participant interaction imbued was analyzed and interpreted as the narrative.

3.4 UTILIZATION OF EXPERIENCE-CENTERED AND PRAGMATIC NARRATIVE INQUIRY

The choice of experience-centered and pragmatic narrative inquiry as the primary research design was a sound decision as it collected an individual's story as data through conversations, offers a social context for the story, and evoked through collaboration the presence of the author in some sort of way (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Maxwell, 1996). Careers are individuals' experience of the world of work with the meaning of work derived by those individuals (Squire, 2008a). Career experiences, like ascension to a college presidency, can be storied or narrated (Savickas, 2011). Similarly, participation in a leadership development program is an experience that individuals may elect to include as part of their occupational trajectory and milestone. The researcher is justified in selecting experience-centered narrative as the method of inquiry because one's career is an evolving experience that requires a holistic

approach to understand its context, complexity and derivative meaning (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In summary, an experience-focused approach to narrative inquiry with a pragmatic lens is well suited for this research study.

Secondly, this type of narrative had the ability to evoke a complex, holistic story, which included revelations, missteps, actions, and resolutions within the context of the related account (King & Horrocks, 2010). Experience-centered narrative inquiry accentuates the context of the story and captured time, change, and cultural elements that augmented the story told. The aim of experience-centered narrative inquiry was to achieve a comprehensive story. Thus, experience-centered narratives became the logical choice since the purpose of this study was to understand the individual experiences of female community college presidents and emerging community college leaders in relation to how their attitudes and motivations impact (Matsumoto, 1993) their career progression.

3.5 LIMITATIONS OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Like all methodologies, narrative inquiry had its own limitations. Since this study utilized an experience-centered narrative inquiry, the criticisms of that focus are emphasized. Squire (2008a) critiqued experience-centered research on six points: assumptive interpretations, timelines, coherence, researcher subjectivity, forgetting language, and relativism. First, when espousing experience-focused research, researchers sometimes made strong, prescriptive assumptions about the stories existing in the research (Squire, 2008a). This was particularly the case because of the interpretive authority that the researcher purports basing his or her interpretation on materials to which readers have little access. Readers rely upon the judgment of the researcher who ultimately determines what is included in the final output (Squire, 2008a).

Secondly, according to Squire (2008a), time presented a problem in that experienced-centered narrative requires “the full presence of past, present, and future” (p. 39). While lives are lived this way, the storyteller does not necessarily narrate them this way. Thus, the researcher had the challenge of translating time in a manner that was meaningful and did not detract from the context and value of the narrative shared (Squire, 2008a).

A third and related criticism of experienced-focused narrative was coherence. Squire (2008a) indicated that experience-based narratives should be complete accounts of a person’s experiences and that partial, fragmented, or contradictory stories present complications for data analysis. The researcher, however, was limited to what participants choose to share and in what order; the researcher did not tell subjects how stories should be told or not told and had to accept the incongruence of stories in their narrative inquiry.

Squire (2008a) also criticized experienced-centered narrative inquiry because it suggested that experience is grounded in a subject that claims some unity and agency. This assumption has the possibility of leading the researcher to subjective interpretations or isolating them from a more complicated approach to subjectivity. In analyzing experience, there likely was a tendency to discard or miss the importance of language, both spoken and unspoken, which can contribute to an experience-focused interpretation. Finally, the danger of experienced-centered narrative was the unending cycle of interpretations and re-interpretations. These concerns about experience-based narrative inquiry offered important cautions for the narrative inquirer and are addressed in the section on validity.

3.6 PARTICIPANTS AND STUDY SETTING

In its broadest conceptualization, this study is intended to explore the leadership potential and interest of community college faculty and administrators in the United States. However, the sheer numbers of this population would make for a monumental undertaking. Therefore, it was necessary to delimit the setting from which a sample for the study was drawn. The population for this study was female community college presidents from under-represented minority (URM) groups (American Indian, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and Black/African-American) and female high-potential emerging senior leaders from under-represented minority (URM) groups (American Indian, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and Black/African-American) that would qualify for a community college presidency. African-American and Hispanic faculty and academic leaders remain underrepresented in community colleges, especially when compared to the number of students of color attending the nation's two-year colleges (Jackson & Phelps, 2004; Jackson, 2004). The target sample size was 10-15 participants for each category of presidents and aspiring presidents.

A high-potential leader was someone who had the background characteristics appropriate for leadership advancement and has demonstrated leadership behaviors and actions in current and previous work (Fernández-Aráoz, Groysberg, & Nohria, 2011). An emerging leader was someone who demonstrated potential with three core qualities—ability, engagement, and aspiration (Martin & Schmidt, 2010). The emerging leader possessed the innate (and learned) intellectual, technical, and emotional skills to handle increasingly complex challenges and demonstrates a connection with the employer and the mission of the organization (Martin & Schmidt, 2010). Finally, the high-potential

emerging senior leader demonstrated the desire for recognition, advancement, and future rewards, which aligned with the organization's desires for the person (Martin & Schmidt, 2010). Emerging leaders, as the primary source of the leadership pipeline, had a unique perspective on their own abilities, engagement and aspirations, which directly benefited the research study and tied into the personal beliefs, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control components of the Theory of Planned Behavior. Unfortunately, no comprehensive list of high-potential emerging leaders existed. Often, these individuals are unaware that they might fit within this population. The challenge for this study was finding such people in a manner that provided external validation of qualifications and ease in identification and recruitment. There were many options in considering how to identify members: grassroots leaders, those who lead informally; senior-level leaders who served in positional roles on their way to a presidency; sitting presidents; or even those who did not choose to pursue a presidency.

Professional Development Programs. A strategy for finding high-potential emerging leaders was to look to the national leadership development programs designed to serve this clientele. While not all high-potential emerging leaders may participate in a national leadership development program, there are a number of such programs (e.g., programs by Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), Harvard, ACE, American Association of Community Colleges, American Academic Leadership Institute) that cater to this clientele and thus, over the years, have served a robust number of the population of interest to this study (ACE, 2012; Schmitz, 2008). Those who participated in a program were likely on the cusp of deciding how far to take their leadership abilities as intentional leaders (Schmitz, 2008).

Using such programs as a purposeful sampling strategy ensured several qualities. First, such national programs typically have an application screening process that served as an external validation of the emerging leader status of alumni (Schmitz, 2008). Second, national organizations typically kept track of program alumni and thus enabled access to the subjects of interest to this study (Schmitz, 2008). Third, alumni of these programs typically are proud of their participation and thus might be more willing to talk about their career development before and after program participation (Schmitz, 2008). For these reasons, using participation in national leadership development programs provided a useful first screening device to find high-potential emerging leaders.

ELI and Lakin Alumni as the Sample. While many national leadership programs could have served this study, alumni from the League for Innovation's Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) and the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership served as an appropriate and efficient next level of purposeful sampling. Both the League for Innovation and Lakin Institute employed a rigorous screening process to select each class of ELI. This screening provided an external validation that the members of the population are high-potential emerging leaders. The League for Innovation's Executive Leadership Institute and Lakin Institute were useful sample selections for several reasons: longevity, scope and mission, placement rate, and selectivity. The Lakin Institute and ELI are among a select few higher education leadership programs geared toward community colleges specifically and thus have a long track record of contribution to the leadership development of emerging community college leaders (ACE, 2012). The mission of the ELI, "to provide the opportunity for potential community college presidents, or those in transition, to analyze their abilities, reflect on their interests, refine their skills, and

engage in leadership discussions with an unparalleled faculty of community college leaders” (ELI, 2015), is a perfect match for the interests of this study. Since its inception, the ELI has produced nearly seven hundred alumni, of whom more than three hundred have served as presidents. (ELI, 2015) Likewise, the mission of the Lakin Institute is “to prepare senior-level executives for positions as community college chief executive officers”. The Lakin Institute has graduated the highest number of African Americans who have gone on to CEO positions over any other leadership institute in the United States. (Lakin Institute, 2015).

Through their national sponsoring organizations, the ELI and Lakin Institute maintain respective databases of alumni and their contact information. The president or chancellor must nominate ELI and Lakin Institute candidates from their institution, signifying visibility within the home campus of the emerging leader status worthy of investment and support by the institution. A national review committee of established community college presidents selects participants from qualified nominations. This multi-layered screening process constituted an external validation of the high-potential emerging leader status of each participant. The ELI and Lakin Institute are known as the premier leadership development program serving the community college sector whose faculty is among the masters of community college leadership across North America. The ELI and Lakin faculty includes community college CEOs, experts in leadership development, senior community college trustees, presidential search consultants, and other prominent figures that have excelled in leading their organizations in innovation and strategic thinking with unique tactical styles.

Narrative researchers aim for a certain number of interviews or interviewees. If researchers are interested in a life narrative or a part of a life narrative, they tended to use small numbers of interviewees sampled theoretically, based on a network with little randomization (Squire, 2008b). Creswell (2009) and other scholars surmised that many narrative inquiries sought fewer than ten participants to adequately capture the various perspectives of the participants. Therefore, these previous studies offered a guide to sample size. Creswell (2007) further supported this observation, noting ranges of one to ten as a typical sample size while larger sample sizes are used to develop a collective story (Creswell, 2007; Huber & Whelan, 1999).

The study sample was purposeful and stratified using maximum variation strategies, as outlined in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. A purposeful sample comprised participants that best facilitated answering the research question or understanding the problem (Creswell, 2005, 2009). Stratified sampling was a strategy for selecting participants that

Table 3.1 Devising the Sample Population – Aspiring Presidents

Sampling Strategies Utilized in Identifying Emerging Community College Leaders	
<i>Type</i>	<i>Process</i>
Purposeful	Participation in a national leadership development program
Purposeful	Selection of the ELI and Lakin Institutes, representing emerging leaders with the potential and readiness for a community college presidency
Stratified	ELI and Lakin Alumni classes of 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
Stratified	Categorization of ELI and Lakin Alumni by gender and ethnicity, institutional type and post-Institute career trajectory
Maximum Variation	Selection from each category for initial sample, replacing from a category if an invitee declines participation

accounted for various characteristics of the sample’s subgroups in order to support comparisons (Creswell, 2005, 2009). Maximum variation sampling involved documenting variations to uncover important common patterns (Creswell, 2005, 2007). Combining these strategies was in line with narrative inquiry, which often took different approaches in sampling because of the focus of the stories (Squire, 2008b). Due to the nature of academic leadership and professional networks, both formal and informal, snowball sampling was a likely unintended consequence based upon the interest levels of potential participants in the area of research study. Identified participants may feel compelled to share the research study with other female administrators.

Table 3.2 - Devising the Sample Population – Presidents

Sampling Strategies Utilized in Identifying Minority Female Community College Presidents	
<i>Type</i>	<i>Process</i>
Purposeful	Institution is a member of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
Stratified	First community college presidency secured in 2010, 2011, 2102, 2013 or 2014
Stratified	Categorization of presidents by gender, ethnicity, institutional type and career trajectory
Maximum Variation	Selection from each category for initial sample, replacing from a category if an invitee declines participation

Creswell (2009) highlighted that participants in narrative sampling must have stories they can share. The primary assumption of this study was that sitting presidents and ELI and Lakin alumni had career stories to tell. Creswell (2007) also recommended that researchers working in this methodology reflect on whom to sample. Restricting the sampling dates to 2010 or later increased the likelihood that participants can recount their

career stories in a meaningful way. Emerging leaders who have completed the ELI or Lakin Institute training since 2010 had enough time lapsed to see the impact, if any, on their career trajectory.

The researcher categorized participants for maximum variation of gender, race/ethnicity, traditional/nontraditional pathways, and institutional types. From these categories, the researcher identified 310 presidents and 212 aspiring presidents for invitation to the study, with an anticipated yield of 10-15 presidents and 10-15 emerging leaders/aspiring presidents. ELI and Lakin Institute alumni or presidents with similar demographic characteristics to those first selected were reserved as alternates. If one of the original participants was not available for the study, then the researcher contacted a participant with similar characteristics from the list of alternates. In summary, the population consisted of female high-potential emerging leaders in U.S. community colleges and recently appointed female community college presidents, both of whom were underrepresented minorities. Participants were selected using a strategy that employed purposeful, stratified, and maximum variation sampling.

Should the ELI and Lakin Alumni databases not produce enough participants, the researcher was prepared to engage other national leadership programs that cater to higher education and/or under-represented minority groups. Alternative organizations include: the National Council for Black American Affairs (NCBAA) leadership programs and the American Council on Education's women leadership forums. As a final safeguard, the researcher was prepared to engage in a nationwide call of AACC member institutions that have female presidents appointed in the previous five years (2010 to 2014). These alternatives equally provided a diverse representation of institution types, geographical

regions, and tenure of community college presidents. Emerging leaders could be identified using alternative leadership development programs like those of the ACE Emerging Leaders Group. Additionally, sitting female community college presidents would be asked to identify a colleague that met the selection criteria for participation and was interested in a community college presidency but had yet to attain one. In the end, actual yield produced five sitting presidents and five high potential emerging presidential aspirants.

3.7 INSTRUMENTATION

This comparative study necessitated the use of two similar but separate instruments: narrative interviews and document review. Each instrument was designed specifically for this research study. A qualitative semi-structured interview was designed for sitting presidents and another qualitative semi-structured interview was designed for emerging leaders. The narrative interview served as the primary instrument in the study and allowed the researcher to probe the subjective elements of each participant's career. When obtaining narratives of experience, the researcher made use of a wide variety of materials (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

In academia, a curriculum vita represented one's career history; thus, each participant from the two sample groups was asked to provide a curriculum vita or like document that was utilized as part of this study. The mono-method multi-strand framework was an ideal approach for this study because it enhanced previously reported mono-method single-strand data with additional context (Johnson, et.al., 2007). Instead of using predetermined or established instruments that may or may not address the questions of this study, the qualitative inquiry provided insight from both sets of the

population concurrently (Creswell, 2009). There was wide support from the literature that the synergy from mono-method multi-strand framework is worth its implementation.

The exploratory design provided completeness to the outcomes of this study that had not been seen before in previous studies. It provided credibility to the research in grounded theory that framed the data in a generalizable manner (Johnson, et.al., 2007). The semi-structured interview questions from each version of the instrument was tested for inter-rater reliability and validity before distribution to the sample population. The researcher's institutional review board also vetted each instrument prior to distribution and usage. Using the theoretical frameworks of Planned Behavior and Career Constructs to guide the development of interview questions, the resulting product aligned with the research questions of the research study.

Interviews. The semi-structured interview instruments were designed to elicit detailed outcomes from the selected respondents. Participants were asked for demographic information, their attitudes, motives and interest in academic leadership, and how they characterized their own leadership potential. It was an inductive approach that allowed the respondents to be open and honest without the suggestive influence that a questionnaire instrument can impose on the participant. Narrative interviews were structured more like a conversation than a prompt/ response format. Squire (2008a) explained that most experience-focused narrative interviews take a semi-structured format. Yet, narrative interviews differed from the typical question/response format found in qualitative work in that they solicited stories through the interchange of two active participants with a goal of capturing accounts in great detail (Riessman, 2008). Two important considerations underpinned the structure of this study's interviews: the

format of the questions and the view of the nature of participation of each party in the interview.

Interview Format. Interviewing in an experience-focused narrative inquiry often takes a semi-structured format (Squire, 2008a, 2008b). Prompts about attitude, motivators, self-perceptions of leadership potential and how they incorporate the proposition of advanced leadership roles into their careers were critical to the data collection process. Flexibility, however, was a vital characteristic that allowed the participant to narrate his or her story, so that their experiences were put in context around other important career and life experiences (Squire, 2008a). As most stories have a plot organized around a beginning, middle, and end, this construction shaped the line of questioning for this narrative inquiry and provided the structure for the questions, with a beginning, middle and end (Riessman, 2008). In order to develop narrative interview questions that encouraged the participant to relate the experience in conversation, questions were worded and organized in a way that would more than likely achieve a verbose or robust narrative response (Riessman, 2008). Open-ended questions like “tell me what happened” rather than “when did it happen?” typically provoked more of a story than the latter. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) offered that it is preferable to ask questions that open up topics and allow participants to construct answers that are meaningful to them. They suggested an interview guide with five to seven broad questions supplemented by probing questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

A second consideration was the amount of participation in the story that the researcher deemed to be appropriate (Squire, 2008a, 2008b; Riessman, 2008). The main role of the narrative interviewer was to remain a listener, abstaining from interruptions,

outside of occasionally posing questions for clarification, and assisting the interviewee in continuing to tell her story (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Narrative interviewing was structured more like a conversation where the interviewer played a minimal but active role in the storytelling through active listening. As the interviewee spoke, the interviewer listened for narrative elements, such as plot, tensions, conflicts, and resolutions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Interviewer research participation was generally on a continuum of minimal involvement, that is, from just prompting and allowing participants to narrate their stories with few interruptions, to being a full partner in a conversation that yielded a story (Squire, 2008a, 2008b; Riessman, 2008). Thus, if the researcher placed the story as a reality that was somewhat separate from the individual, then minimal participation along with triangulating the narrative with information from other sources became important (Squire, 2008a, 2008b). If, however, the researcher was convinced of the importance of co-construction of the narrative, the researcher interacted in a mode that is more like a conversation. According to Riessman, when the research interview was viewed as a discourse between speakers—rules of everyday conversation applied (2008) and included turn taking, relevance, and entrance and exit talk within the same discussion (Riessman, 2008; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009).

Interview Structure. The interview instruments included sections on (a) attitudes toward academic leadership roles; (b) motivators to pursue academic leadership roles; (c) leadership potential and (d) interest in academic leadership. The instrument also included an additional optional section on demographics. The narrative interviews conducted for this study drew upon the semi-structured format, with enough flexibility that allowed for

a conversation to occur between the researcher and participant so that detailed accounts were generated as the text. Appendices A and B elaborate on the broad and probing questions that will guide the interview and conversation along. Through expert review, the instruments were validated twice among each sample population to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. Expert review is where a group of experts or referees assess whether the measuring instrument measures the attributes of interest to the study (Creswell, 2003). Two presidents were identified that matched the sample population of the study with the exception of attaining their presidency prior to 2010 and invited to review the instrument and provide feedback. The same approach was taken with two aspiring presidents who attended the ELI or Lakin Institute leadership development programs prior to 2010. The feedback received included minor wording changes. The finalized instruments were submitted to the researcher's institutional review board (IRB) for approval for use with human subjects.

Document Review and Analysis. All professionals summarize their career history and professional accomplishments in a document or website. In higher education, the typical and traditional document is a curriculum vita, which is an expanded résumé with entries that cover personal information, education, professional experiences, including employment, published articles and books, areas of teaching and/or expertise, conference or research presentations, service experiences, and other information. A curriculum vita is an individual's presentation and interpretation of his or her work life to a potential employer, review board (search firm or tenure and promotion committee) or colleague. While there may be similar information in different curriculum vitae, there was no standard format. The quality of and information on a curriculum vita varied

Table 3.3 Crosswalk of Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Question	Curriculum Vita Review	Narrative Interview	Associated Interview Questions
What are the attitudes, motivators, and perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders toward academic leadership roles?		X	Tell me how you decided to pursue a career in academe. What was your initial position? At the time, what were your aspirations?
What are the perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders on their own leadership potential?	X	X	Describe the presidential leadership development programs you've attended. What factors led to your application to the LDP of your choice? What has been especially meaningful about participating in that program? Did your experience change your career goals? Why or why not? How do you see integrating leadership roles as part of your career? As you derive meaning for your life in general, what role does your career play in that interpretation?
For what reasons do minority female emerging leaders pursue or not pursue the community college presidency?		X	How would you describe the way in which your career has developed? Are there memorable events and/or persons that contributed to your ascension to presidency? Did you have a mentor encourage your leadership pursuits? Did your leadership cohort have any impact on your career? Have you taken any missteps?
Are their attitudinal or motivational differences between actual and aspiring minority females for the community college presidency?		X	What career advice would you offer future presidential aspirants? What has best prepared you for your presidency? What details of the journey stand out for you? Given what you know now, what is your ultimate career objective? What do you know now that you wish you knew before becoming a president?

widely and did little to narrate the personal stories behind the ascending experiences documented (Cohen & Mallon, 2001). Additionally, some higher education

administrators, particularly those who arose through nonacademic or nontraditional paths, may capture the evolution of their careers in a résumé instead of a curriculum vita.

Those in more senior administrative ranks (e.g. provost, vice president, CEO or president) tended to narrate their careers through a biographical note that is appropriate for placement on the website of the institution at which they work. This variance in how people chose to present their professional lives and the variations across these categories of documents are distinct limitations for this study, since such documents cannot be directly compared *prima fascia*. For the purposes of this discussion, this range of professional documents was referred to as curriculum vita. Thus, the most helpful roles of curriculum vitae in this study were as a first introduction of the participant to the researcher, as a chronology of positions and experiences, and as a tool by which to build a tentative career path to explore in the interview.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The purposeful sample of presidents and emerging leaders received an email notification with an invitation to participate in the study. The introductory letter described the research, its importance, and closed with the contact information for the principal investigator. Those who completed the electronic informed consent form were contacted to schedule an interview. One week after the initial invitation, a follow-up email was sent to thank those who have volunteered for interviews and to solicit additional participants. Interviews were offered in person, by telephone or videoconference.

The data collected for this study consisted of an objective component (career histories such as curriculum vitae) and a subjective component (semi-structured, narrative interviews) as denoted in the Career Construct and Planned Behavior theories. The

document review allowed for an introduction of the participant to the researcher, provided documentation of the participant's chronology of positions and experiences in the participant's work history.

The narrative interview captured the participant's career story, documented the meaning the participant derived from his or her current and anticipated leadership roles, and provided a text for analysis. Data was collected by recruiting the participants for the study, requesting their curriculum vitae, arranging and conducting the interviews, securing informed consent, and member-checking and follow-up.

Invitation to Participate. Based on the sampling procedure outlined above, 310 sitting presidents and 212 aspiring presidents were filtered to form the sample population. Using IPEDS to narrow the presidential pool and alumni databases from ELI and Lakin Institute, the researcher catalogued the contact information for sitting presidents, ELI alumni, and Lakin Institute alumni. Eligible participants were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. Of the 522 email invitations sent, 77 were returned as undeliverable, 147 did not respond, 178 declined, 68 requested to be alternates and 52 responded affirmatively. From the 52 initial affirmative responses, 16 bowed out due to scheduling conflicts leaving the pool at 19 presidents and 17 aspiring presidents. The e-mail invitation (see Appendix C) contained a brief description of the study and the informed consent form was included as an attachment. If an e-mail response to the initial invitation was not received within seven business days, the researcher called the prospective participant's office phone. If an assistant was reached, the researcher explained the project briefly, asked if the prospective participant had seen the e-mail yet, and offered to resend the e-mail and then follow-up with the prospective participant or

the assistant if there were any questions. If the president or emerging leader did not reply upon the second contact, the researcher assumed noninterest from that prospective participant and contacted an alternate from the sample. This process was repeated until all contacts were exhausted.

Return of the e-mail with expression of interest in study participation, submission of a curriculum vita, or response about scheduling an interview was considered sufficient indication of interest in participating to continue the conversation. If the invitee agreed to participate, a follow-up e-mail (see Appendix D) noted a window of time in which to schedule the 30-45 minute in-person, phone or virtual interview, included the interview questions, and a request for the participant's curriculum vita. The e-mail invitation requested submission of a curriculum vita, by attaching the document to the reply, affirming participation. If a participant claimed not to have a curriculum vita, then an administrative resume or biographical note was solicited. Receipt of the curriculum vita, resume, or note was confirmed with the participant during the reply to schedule the interview. The curriculum vita was catalogued and prepared for review and analysis. Once participation in the study was confirmed and the curriculum vita was received, the interview was scheduled with the participant at a mutually convenient time. The researcher sent a confirmation e-mail (see Appendix E) to the participant with the date and time of the interview. Two days prior to the interview, the researcher sent an e-mail reminder and resent the list of interview questions (see Appendix F).

Securing Informed Consent. The initial invitation contained the informed consent document (see Appendix G), so that prospective participants could further understand their role in the study and the potential risks assumed prior to making a

decision about participating. The invitees were encouraged to ask questions, via e-mail or telephone, about the study prior to the arranged interview time. At the outset of the interview, the researcher restated the informed consent language, and again presented an opportunity to ask questions. The researcher, as per the informed consent document, asked participants if they were willing to provide verbal consent. After providing verbal consent, participants were given the option of generating a pseudonym for confidentiality purposes or to retain the use of their given name and provide their demographic information. Subsequently, the researcher turned on the audio recording device and asked participants to state their pseudonym, to confirm that they had read the informed consent documentation, and to reconfirm that they were consenting to participate in the study.

This verbal consent process was consistent with the IRB policies at the University of South Carolina. Self-selected pseudonyms were used for the participants in the results and discussion sections of the study. While the interviews were not designed to evoke visceral responses from participants, such responses were possible given that the interview prompts called for recollections of social and interpersonal situations. It was also possible that participation in the interview could lead to emotional discomfort. Participants were able to pause, redirect, or end the interview if they became uncomfortable at any time during the interview. Given the precautions previously noted regarding the protection of participants' confidentiality, privacy risks were minimal. Lastly, physical, financial, and legal risks were insignificant and unanticipated.

Conducting the Interviews. This study utilized in-person, phone or videoconference interviews as a data collection method. Although an in-person interview was preferable, telephone interviews are typically more practical and are an acceptable

method of collecting interview data (Weiss, 1994). As sitting presidents, Lakin Institute alumni and ELI alumni were located all over the country, cost and time constraints prohibited in-person interviews for everyone. Phone interviews can be a highly productive way to obtain interviews of busy people, imposing only on their time, but not causing a physical imposition (Webster, 1996). All interviews were conducted using a digital audio recorder capturing the interview via an audio file. The researcher conducted four in-person interview and six phone interviews to collect the data.

After securing verbal consent, the researcher followed the interview protocol and script (see Appendix H). In addition to the digital recording of the interview, the researcher took notes on the participants' answers as a preventive measure in case there were technical issues with the recording. These notes were catalogued on the tables that contained the participants' position chartings. Following the interview, the researcher checked the digital file to ensure the recording was made. The final step in the data collection process was to write and mail a thank you note to each participant (see Appendix I for a sample of this correspondence).

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data from the interviews transcripts were reviewed for accuracy before data analysis began. Member checking was the validation strategy employed that involved returning parts of the study to participants for their input on the accuracy of the materials (Creswell, 2009). Thus, follow-up with the participants on the interview transcript was important. Pre-determined concepts were not used to uncover phrases or themes to code; instead, the researcher allowed the data to reveal any significant themes or concepts organically. To add depth, concepts were also coded for frequency,

consistency and meaning. Once the concepts were identified, content analysis categorized the responses into evaluative dimensions. After a systematic review, the qualitative results were then quantified in a descriptive manner. The statistical software package of Nvivo was utilized in the data analysis process.

Curriculum Vitae. Prior to the interview, the researcher thoroughly read the interview subject's curriculum vita as a text. The first goal was to become acquainted with the participant through that participant's presentation of self via the curriculum vita. This facilitated the researcher's knowledge about the person's background prior to the interview so that rapport could be developed quickly (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Then a profile of positions was produced to objectively support the interview process. This profile of positions was compiled in a Microsoft Excel table. The curriculum vitae was analyzed using Nvivo for common and recurring themes present in the document. The position charts of sitting presidents was comparatively analyzed to discern the applicability of the chartings to current emerging leaders.

Individual Interviews. This section details the interview analysis, including preparing the transcripts, analyzing the research text, producing individual profiles, and building the metanarrative from the profiles. Creswell (2007) stated, "the data collected in a narrative study need to be analyzed for the story they have to tell, a chronology of unfolding events, and turning points, or epiphanies" (p. 155). Thus, the researcher took an additional step that involved generating a research text or transcript from the interview recordings. Transforming the conversation into a literary style highlights nuances and facilitates communication of the meaning of the subject's stories to readers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As supported by other scholars

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), the researcher verified the transcript against the recorded phone or virtual interview and member-checked by the participant, then generated a research text or transcription for analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Any observations that were related to the biases and impressions of the researcher during the interview were documented in interview memos for each participant and were maintained as a separate set of documents (Creswell, 2007).

Transcription Analysis. Coding, according to Creswell (2009), is the process of organizing text by chunks or segments and labeling the segments with a term. Predetermined codes can be used based on theory to examine the data (Creswell, 2009). After compiling each research text, the researcher undertook a second reading of the narrative and used Nvivo to code for the emerging themes. Anticipated themes included career themes, values, micro-narratives, influences, interest, identifications, and epiphanies (Creswell, 2007; Savickas, 2011). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) advocated for “relentless re-reading” of research texts in narrative inquiry (p. 131). With this in mind, the researcher read each narrative research texts a third time, looking for overarching themes related to attitude, motives and perceptions of leadership potential (Savickas, 2011).

Presidential and Emerging Leader Profiles. At this point in the analysis, the researcher combined all of the materials (interview transcripts and curriculum vitae) into presidential and emerging leader profiles. Combining the analytical products allowed the researcher to read these sources together to begin the synthesis and interpretation of the subjective (interview transcriptions) and objective (curriculum vitae analysis and profile of positions) elements of the participant’s career narrative, for a comprehensive

comparative analysis of the two groups (Savickas, 2011). As warranted, the researcher adjusted the interpretation of attitudes, motives and leadership perceptions if necessary based on the information obtained in the interview and curriculum vitae.

3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

With any study, there are issues to account for in its design. Validity and reliability are two concepts researchers utilize to address the congruence of the design and the findings. In qualitative studies, these concepts take on connotations that are different than their use in quantitative research (Creswell, 2009). This section discusses the concepts of validity and reliability in the context of qualitative research, the strategies applied in this study to address validity and reliability, and additional considerations for narrative inquiry.

Validity. In qualitative research, Creswell (2007) viewed validation as a process that strives to assess the accuracy of the research findings through specific strategies that involve the researcher and the participants. Creswell stated “qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures” (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). Creswell (2007) also outlined eight of the most frequently used strategies employed in any qualitative research and recommended that researchers select at least two for any given study. Qualitative researchers routinely employed researcher reflexivity, member checking, triangulation, thick description, peer reviews, and external audits. Researchers engaged in one or more of these procedures and report results in their investigations. This study employed four validation strategies: researcher reflexivity, member checking, peer review, and triangulation.

Researcher Reflexivity. Researcher reflexivity is the way in which a particular researcher's values and expectations influence the study both positively and negatively, while avoiding the negative influences as much as possible (Creswell, 2007, 2009). Creswell noted that "clarifying researcher bias from the outset of the study is important so that the reader understands the researcher's position and any biases or assumptions that impact the inquiry", a concept supported by other qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2007, p. 208; Merriam, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). Two techniques assisted in addressing this strategy. First, a positionality statement to fully document these assumptions, beliefs and biases prior to any data collection or analysis was included in chapter one. Second, the researcher provided an epilogue outlining reflections on the social, cultural, and historical forces that shape their interpretation of this research. The epilogue covered all interpretive commentary throughout the discussion and findings as necessary.

Member Checking. Member checking shifts the validity procedure from the researcher to the participant. It involved returning parts of the finished product back to the study participants through either a follow-up interview or an opportunity to review and comment (Creswell, 2007). This validation strategy is touted as the most crucial technique for establishing credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by allowing participants to offer input on the accuracy of the raw data (transcriptions) or even of the findings. Having the participants perform member checks of the interview texts assisted in addressing the validity and credibility of this research (Creswell, 2007).

To accomplish the task of member checking, the interview transcript was e-mailed to each participant, as outlined in the initial the recruitment invitation (see Appendix C) The researcher requested review and input on the interview transcript, in

whatever form was most convenient—whether replying by e-mail, calling to discuss it, or returning the document with their comments noted in track changes or other similar word processing feature. The researcher requested that the participants offer any factual corrections to the interview transcript within three weeks of the message. If no response was received, an e-mail reminder was sent after one week and then a phone call was made after two weeks. If no response was forthcoming within a month, the researcher noted this as a comment in the individual profile and proceeded with the transcription and analysis. For responses received, the researcher corrected any issues the participants noted.

Peer Review. A peer review or debriefing is the review of the data and research process by someone who is familiar with the research or the phenomenon being explored. A peer reviewer's role was to process the study with the researcher, ask challenging questions about assumptions, methodology, inferences and interpretations, and provide overall support as a sounding board or devil's advocate (Creswell, 2007, 2009). Peer review allowed for incorporating an external reviewer's interpretation so that the finding presented resonated with others, adding validity and credibility to the investigation. Since this study was based on personal accounts presented in narrative forms, peer review was an appropriate strategy.

To implement peer review, the researcher arranged for a retired faculty mentor who is familiar with qualitative dissertations to serve as the peer reviewer for this study. The peer reviewer selected has an earned doctorate in education from New York University and has extensive experience in higher education administration. The peer reviewer and researcher have an established rapport and style for providing feedback and

critique on each other's work. Furthermore, the peer reviewer had current human subjects' research training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).

Peer review occurred at three points in this study. The first session took place prior to the interviews, the second during the coding, and the third at the completion of the findings and discussion. The researcher and reviewer discussed the study methods and articulated biases, hypotheses, and speculations held by the researcher at the outset of the study. This conversation helped the researcher to evolve the positionality statement (see chapter 1) and researcher reflexivity (see chapter 3). When the first research text was ready to be coded, a second review occurred to calibrate the codes. As part of this step, the researcher requested that the peer reviewer review the coding of the first research text for consistency as a strategy of reliability. The peer reviewer spot checked the transcriptions for any additional coding issue. These comparisons were discussed, with the insights from the discussion informing subsequent coding by the researcher (see reliability section for additional details). Finally, the researcher requested that the peer reviewer review the discussion of findings and offer insights and challenges to the presentation of the interpretation of the individual profiles as a group.

Triangulation. Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. Denzin (1978) identified four types of triangulation: across data sources (i.e., participants), theories, methods (i.e., interview, observations, documents), and among different investigators. As a validity procedure, triangulation is a step taken by researchers employing only the researcher's lens, and it is a systematic process of

sorting through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). A popular practice for qualitative researchers was providing corroborating evidence collected through multiple methods, such as observations, interviews, and documents to locate major and minor themes (Johnson, et. al., 2007). The narrative account is valid because researchers go through this process and rely on multiple forms of evidence rather than a single incident or data point in the study.

Reliability. Reliability, in qualitative research, focuses on the consistency of particular approaches across different researchers and projects (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) outlined two strategies for individual researchers that were employed during this study to address consistency: transcript verification and coding verification.

Transcript Verification. According to Creswell (2007), a critical procedure in addressing reliability is capturing a high-quality recording, which facilitates detailed field notes and an accurate transcription of the recording. This study used a good-quality digital recording to capture the interviews so that the transcriptions could be made more easily. Transcript verification involved checking the transcripts after they were rendered from the recording to correct any mistakes (Stake, 2010; Creswell, 2009). This verification was the first step taken after the transcripts were returned from the transcription service. The details of this verification step were outlined in the member checking section of the validity procedures.

Coding Verification. Coding verification prevents a “drift in the definition of codes” so that the meaning does not shift in the middle of coding (Creswell, 2007, p. 190). Creswell (2005, 2007) recommended developing a codebook detailing the code, definition, and the locations of the codes. Along with a codebook, he also recommended

that researchers constantly compare the data with the codes and any memos on the codes and definitions as part of the codebook to capture the ways in which they may evolve during analysis (Creswell, 2009). In alignment with Creswell's (2009) and Merriam's (2009) recommendations, this study developed an initial codebook based on the initial transcript analysis and documented the codes' evolution with memos. The peer reviewer was enlisted to assist in calibrating the coding for the first interview and through spot-checking the coding for the other interviews.

The general goal of narrative research is to elaborate and investigate individual interpretations and perspectives of complex and human-centered events. With this goal, the researcher was more concerned with individual truths than generalizable and repeatable events (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). With the focus on individual truths, the researcher's representation of research notes, transcripts, and data are particularly important for reliability and validity in narrative inquiry (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Therefore, it was important to provide documentation of the research notes, interview transcripts, research text, profile of positions, memos, and any other records made during the data collection and analysis steps to further support validity and reliability in this narrative inquiry. These documents were included in part or whole in the text and various appendices for this study and were shared with the peer reviewer for that process.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Positionality allows for a narrative placement for researcher objectivity and subjectivity whereby the researcher is situated within the many aspects of perspective and positionality (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This often serves to inform a research study rather than to invalidate it as biased or contaminated by personal perspectives and social or

political viewpoints. Although covered in the introductory chapter, the researcher would be remiss by not highlighting their positionality again. The subjectivity of the principal investigator, as an under-represented minority female administrator within higher education (although not in a community college) was vital and necessary to the processes for self-reflection and assessment within the personal, societal and social constructs under investigation. This offered a transparency essential to the perspectives brought to the narrative inquiry or the perspectives that serve to scaffold it.

Since this project relied on interviews of human subjects as a primary source of data, there were several critical considerations to ensure ethical research and to protect the study participants. First, approval for the study from ELI, Lakin Institute and AACC were sought and obtained. Next, approval was secured through the University of South Carolina's institutional review board (IRB), following its human subjects' procedures. Second, as part of human subjects' protection for the IRB, the researcher sought informed consent of the participants in this study. This involved sharing the purpose of the research, the design, the risks, and the benefits with the participants and obtaining their consent to participate (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The researcher respected the decisions of those who declined to participate in this project. Third, and most importantly, confidentiality was addressed in the research and interview protocol. Confidentiality involved keeping private data that identified the participants undisclosed. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) caution researchers about the alluring openness and intimacy of qualitative research that may cause participants to regret sharing certain disclosed information. In an effort to mitigate these risks, the researcher substituted individual names with pseudonyms selected by the participants and omitted any institutional names

or position titles that were unique enough to lead to identification of the participants. Thus, the researcher applied the human subjects' protections necessary to ethically complete this study.

3.12 SUMMARY

Narrative inquiry has its limitations, which included interpretation as prescription, time as an issue, coherence, authorial subjectivity, forgetting language, and relativism (Squire, 2008a). As is the case in all research endeavors, researchers sometimes make strong, prescriptive assumptions about the stories existing in the research and may enter the study with biases. This was particularly applicable to qualitative narrative inquiry because of the interpretive authority that the researcher bases their interpretation on materials that readers have limited access. The researcher made the sole determination on what constitutes a "good" story. Time presented a drawback in that narrative inquiry required "the full presence of past, present, and future" (Squire, 2008a). Narrative reflections on one's life experiences do not necessarily follow this same chronological order. Thus, the researcher had the challenge of translating time without reducing the meaning of accounts or misleading perspectives. Experience-based narratives from this study were complete accounts of a person's experiences; however, the reflective process produced some partial, fragmented, or contradictory stories. Thus, the researcher accepted the incongruence of the stories received from study participants.

Squire (2008a) also suggests that experience is grounded in a subject that claims some unison and agency. If not identified, this assumption can lead researchers to prescriptive interpretations without objectivity. It was important to separate oneself from the research to maintain the integrity of the data. In evaluating vocational experiences,

language was an important component that should not be discarded. Lastly, the danger of experienced-centered narrative was its cyclical nature, where there is no place to stop the interpreting, and no way to judge between truths and exaggerations (Squire, 2008). These concerns, along with the ethical considerations, about experience-based narrative inquiry offered important cautions for the researcher to consider through the data collection and data analysis phases.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this comparative study was to explore diversity within the community college leadership pipelines by investigating the attitudes, motives, and perceptions of leadership potential from both sitting presidents and aspiring presidents. Three hundred ten presidents that met the study profile were invited to participate; the study targeted 10-15 participants and yielded five complete interviews. Two hundred twelve aspiring presidents that met the study profile were invited to participate; the study targeted 10-15 participants and yielded five complete interviews. This chapter presents the profiles of the individual groups, presidents and aspiring presidents. The chapter information has been organized in the following sub-sections: (a) Respondent Profiles – Presidents; (b) Respondent Profiles – Aspiring Presidents; and (c) Emergent Themes and Findings. The profile sections summarize the demographics, provide a narrative summary and career profile chart for each participant. The emergent themes and findings section documents the key outcomes from the study including the attitudes, motives and perceptions of leadership potential for each participant group.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- RQ 1. What are the attitudes, motivators and perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders toward academic leadership roles?

- RQ 2. What are the perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders on their own leadership potential?
- RQ 3. For what reasons do minority female emerging leaders pursue or not pursue the community college presidency?
- RQ 4. Are there attitudinal or motivational differences between actual and aspiring minority females for the community college presidency?

SECTION 4A

RESPONDENT PROFILES – PRESIDENTS

This sub-section presents the profiles of the presidents who participated in the study. This section's information has been organized into a narrative summary for each president inclusive of a synopsis of their curriculum vitae

4.1 PRESIDENTIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

The five participants represented the following minority groups: Black or African-American, American Indian, Two or more races, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander. Their age ranges were from the late 40s to early 60s. All five participants currently work at public institutions. While this study does not provide an extensive chronology of each participant's cultural background and history, context of cultural influence, racism, specific race, language, physical characteristics, and gender provide a context within which to understand each individual's experiences sufficiently.

Table 4.1 – Presidential Demographics

	AGE RANGE	ETHNICITY	INSTITUTIONAL DESCRIPTION	INSTITUTIONAL LOCATION
ANNE MARIE	50s	Black Hispanic	Small Suburban Multi Campus	Southeast
LINDA	50s	American Indian	Large Urban Multi Campus	Midwest
BELLE	60s	Black or African-American	Large Multi Campus, Multi District	Southeast
SHIVANI	50s	Asian Pacific Islander	Midsized District	West
YVES	40s	Two or more races	Midsized Urban Single Campus	Northeast

4.2 PRESIDENTIAL NARRATIVES

ANNE MARIE

Anne Marie serves as Chief Executive Officer of the college and provides leadership to a change in mission via a merger with another small community college. The merger transformed her current institution from a two-year college with a primary focus on transfer to a comprehensive six-campus community college with an emphasis on transfer, career, technical and workforce development programs. She has climbed the proverbial academic ladder, from the ranks of faculty to administration, often serving as the first female or first African-American female. She self-identifies as a Black Latina. Anne Marie has more than 20 years of experience in higher education. She has served as chancellor of STCC since 2012. During her time at STCC, she has managed the complete transformation of the college's organizational structure from a technical college to reflect a comprehensive community college. She has also led the increase of STCC's enrollment from 1,617 to 3,060 students over a four-year period. In addition to the completion of

STCC’s application to the regional accreditation body with the expectation of candidacy membership in December of 2015, Anne Marie has also secured \$3 million in private donations, grants and contracts for the college.

Table 4.2- Presidential Career Profile: Anne Marie

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Chancellor	Community College 4	2012 - present	
Vice Chancellor	Community College 3	2007-2012	
Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs	Community College 2	2000-2007	Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership
Interim Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs	Community College 1	1998-2000	Millennium Leadership Institute
Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty	Liberal Arts College 1	1993-2000	
Executive Director	Non-Profit Grant Organization	1991-1992	
Assistant Dean, College of Health and Community Sciences	Public 4-year Institution 2 – R2	1988-1991	
Assistant Academic Dean, Curriculum and Instruction	Liberal Arts College 1	1985-1988	
Chair, Department of Biology	Liberal Arts College 1	1983-1985	
Associate Professor, Department of Biology	Liberal Arts College 1	1982-1992	
Instructor, Department of Anatomy	Public 4-year Institution 1 – R1	1980-1982	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Prior to serving at STCC, Anne Marie served as the provost/executive vice president for academic affairs, administration and planning at STCC, which is the largest community college in the state. Before this position, she served for five years as provost/executive vice president for academic and student affairs. She also served for two years as interim vice president for academic and student affairs at SSCC where she provided leadership for the consolidation of the academic and student affairs units of two smaller institutions, to form the new institution - STCC. Preceding this appointment, Anne Marie served six years as vice president for academic affairs/dean of faculty at LMOCC. She provided leadership and oversight for the development and implementation of the college's first accredited master's degree program in education; and the acquisition of a \$5-million-dollar National Science Foundation grant designed to increase the number of minorities who pursued careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Anne Marie earned her doctorate and master's degree in cell and developmental biology.

LINDA

Linda is a passionate advocate for maintaining the community college open door commitment, challenging and supporting students through high-quality academic programs, and improving success and completion outcomes. She became Chancellor at an urban multi-campus community college in 2011 with oversight of four campuses and multiple extension sites in a large metropolis and surrounding suburbs serving 48,000 students annually in career and transfer degree programs. Linda previously served as a campus president of the same institution, Dean of Academic Affairs, and Assistant Dean of Liberal Arts. Other prior positions include faculty and administrative posts at other community colleges, liberal arts colleges and a Carnegie Research 1 four-year institution.

Linda, who self identifies as American Indian, has served on the faculty at the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) Summer Institute for Women at Bryn Mawr College, the Lakin Institute for community college leadership, and as a member of the Chair Academy’s International Presidential Advisory Board. Her community service includes the Board of Directors for the St. Joseph Academy girls’ school, leadership roles with the local YWCA, and past board chair roles with a local healthcare institutions and the Chamber of Commerce.

Table 4.3 – Presidential Career Profile: Linda

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
President	Community College 2	2015-present	
Provost/Executive Vice President of Access, Learning and Success	Community College 1	2011-2015	
Campus President in Community College District	Community College 1	2006-2011	City Leadership Academy
Dean of Academic Affairs	Community College 1	2004-2006	Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership
Interim Dean of Performing Arts	Community College 1	2003-2004	HERS Summer Institute for Women
Assistant Dean of Liberal Arts	Community College 1	2001-2003	
Associate Professor	Community College 1	1996-2001	
Assistant Professor	Community College 1	1990-1996	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

A graduate of her city's Leadership Academy in 2010, Linda is the recipient of numerous awards including the Diversity Council's Woman of Power and Influence Award, the Education Award from the Coalition of National Council of Negro Women and the YWCA's Woman of Professional Excellence award. Linda attended public schools her entire academic career, earning a B.A. in Political Science, a M.A. in Educational Psychology and an Ed.D. in Higher Education Organization and Leadership Development.

BELLE

Belle currently serves as President of a large regional secondary and post-secondary accreditation body and is the first Black or African American, the first woman and the first with a background in community colleges to serve in this capacity. Her career spans 40 years and includes the roles of faculty member, chief student services officer, campus provost, college president and state Secretary of Education. In several of those roles she was the first African American and/or woman to serve in those capacities.

Belle received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Sociology; her Master's in Developmental Educational Psychology; and her Doctorate in Educational Administration with a special concentration in community college leadership. She has received numerous awards and recognition including four honorary degrees; the Distinguished Graduate Award from TU, and from the College of Education at UTA; Washingtonian Magazine's 100 Most Powerful Women in Washington, DC; the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Woman of Distinction Award; the Suanne Davis Roueche National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development's Distinguished Lecturer Award; the John E. Roueche National Institute for Staff and

Table 4.4 – Presidential Career Profile: Belle

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
President	Regional Accreditation Commission	2005-present	
Secretary of Education	State Government	2002-2005	
President	Community College 5	1998-2001	
President	Community College 4	1992-1998	
Chairman, Presidential Transition Management Team (6 months)	Community College 3	1991	
Provost	Community College 3	1989-1991	Executive Leadership Institute
Dean of Student Development Services	Community College 2	1987-1989	
Director of Academic Support Services	Community College District 1	1987	
Director of Developmental Education	Community College District 1	1984-1987	
Acting Director of Counseling Program	Community College District 1	1984-1985	
Administrative Intern – Chancellor’s Office	Community College District 1	1983	
Associate Professor of Psychology	Community College District 1	1974-1984	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Organizational Development's International Leadership Award; and the AACC Leadership Award; the John Hope Franklin Award from Diverse Issues in Higher Education for outstanding leadership in higher education; and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Terry O'Banion Prize in Education from the League for Innovation in Community Colleges. Belle holds and has held membership in numerous local, state and national organizations including Rotary International; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; the American College Testing, Inc., Board of Directors; American Association of Community Colleges, Board of Directors; the Lumina Foundation for Education, Board of Directors; the President's Round Table of the National Council on Black American Affairs; the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame, Board of Directors; Excelencia in Education, Board of Directors; National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Community College Honorary Board; Next Generation Learning Challenges, Advisory Panel; Project GOALS (Gaining Online Accessible Learning Through Self-Study); and the National Student Clearinghouse, Board of Directors.

SHIVANI

Shivani began her tenure as the superintendent/president of the MCCC on January 2, 2015. She has been a community college educator and administrator since 1993, and a president since 2010. A recognized community college leader, Shivani came to MCCC from GCC, where she served as president from 2010 to 2014.

Shivani received her bachelor's degree in biology and a teaching certificate in science education. After being awarded a doctorate in biology, she completed a postdoctoral training program in the molecular aspects of cell adhesion and metastasis. She then became a founding faculty member of LSMCC. She has taught full and part

time for more than thirteen years and continues to teach each summer in a local university’s doctoral program in educational leadership.

Shivani, self identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, is a collaborative and innovative leader with a strong dedication to the promotion of community colleges and workforce development. Since 2012, she represented all of her county’s community colleges on the Workforce Investment Board and is now the liaison with the State Chancellor's Office regarding economic and workforce development efforts at the regional and state level.

Table 4.5 – Presidential Career Profile: Shivani

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Superintendent/President	Community College District 2	2015-present	
President	Community College 2	2010-2014	
Associate Vice Chancellor, Workforce Development	Community College District 1	2005-2010	New CEO Institute City Leadership Academy
Dean, Natural Sciences and Health Professions	Community College 1	2002-2005	
Director, Biotechnical	Community College 1	2001-2002	
Professor	Community College 1	1995-2005	
Associate Professor	Community College 1	1993-1995	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s)

She is the chair of a statewide campaign focusing on community college and industry collaboration that aims to close the skills gap. Shivani is an active board member

of her local Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, a local technology corporation, and the regional Workforce Investment Board. She is looking forward to becoming more involved in her community as she progresses through her current presidency.

YVES

Yves was selected as the seventh president for CCC effective August 2016, her first official presidency. Prior to this historic announcement, Yves was the Vice President for Strategic Planning and Partnership Advancement for all three campuses at MBCC. In addition, she also served as the interim Campus Executive Officer for the College's urban location where MBCC is currently building a new \$59 million downtown location. She oversaw strategic and operational planning, assessment, and accreditation activities. Her work focused on moving forward the College's strategic initiatives to promote regional economic and social development facilitated through increasing higher education attainment rates in the Metro West region.

Yves was also responsible for strategic external relations, encompassing industry, non-profits, all levels of government, and the communities within the College's service area. Yves' professional career includes a broad range of experiences and perspectives from working at large and small public and private institutions. In addition, Yves has experience working at the state and municipal levels of government. She has participated in multiple state-wide reviews of K-12 schools and higher education teacher preparation programs. She has also conducted accreditation reviews of public and private higher education institutions. She currently serves on multiple advisory councils informing the direction of public higher education in Massachusetts. Internationally, Yves has consulted

with the Bermuda Ministry of Education, the United Nations, and the Government of Mexico. Yves currently sits on the Executive Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Network of the American Council on Education’s National Network of Women Leaders, the local Chamber of Commerce, and the regional Corridor Partnership.

Table 4.6 – Presidential Career Profile: Yves

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
President	Community College 2	2016 – present	
Interim President – All Campuses	Community College 1	2015-2016	
Vice President for Strategic Planning and Partnership Advancement/Campus President	Community College 1	2013-2015	Executive Leadership Institute
Dean of Institutional Planning, Research and Assessment	Community College 1	2010-2013	
Director of Planning and Assessment	Public 4-year Institution 1 – R1	2007-2010	
Research Fellow	Private 4-year Institution – R1	2004-2007	
Coordinator of Assessment and Accountability	State Department of Education	2002-2004	
Policy Analyst	City Government	2000-2001	
Program Manager	Public 4-year Institution 1 – R1	1997-2000	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Yves holds a Ph.D. in educational research, measurement and evaluation, a master’s degree in economic history and a Bachelor’s degree political science and

international relations. She also serves as adjunct faculty at various colleges in her region where she teaches courses in higher education leadership. She has also taught research methods and assessment as in-person, hybrid, and fully online courses. Yves is fluent in four languages and has traveled to 22 countries; she self identified as having two or more races with Hispanic ethnicity.

4.3 SUMMARY OF PRESIDENTIAL PROFILES

For these five female presidents, their ascension to the community college presidency holds many similarities and some differences. Their profiles document extensive work histories across various landscapes of higher education: from public and private institutions, liberal arts to research intensive, community colleges to four-year institutions, single campus to districts or systems. Some even bring public and private sector experience to their presidency, be that public education (K-12), corporate America, or local/state government. These varied experiences are part of each participants' narrative of their lives and have added value along their path.

The pathway to the presidency for four of the five participants was through the traditional academic ranks. One rose to her presidency through administrative positions and has not held a traditional faculty role in her career, although she does teach both graduate and undergraduate research courses. Once the participants entered administrative roles, those positions tended to focus on academic administration or student services. All the participants attended at least one presidential leadership development program, though their selection of programs are varied.

To advance their careers, three of the women did not change institutions frequently while the other two could be classified as career/institutional changers. One

participant entered the niche of community colleges within the last six years, compared to the other women who have anywhere from eighteen to twenty-seven years in the community college sector of higher education. All the participants acquired their first official presidency at new institutions and were often the first minority female to hold the position.

SECTION 4b

RESPONDENT PROFILES – ASPIRING PRESIDENTS

This sub-section presents the profiles of the aspiring presidents who participated in the study. Aspiring presidents have the qualifications to serve as a community college president but have yet to attain their first presidency. This section's information has been organized into a narrative summary for each aspiring president inclusive of a synopsis of their curriculum vitae.

4.4 ASPIRING PRESIDENTIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

The five participants represented the following minority groups: Black or African-American, Two or more races, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander. The age ranges were from the early 40s to early 60s. All five aspiring presidents currently work at public institutions. While this study does not provide an extensive chronology of each participant's cultural background and history, context of cultural influence, racism, specific race, language, physical characteristics, and gender provide a context within which to understand each individual's experiences sufficiently.

Table 4.7 – Aspiring Presidential Demographics

	AGE RANGE	ETHNICITY	INSTITUTIONAL SIZE	INSTITUTIONAL LOCATION
DEBRA	60s	Two or more races	Small Suburban District	Midwest
LEILANI	60s	Asian Pacific Islander	Small Single Campus	West
TRACY	40s	Black or African-American	Midsize Urban Single Campus	Southeast
COLLEEN	50s	Black or African-American	Midsize Suburban District	Northwest
VALARIE	40s	Two or more races; Hispanic	Midsize Urban Single Campus	Northeast

4.5 ASPIRING PRESIDENTIAL NARRATIVES

DEBRA

Debra, self identified as having two or more races, began her career in education as a middle school teacher with a Unified School District in the Midwest. After 17 years in the K-12 system, Debra took a counselor/instructor post with RCCD. It was there that she spent her time learning everything about community colleges and served as Dean of Matriculation for five years. Over the next seven years, Debra’s career advanced as she served as Vice President Student Services, Associate Vice Chancellor Student Services & Operations and Interim Vice Chancellor, Student Services & Operations. Debra then assumed the interim president position for NCC from July 1, 2011, until June 30, 2012. Debra returned to her prior position as Vice President Student Services with RCCD when the interim presidency was filled.

Table 4.8 – Aspiring President Career Profile: Debra

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVLEOPMENT PROGRAM
Interim President	Community College District 1	2011-2012	Executive Leadership Institute
Vice President of Student Services	Community College District 1	2010-present	State Community College Leadership Academy
Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Services and Operations	Community College District 1	2009-2010 2004-2007	
Interim Vice Chancellor	Community College District 1	2007-2009	City Leadership Academy
Dean, Matriculation	Community College District 1	1999-2004	
Department Chair	Community College District 1	1997-1999	
Counselor/ Associate Professor	Community College District 1	1991-1999	
Middle Grades Educator	K-12 School District	1974-1991	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

A product of the Midwest educational system, Debra graduated with a bachelor's in physical education and English. She has received numerous teaching awards both at the K-12 level and at the community college level. Her passionate stance for equality in education drives her daily path and pursuits. She holds two non-terminal, master's degrees in educational counseling and educational psychology and a doctorate in educational technology.

LEILANI

Leilani is the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and she has over 25 years of experience in higher education. Prior to taking on this role in February 2010, Leilani was the Dean of Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences and Human Services for eight years. She is also a registered nurse whose clinical expertise includes community mental health and gerontology. Leilani was Professor of Nursing at CCCC. In addition to her role as a tenured professor, Leilani has held a variety of nursing staff and management positions at CCCC.

Table 4.9 – Aspiring President Career Profile: Leilani

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Vice Chancellor	Community College 3	2008-present	Executive Leadership Institute
Acting President (5 months)	Community College 2	2007	
Academic Vice President and Dean of Faculty	Community College 2	1998-2008	
Vice President and Dean of Faculty	Community College 1	1989-1998	
Provost and Dean of Faculty	Private Liberal Arts College 2	1986-1989	
Associate Dean and Director of Graduate Studies	Private Liberal Arts College 1	1984-1986	
Assistant Dean of the Graduate School	Public 4-year Institution 2 – R1	1975-1984	
Instructor	Public 4-year Institution 1 – R1	1970-1972	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Leilani, who self identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, is active in community activities as a member and past president of the local Rotary Club and serves on the board of a local rehabilitation hospital and community bank. She regularly pursues professional development to keep current with issues in healthcare and higher education. Sue earned a Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Administration and is currently pursuing research and professional interests are in the areas of access, equity, and educational success.

TRACY

Tracy has served as vice president for academic affairs at SLCC since 2011, where she is responsible for more than 30 career and technical programs, academic support services and instructional resources, stackable credentials for workforce development, faculty oversight, and the African American Male Initiative, among others. She previously served for six years as associate dean of instruction at MPCC. There she managed strategic planning efforts, articulation agreements, career and technical program reviews and P-16 initiatives. Two years' prior, Tracy led a regional public university's minority student retention services. Tracy's foray into higher education began as an instructor of speech and intercultural communication courses at SLCC. She has always maintained her faculty status by teaching courses on speech, mass communication and intercultural communication. Tracy self-identified as Black or African-American.

In addition to her membership in numerous professional and civic organizations, Tracy has participated in the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, the American Association of Community College's Future Leaders Institute, National Council on Black American Affairs Mid-Level Management Institute, and the

Kaleidoscope Women’s Leadership Conference. Tracy earned a doctorate in educational leadership and policy analysis, a master’s degree in communication and information sciences and a bachelor’s degree in journalism.

Table 4.10 – Aspiring President Career Profile: Tracy

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVLEOPMENT PROGRAM
Vice President, Academic Affairs	Community College 3	2011-present	Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership
Associate Dean	Community College 2	2004-2010	Community College Future Leadership Institute
Instructor	Community College 2	1999-2004	
Coordinator, Minority Student Retention	Public 4-year Institution 1 – R2	1997-1999	NCBAA Mid-Level Management Institute
Instructor	Community College 1	1993-1997	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

COLLEEN

Colleen is an experienced leader in higher education with a deep commitment to student success. Her experience includes serving as interim President at PCC; the Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer at CSU-M; Vice President for Information Technology and Services and Chief Information Officer at CSU-P; Dean of Information Technology at PCC; and Manager of Consulting and Project Management Services at a State Department of Transportation.

Table 4.11 – Aspiring President Career Profile: Colleen

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVLEOPMENT PROGRAM
Interim President	Community College 3	2014-present	
Interim President, Satellite Campus	Community College 2	2012-2014	Harvard Management Development Program
Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer	Public 4-year Institution 2	2010-2012	
Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer	Public 4-year Institution 2	2005-2010	
Executive Assistant to the President	Public 4-year Institution 2	2003-2005	
Consultant – Chief Information Officer	Private/Public Partnership	2003	
Associate Vice President for Information Technology	Public 4-year Institution 1	2001-2003	
Director of Information Technology	Public 4-year Institution 1	1999-2000	
Dean of Institutional Technology	Community College 1	1997-1999	
Manager, Consulting and Project Management Services	State Government	1996-1997	
Self-Employed in Technology Industry	Private Small Business	1980-1996	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Colleen, self identified as Black or African-American, knows the meaning of “humble beginnings” and has combined her intelligence quotient (IQ), emotional

intelligence (EQ), entrepreneurial spirit, and technical knowledge to forge successful careers in engineering, information technology, and education. Before transitioning into higher education, Colleen worked as a computer analyst and engineer at a variety of Fortune 500 companies and ran her own computer consulting firm.

Colleen has served on numerous boards and committees including her local Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, the local Air Force Base 2020 Taskforce Committee, National Association for Schools of Music Accreditation Committee, African American Male Leadership Institute Steering Committee, the local research university's College of Engineering Advisory Committee and Campus Climate Committee. Colleen's many honors include the Outstanding Engineering Alumnus Award, United States Army Distinguished Civilian Volunteer Service Medal Award, Thurgood Marshall Foundation Chief Information Officer of the Year Award, Dayton Business Journal Chief Fiscal Officer of the Year Award, and the National Diversity Council Glass Ceiling Award. Colleen recently earned her Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Administration after completing the Harvard Graduate School's Education Management Development Program. She also holds a master's degree in administration and a bachelor's degree in industrial and systems engineering.

VALARIE

Appointed Interim President at BSCC in August 2015, Valarie formerly served as vice president of GSCC and interim president of CVCC. At GSCC, Valarie was also responsible for the Institutional Advancement and Student Services Divisions. Valarie held various positions at GSCC, including Vice President, Acting President in 2008 and 2011, Dean of Institutional Advancement and Community Services, Associate Dean of

Table 4.12 – Aspiring President Career Profile: Valarie

TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR(S)	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Interim President	Community College 2	2010	
Vice President, Student Services and Institutional Advancement	Community College 2	2009-present	Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership
Acting President	Community College 2	2008-2009	
Vice President, Student Services and Institutional Advancement	Community College 2	2004-2008	State Community College Leadership Academy
Dean of Institutional Advancement and Community Service	Community College 2	2003-2004	
Associate Dean for Student Services	Community College 2	2003	
Director, Upward Bound	Community College 2	1999-2003	
Army Community Service Officer	International and Stateside	1992-1999	
Social Services Caseworker	State Government	1990-1992	
Instructor	Community College 1	1989-1992	

Note. *Institution type denotes the sequence of institutions where the positions were held. Numeric value next to institution type represents the number of institutions. For example, a participant who worked at three different community colleges would have Community College 1, Community College 2 and Community College 3 represented in their institution type. Participation in Leadership development programs are documented according to attendance date(s).

Student Services, and Director of Veterans Upward Bound. Valarie earned a bachelor's degree in biology and sociology and a master's degree in counseling education. She also holds a doctorate in higher education administration and is a graduate of her state's Community College Leadership Academy and the Thomas Lakin Institute for Mentored

Leadership. Prior to her full-time foray into higher education, Valarie held a few positions in state government and with the military.

4.6 SUMMARY OF ASPIRING PRESIDENTS' PROFILES

For these five female aspiring presidents, their trajectory to the community college presidency holds many similarities and some differences. Similar to the presidential participants, these profiles also document extensive work histories across various landscapes of higher education: from public and private institutions, liberal arts to research intensive, community colleges to four-year institutions, single campus to districts. Some even bring public and private sector experience to their presidency, be that public education (K-12), military, or local/state government. These professional experiences are part of each participants' narrative of their lives and have added value along their path, with the range of professional experiences varying from twenty-three to forty-six years.

For the majority of the aspiring participants, the pathway to the presidency is being pursued in a variety of ways: traditional scholars, administrative and leadership outside of higher education. However, many appear to have spent less time on the faculty side, not necessarily advancing through the faculty ranks, and moved into administrative roles rather swiftly. Once the participants entered administrative roles, those positions tended to focus on academic administration or student services. All the aspiring participants have held at least one deanship and the majority have also served in an interim capacity as either president or chancellor. All attended at least one leadership development program that either focused on presidential leadership or higher education administration overall.

To advance their careers, two of the aspiring women have not changed institutions frequently while the other three could be classified as career/institutional changers. Outside of interim positions, the average time spent in a position was five years for the career changers and seven years for the ones whose tenure was primarily at one institution. All the participants have experienced being the only or among only a handful of other minority administrators at their respective institutions.

SECTION 4c

EMERGENT THEMES AND FINDINGS

Interview questions elicited responses related to the participants' attitudes, motivators and perceptions of their own leadership potential. The results of the study produced six emergent themes that touch on the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of leadership from the participant groups. The overall themes are academic career paths to the community college presidency, racial micro-aggressions, advocacy or activist philosophy, and organizational culture and structure – these themes were experienced or evidenced by both groups of participants. Two other themes emerged, family/life balance and mentor networks/professional development, but were more prevalent to the aspiring presidents and president participant groups respectively.

The academic career path theme describes the attitudes and motivators (RQ1 and RQ3) that led the presidents and aspiring presidents through the career choices that led to their current positions. The effects of racial micro-aggressions theme captures the experiences that ultimately motivated the presidents and aspiring presidents (RQ3) to continue their pursuit of the highest leadership level. These experiences also helped to

shape their perceptions of academic leadership (RQ1) and perceptions of their own leadership potential (RQ2). The advocacy theme describes the advocacy felt for other women and minorities. This sense of advocacy speaks to another motivator (RQ1) for presidents and aspiring presidents (RQ3) as well as enhancing the perceptions of their own leadership potential (RQ2). The organizational culture and structure theme describes the institutional and societal barriers that can or have impacted the participants' perceptions of academic leadership (RQ1) and their ascension of the academic career ladder to the presidency (RQ3). The family/life balance theme emerged as a consideration in the pursuit of the presidency. From the perspective of aspiring presidents (RQ3 and RQ4), work/life balance is a major aspect in their career decision-making. Mentor networks were thematic as motivating factors (RQ1) to pursue academic leadership positions. These mentor relationships also helped the presidents (RQ4) realize their own leadership potential (RQ2) and shaped their perceptions of academic leadership (RQ1). The results are presented by emergent themes and overall findings.

4.7 LET ME SEE YOUR I.D.: CAREER PATHS AND GATEKEEPERS TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENCY

For the five presidential participants that have already traveled the road to the community college presidency, the under-represented women traveled a traditional route outlined by Birnbaum and Umbach (2001), similar to their Caucasian male counterparts. All five entered the field of higher education ultimately ending at the community college presidency through two of the four pathways described by Birnbaum and Umbach (2001). Interestingly, four of the five presidential participants took the traditional scholar route from career professor and dean to vice president and presidency. One participant

followed the steward route, meaning they held an administrative position in higher education, but was not a career professor. There were no spanner or stranger path seekers among the participants. According to Birnbaum and Umbach, “the proportion of women among presidents following the two traditional paths of scholar and steward was much higher than among those in the nontraditional paths of spanners and strangers” (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001, p. 207). According to Anne Marie, “as a president, you need credibility, with a Ph.D. in an academic field and an understanding of the life of a faculty member and experience being part of the academy.” Spanners come to the presidency having held high administrative posts in both higher education and other non-educational institutions. Strangers come to the presidency directly from a non-education organization, having never held a position in higher education (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001).

Table 4.13 – Participant Groups Categorized by Birnbaum and Umbach’s Presidential Pathways

	SCHOLAR	STEWARD	SPANNER	STRANGER
PRESIDENTS	Anne Marie Belle Linda Shivani	Yves		
ASPIRING PRESIDENTS	Debra	Tracy Leilani	Colleen Valarie	

However, many of the female presidents also came with leadership experience in auxiliary functions like faculty governance, contract and grants, student services, recruitment and retention, vocational instruction, economic development initiatives, and various system-wide curriculum and programmatic initiatives administered college- or district-wide. Such auxiliary functions have afforded them the opportunities to develop

the required core competencies of community college leaders such as organizational strategy, community college advocacy, resource management, communication, collaboration, and professionalism (AACC, 2005). The inclusion of such additional experiences in one's repertoire does not appear to have impacted their ability to advance up the academic career ladder. These untraditional conduits to the presidency, or supplemental leadership endeavors, lead to three conclusions on the researcher's part: (a) the 'traditional' academic pathway to the community college presidency is not a barrier to entry for these women of color, (b) there are multiple pathways to the presidency for women of color and (c) these female leaders of color made a conscious effort to lead from where they were.

For those aspiring to the presidency, they are engaged in both reflection and strategic career management. There is much more of a mixed sentiment on what is required to make it to the presidential level. Contrary to the presidential participants, there is no majority perspective that a faculty background is imperative to the operation of a community college as evidenced by the range of their pathways: scholar, steward and spanner. Debra, categorized as a scholar, described her entrée into administrative leadership as "an odd point" in the life cycle of her then department. She goes on to say, "I wasn't by any means a senior individual, but when the senior individuals retired, I became one of the remaining senior folks in a very short time. Thus, when I became department chair, it wasn't really planned, but the timing was good. Serving as department chair for a few years was long enough; it's a role that hadn't really sought out, but one that I did enjoy."

Similarly, Linda shared her reflection of her time in the interim deanship position, where she was working at a level that brought about notions of other possibilities that she had not thought to entertain previously. As Linda stated, “I began to think about what else I might be interested in career-wise. I think my provost encouraged me to try the interim position to see if that peaked an interest in academic leadership beyond my program area.” Likewise, Leilani shared:

I think it’s [the presidential career path] changed a little bit. I mean, it’s very much true that you are better off with faculty experience as your foundation because it’s the faculty who have tremendous influence in hiring their leaders. However, as the years go by, there are a variety of pathways now. For example, when the economy was in flux, a lot of colleges were hiring chief business officers or financial managers with strong financial backgrounds. External hiring has lost its taboo and I think student services is really becoming a more common path for presidencies, but you still have to know instruction and community colleges overall.

Debra considers herself a problem solver and approaches her career path from that perspective: looking at things differently, trying to figure where something is broken, and determining whether she can add value in fixing it. Thus, over the years, she has gained a reputation for solving really challenging problems, and problems that were not technical necessarily, but technical plus political, plus financial. In her own words:

I believe that there are issues out there that I see and that I can offer solutions where other people may either not see the issue or be able to see what’s causing it and then be able to figure out natural plans to resolve it. So, I kept driving more

towards how I could have a bigger impact. This is how I have been able to advance and what I believe will help me achieve the next promotion.

The aspiring presidential participants did not wait for someone to appoint or promote them to a formal position leadership before they attained and mastered the requisite leadership skills needed to be an effective executive leader. Tracy began to realize that ambiguity was her friend. She shares:

I had a great deal of influence and credibility by work on committees, task forces, by deep knowledge of each of the colleges and their leadership. While I might not have had the progressive title changes that I would have hoped to have had, the power and influence I had over the course of that time was based on the intentional approaches to being involved in key initiatives of the institution and being a strategic planner. I began to realize that it wasn't always about the hierarchical, ladder-like climb that a lot of people thought was the way you achieved success.

Tracy goes on to say, “we have to have some facility with being able to talk about issues of race, class, and gender. We have to be in an environment where it's okay to make a mistake around that because some people don't want to talk about race; you know, they might mess up and say the wrong thing and then they're a racist for life. So I actually lead with the intention of creating this kind of an organization, because I think it's these kinds of organizations that allow people, not just people of color, but everyone to move through these organizations with some success.”

As indicated by at least one participant's reflections on barriers to her ascension to the presidency, one was self-imposed restrictions, primarily self-doubt or fear of

rejection from peers. Linda shares her personal struggle on initial self doubt:

I could see potentially serving in the role of president, but it was not an initial aspiration of mine. At times, I am still uncertain if I am well suited for such a role. Many of the positions I've held so far are not positions that I anticipated. I was blessed to not have to move to be able to do different things, but I could also enjoy being at the same place and still moving through different experiences.

For Leilani, leadership in and of itself was not important to her. She shares that “very often, I've been thrust in leadership positions from the back where others have said, “you need to step forward, we have confidence in you and would follow you.” Whereas my natural tendency is to hang back where I can comfortably lead from behind – not sure this that's gender specific or more tied to my personality.”

For Shivani, it about taking chances on yourself:

If you don't step through hoop one, hoop two, hoop three, then you can't go on to four. And I really challenged that and moved from this college to another position and went two steps higher than I would have been had I stayed...actually I probably wouldn't even be president of this college had I stayed here. I think going to other colleges and seeing how things are done in other parts of the country, seeing how things are done at other institutions, has been a benefit in my leadership growth and transformation. It's broadened my perspective of myself, and it's enabled me to see this position and myself in this position in ways that I wouldn't have envisioned had I stayed here and moved into this position, growing into it internally.

That intrinsic belief in oneself, for all of the participants in this study, was a motivating factor and an invaluable asset. This motivation was supplemented in the form of a seasoned professional who provided them professional guidance and moral support. In some cases, participants were identified as emerging leaders by superiors, but in other cases, participants sought mentor relationships with professionals they met through networking opportunities or along the way in their careers.

In summary, the path to the presidency is not wholly prescribed. While the traditional path of faculty to administration may presumptively be considered a barrier to advancement, this does not appear to be the case for the participants of our study. Alternative pathways, thought to address access and equity within the leadership pipeline, are just as prevalent with the participants as the traditional route. The women of color in this study have engaged in career advancement through cross-training, professional development, volunteerism and other ways to challenge themselves and grow their leadership skills. With regard to the aspiring presidents, it is hard to determine at this point if one pathway is more advantageous than another. As some aspirants have held interim or action president/chancellor positions, the lack of a strong faculty background may or may not become more of an issue later on. Nevertheless, both groups have been able to overcome real and perceived physical and psychological barriers to their ascension to the community college presidency and career paths thus far.

4.8 BLACK AND BLUE: THE EFFECTS OF RACIAL MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

Micro-aggressions are subtle but offensive comments or actions directed at a minorities or other non-dominant groups that are often unintentional or unconsciously reinforces a prevailing stereotype (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal &

Esquilin, 2007; King, 1991). King described micro-aggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward people of color” (1991, p. 271). Both presidential and aspiring presidential participants acknowledged that racial micro-aggressions were more prevalent in their experiences in higher education than overt racism. They encountered these micro-aggressions more so once they entered the administrative ranks and the occurrences are pervasive across the various institutions and the various leadership levels in which they have worked. The instances verbalized from the participants are grouped by the researcher into five main categories: socio-emotional (exclusion, avoidance, isolation, etc.), intellectual (others expressing frequent doubt or uncertainty of abilities, intellect, and direction), physical (avoiding physical or eye contact, expressing irrational physical fear or suspicion), positional (insubordination by staff/faculty, undermining by colleagues), and verbal (racial slights/slurs, gossip, or rumor spreading). These racial micro-aggressions manifest themselves in group settings and on an individual basis, in formal and informal settings, and from superiors and subordinates. While racial micro-aggressions were experienced as a collective, not all participants experienced aggressions from all five categories outlined.

Socio-emotional. Shivani shared one of her experiences of being excluded from interactions with her male colleagues as a form of socio-emotional micro-aggression. Following a national executive leadership training session where the majority participants were Caucasian males and she was one of seven attendees and the only woman, Shivani noted that as the meeting was wrapping up a male colleague said to the five other males,

“same place for lunch?” Shivani felt specifically excluded for being female and a minority. While one could attest invitations to social gatherings are a personal choice, the lunch invitation was introduced in a group setting, but not intended for all members of the group. It is highly questionable that such accomplished leaders whose positions necessitate political acumen, social etiquette and common courtesy, would inadvertently forget to include *all* the colleagues at the table, let alone exclude one intentionally.

Debra too encountered her own instances of socio-emotional micro-aggression. One in particular stands out for her after her return from a professional development shadowing experience. Upon returning from her training, she returned to her department and said “I’m back!” In her words, “instead of a welcome back, I was greeted with “Oh, were you gone?” That made me feel somewhat invisible, like I was not a member of the department. I came back to a reorganized department and my office was moved to a satellite location. Not even so much as an email or phone call to notify me or discuss it. That really let me know the value my colleagues and dean felt for me.”

Valarie shared a similar story where she was encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities to expand her skill set and solidify her appeal as a campus leader, only to return to what could be described as a bait and switch. In her own words:

I entered the leadership development program in preparation for a role that seemed, if not guaranteed, highly likely... and I came back to a place where nothing was likely or guaranteed. None of the scenarios we discussed prior to my attendance came to fruition. After the fact, I realized I was sent to meet a quota and perpetuate an appearance of diversity, but there was no true investment in me as an individual or potential leader on campus.

Intellectual. Interestingly, across the board, participants shared both general micro-aggressions, and ethnicity or language-specific micro-aggressions. For instance, Belle, Tracy, Colleen and Debra, representing the Black or African American cohort, expressed in their responses issues that conjoined around the questions or concerns on the legitimacy of their abilities as a scholar or leader. They universally expressed instances when they attending large meetings or conferences and were either considered professional staff or otherwise received with remarkable surprise upon introducing themselves to new colleagues or staff as a community college president or high-ranking administrator.

For Leilani, our Pacific Islander participant, she experienced being stereotyped as demure or passive, and thus, colleagues and subordinates expressed feelings of doubt of their abilities to effectively lead an institution or division. In addition, derogatory comments addressed to participants in reference to English spoken with a foreign accent were noted in a few participants' narratives. For at least one participant, she was encouraged to Anglicize her accent, presumably to sound more scholarly or professional (she interpreted the advice as become less foreign). Anne Marie and Valarie, two Latina/Hispanic participants, expressed feeling pressures that came both from within and outside of their ethnic group.

Universally, Belle, Yves, Shivani, Linda and Anne Marie spoke of being "firsts" or the "only" in their post as president and even in the executive leadership positions leading up to the presidency. The participants claimed that had it not been for mentors and professional networks of color and gender affiliation, many of them might have been overlooked or not sought out for promotional opportunities based on the assumption by

prevailing stereotypes that they are not “presidential or leadership material.” Common among participants was the notion that they needed to be at least twice as qualified, twice as credentialed, and twice as politically/collegially connected as that of the Caucasian male and female counterparts to be considered for executive posts, and not be considered an Affirmative Action hire. While this disparity may not have been intentional, it has at its core an assumption that a Caucasian male is the generally accepted norm for “presidential material” as evidenced by the composition of community college presidencies since their expansive growth in the 1970s. This underscores King’s theory of dis-conscious racism (1991), where by inequities are accepted or justified as the status quo.

Physical. It was difficult for Tracy to discern whether her traumatizing first-week experience as Coordinator of Minority Student Retention at a new campus was attributed to her gender, ethnicity, or both, and certainly the impact was both physical and socio-emotional. In her narrative, she recounted being literally locked out of her office by subordinates. Tracy shared:

As with any new appointment, I have learned that not all the essentials will be ready on day one. So when I was told that my office was open but the keys were not yet available, I was not surprised or taken aback. As I carried on my exploration of the office and shared my vision with the staff, I began to sense some animosity and underlying tension. I presented myself as open and transparent, trying to ease any resistance that may be coming. After a unit wide presentation on my vision for the office, I returned to my office only to find the door closed and locked. With no key, I spent the next two hours trying to get into

my office. When I asked the secretary what happened, she disclosed that ‘someone’ said that office is not mine, but reserved for a director they can respect and support.

Tracy soon learned that the heir apparent for the position was an African American male and the campus had a vocal constituency that appeared to resent her appointment. It took several months for Tracy to adjust to her new environment and for her environment to adjust and accept her. During this time, she experienced multiple physical barriers that would most appropriately be characterized as harassment and intimidation. Nonetheless, she overcame these barriers and ultimately earned the respect and support of her colleagues and subordinates.

Belle reported a similar incident where a faculty member would park in her reserved parking space because he was late for class – an occurrence that happened at least once a week during her first three months as president. After a brief and frank conversation with the faculty member, in which she introduced herself, gauged his motives and outlined the parking rules as she understood them, the physical intimidation ceased.

Positional. Both Colleen and Belle spoke of having their authority questioned and encountered colleagues and subordinates urging for “second opinions” from other colleagues to confirm their positions on an issue or thoroughness in addressing a complex task. For Colleen, the re-accreditation of her institution presented a situation in which subordinates urged her to confirm her proposed response with the former president prior to presentation to the site review committee of the accrediting agency. Ironically, Colleen served as vice president for several years where she led the accreditation process and

made recommendations to her president in formulating the final presentation.

For Belle, her predecessor kept tabs on what has happening under her tenure, assuming that she must seek him out in order to be successful. Her predecessor, a white male, kept in touch with others in the office to seek out information, sent Belle emails to remind her of upcoming deadlines or events and offered his support, and on occasion stopped by the office when she was away. She purposefully did not contact him for the first six months so that she could assess the staff on her own, which she found to be highly competent. Linda reported being left out of decision-making for campus-wide projects such as capital improvements which reinforced for her that some colleagues and subordinates decided what she should and should not have a say in. Linda found this curious in that the prior president also expressed interest in the physical environment and presence of campus, and his participation in such projects was welcomed and invited.

Verbal. While overt racism, particularly in the form of slurs appeared to be much less common among the participants' experiences. Yves, who self identified as two or more races and considers herself of Hispanic descent, shared an instance when the use of the word "nigger" flowed unreservedly in a conversation with a colleague. While the encounter was not directed toward Yves, and it took place in a context outside of higher education, it was still disheartening for her that such racist language and ideology persists and was used so openly. Additionally, both Valarie and Shivani recounted several instances where colleague often commented on their accents and claiming not to understand them, making direct reference to their ethnicities, not being born in America and English being their second language.

In summary, racial micro-aggressions are not foreign to women of color, nor are

they restricted to the workplace (Sue, et.al., 2007; King 1991). Because these types of slights are considered commonplace, many women of color are adept at dealing with them. The examples of micro-aggressions shared by both presidential and aspiring presidential participants highlight the passive and aggressive racial encounters along their career paths. The aggressors were both from within and outside the minority group represented by the participant, although, most of the feedback reflected encounters with white majority males. The instances verbalized from the participants reveal five main categories of aggression: socio-emotional, intellectual, physical, positional, and verbal. The manifestation of these aggressions reminds us all of the role that privilege, race and gender have played and continue to play within our larger society and higher education overall.

4.9 NATURE OR NURTURE: WOMEN ADVOCATING FOR WOMEN

The majority of participants, either in their exact words or by deduction, assumed what can be described as an advocate/activist stance to their purpose and leadership. More explicitly, all participants expressed their commitment to helping all students and other minority leaders, a commitment based upon their own experience with adversity. When asked if she thought colleagues or subordinates assumed she appeared to be too focused on creating a diverse organizational culture, Linda replied:

I think I established a reputation for being student centered, with sensitivity to issues of underrepresentation for students of color, or second language and proficiency, or immigrant education. I led with that philosophy and it didn't bother me that some people say your focus is too narrow. I advocate for all students, even if in other's opinions it wasn't my responsibility, I would champion

what's best for all students.

Anne Marie expanded on the importance of advocacy for effective organizational leadership:

Advocacy is at the core of my educational philosophy and my leadership style. I think that's one of the things that leaders have to do, particularly if they're doing decision-making. This is paramount for any leader in higher education and the administrative team that supports them.

According to Linda, leadership looks and operates differently to different people. She goes on to say "some people can lead from the position that they are in today and remain in that position for twenty years. Leadership is more about being a visionary and less about holding a title. Being a visionary entails influencing others to believe and share in your vision, setting goals and achieving them." For Shivani, her advancement through the ranks was more about impact, and her desire to make an impact. She was not driven by accomplishing or achieving a specific title or salary within a given timeline. As she explained her motives, "it's about being true and knowing yourself, knowing what my values are, honoring integrity within myself, and being open to the learning experience of leadership."

For Belle, so many things have been passed down to her that she has since passed on to others. "Whenever you have doubt, when you are in doubt, step back and try to really focus on your big intentions. Reflect on why you come into the office in the morning, why you put your energy into this stressful job day in and day out. Once you identify the motives and intentions of your pursuit, then the small decisions become much easier."

Colleen espoused that you have to follow your instincts in your career. If everything in your body is telling you it's time to move on, you should give it some serious thought. She went on to say:

It is important to recognize that everyone makes mistakes, and you should minimize the time you allow yourself to wallow in any missteps along the way. If you are still feeling badly about something that happened in a meeting 2 weeks ago, that's way too long. The other thing is don't let anyone tell you that you "can't." Every leader I've spoken to in higher education had naysayers or people who doubted their abilities on many levels. I was told I couldn't be an academic leader because I had no faculty experience, yet here I am. I was told I couldn't be a leader because there weren't female leaders, and yet still, here I am. So, I don't carry the burdens of what other people say I can or cannot do; I would encourage other upcoming leaders and even current leaders with the same mantra.

For Linda, "a misstep might have been letting comfort dictate the path of my career. For a while, I never had an interest or motivation to pursue anything beyond where I was at the time. I could have been holding myself back or missing opportunities along the way – I cannot relish on the past, but am grateful for the opportunities that arose external to me that finally prompted me to make a move."

Debra and Yves encouraged current and aspiring leaders to share their perspective and ideas. With the belief that each person comes to the table with different perspectives, being open enough to share will benefit and advance the individual and the institution. When one sees there are different issues that need to be dealt with, if you know how to create a solution or create a team that solves a problem, share those tidbits of knowledge

with your colleagues or administrative team because that's how higher education moves forward. Debra goes on to say, "I would encourage others to be open to roles and opportunities as they arise; the fact that you are being approached says a lot about how people view and value you. Just consider carefully before you turn anything down. The motivation for what you do and what drives you is inertly more than positional titles."

A common theme among participants' narratives includes a sense of responsibility and reciprocation to the communities that support them. "It gave me a chance to see women doing work in leadership roles at the other colleges, and that's where I really started to see that there was an opportunity for me to move forward" says Tracy. For Yves, its about giving back and paying it forward because:

As a woman of color, I come from a family that really felt it was important to uplift the community and be a part of challenging preconceived notions about stereotypes and just making sure that there was equality and equity. Whatever career I had, I knew that would be an integral part of what I did. Thus, I've always been very interested in mentoring, particularly young women and people of color, introducing them to higher education leadership, where in my early years, there was a real dearth of people of color in the higher levels and mid-levels of higher education leadership; this was particularly true for women of color.

Likewise, Anne Marie demonstrated in her acceptance of my invitation to participate in my study:

That's why we're talking; because I take time to help people who are working on their doctorates. Someone helped me when I was working on mine and I feel I need to give back. I'm particularly supportive of requests that I receive from

people of color...I rarely turn down anybody, regardless of their ethnicity and regardless of their gender. It's rare that I will say no to people; because that's my personal commitment to helping people achieve their academic objectives.

Leilani shared her experience with a particular leadership development program, the Kaleidoscope program, designed to celebrate and enhance the achievements of women of color in higher education. There are also professional development networks designed for and by various ethnicities, such as Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP for Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities across the world) or Asian Pacific American Empowerment Conference (APAEC) whose mission is to “foster a spirit of student activism that will raise awareness about Asian American identity and facilitate self and community empowerment”. As Leilani articulated, “I think for women of color there is no singular formula...I think we have to push, you know, we have to try any key we get. We have to try any key in the door, and the key might be a mentor.” Tracy summarized it best by stating, “we can’t call ourselves leaders if we are not helping the next generation as much as others have helped us.”

In summary, the firm commitment to activism and advocacy for advancement and professional opportunities for women of color and minorities in general was voiced by all participants of the study. Recognizing that women are far outnumbered in the leadership ranks, the participants expressed an intrinsic duty or motivation to pay it forward or give back. For many of our participating women, it was the generosity of other people’s time and efforts that helped them accomplish the successes experiences thus far. Three participants in particular expressed an interest in the career path and research agenda of

the researcher, even offering future support and inclusion in the researcher's professional network for mentoring and professional advice.

4.10 YIELD: BARRIERS IMPOSED BY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND STRUCTURE

With regard to organizational culture, structure and governance, the women shared their experiences and perceived impediments to advancement based upon race and gender. Participants' narratives revealed three main notions that spoke to how organizational culture impeded their ascension to the presidency. These are also expanded upon in Chapter 5 as recommendations for removing barriers to the career ascension of women of color and include: representative leadership, succession management, and mentoring. Briefly, representative leadership speaks to community colleges' administration's value of, and commitment to, the diversity of their student body being reflected and represented by executive leadership. At least three presidents interviewed shared their experiences of receiving a list from hiring panels of recommended finalists for faculty positions lacking ethnic and gender diversity that were ultimately rejected with instructions for the committee to cast a wider and more diverse net. These presidents added that based on the lack of diversity of the executive leadership positions, they doubted the commitment to diversity was shared by all board members and faculty, regardless of gender and race.

The same is true when engaged in succession planning as you consider internal promotions or external hires. There are benefits and consequences to both approaches, but must be considered in the context of the institutional composition if diversity is truly an aspiration. Effective succession management strategies are essential to the

sustainability of community college leadership. Participants spoke of the dire need for gender and ethnic-specific professional development opportunities, offered and sought both internally and externally to an aspiring leader's organization.

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) outlined core competencies for community college leaders in their paper titled *Competencies for Community College Leaders* (2005). These competencies were born out of the understanding that “the development and availability of well-prepared leaders is vital to the continued success of community colleges and their students” (AACC, 2005, p. 1). In this document, six core competencies are outlined for successful leadership: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism (AACC, 2005). The AACC recommended the “leadership gap can be addressed through a variety of strategies such as college grow-your-own programs, AACC council and university programs, residential institutes, coaching/mentoring, and online/blended approaches” (AACC 2005, p. 2). Confirming and expanding upon these recommendations are the findings of this study in which participants were asked to identify where they acquired their leadership competencies. Participants responded that university programs, coaching/mentoring, and professional development offerings external to higher education were the most effective means of acquiring relevant competencies for community college leadership. With regard to organizations striving for representative leadership, Valarie succinctly stated:

I think that being mindful first of all, it has to be on your radar. It has to be a conscious effort on the institution's part that we want to grow diverse leaders. We want to grow women leaders. We want to grow women of color.

Many, if not all, participants spoke of either not having the luxury of being fully accepted because they stood out as the “only” woman or person of color in the room or feeling invisible and unheard due to others’ perceptions of their gender and ethnicity. Offering a place of solace and unspoken understanding for these women are professional mentors who either served as executive leaders themselves, or recognized their latent talent for leadership at pivotal points in the participants’ careers. The same could be said of the various gender- and ethnicity-focused professional development networks upon which participants relied and in which they took leadership roles to provide support for aspiring female leaders of color.

A lack of mentoring can also be an impediment to advancement if you find yourself in a position or institution with no internal allies or external support system. Supplemental to advocacy for professional development opportunities for women and people of color was the importance of a mentor. While many participants shared that their first or most influential mentor might have been of a different ethnic background or even a man, participants were unanimous in their affinity for having a female of color to provide both professional guidance and emotional support to aspiring female community college presidents of color. More details on mentoring are shared later in this chapter.

Participants seemed to believe the culture of their respective organizations had an impact on their ascension to the presidency, either helping or hindering. Macro systems, such as governance structure and policies and procedures, had great effect on the perceived opportunities for advancement and support of leaders of color once appointed to executive leadership positions. Likewise, micro systems such as professional development opportunities and organizational behavior of superiors, subordinates, and

colleagues can convey an unspoken sense of appreciation for and institutionalized practice of valuing diversity, or lack thereof.

As one participant states, “Like faculty select like faculty”, meaning that if the majority of the existing professoriate are white males, so likely will be your newly recruited professors. Some participants in this study asserted themselves proactively in the selection process for hiring panels. Diversity was insisted upon within the hiring committee, and advanced candidate lists were rejected once presented to participants in their role as president or chancellor for lack of diversity. Such a fervent stance does not serve to undermine hiring committees, but rather empowers them to expand their search for the highest quality candidates professionally and diversity-wise.

As for creating and fostering an organizational culture that supports and promotes aspiring talent and boosts the sustainability of an organization, Shivani offered some concrete suggestions such as formal and informal mentoring networks, valuing a collegial environment in which people genuinely like each other and are not afraid to take risks, offering structured professional development opportunities for leadership, and establishing and maintaining cultural fluency. The alchemy of these components strengthens the organization for all people, not just people of color. Belle expanded by saying, “perhaps the most sensitive of issues for female leaders is advocating for oneself when it comes to appropriate compensation. Some women hinder themselves professionally by being timid in advocating for themselves, especially when it comes to executive level position compensation.”

Equally, participants described being encouraged by superiors to pursue promotional opportunities within their current organizations, this suggests there may be a

de facto culture in some community colleges advocating for sustainable leadership. That an existing vice president or president would recommend to an aspiring leader of color that she should consider applying to be their successor indicates to the researcher that said leader of color is not only deemed competent, but also that the incumbent president recognizes the value of cultivating leadership within the organization. Valarie shared what crystallized for her:

I am very motivated by affinity with senior leaders, and the ability to relate with a charismatic president or provost is something that helps drive my commitment to an institution. The leadership development program taught me a great deal about myself and my approach to higher education leadership.

In summary, due to the organizational culture and structure, some participants described frustration at the lack of opportunities to advance within their own organizations but did not see a lack of said opportunities for their white, male counterparts, and felt compelled to seek advancement opportunities elsewhere. While this does not necessarily mean that a lack of internal promotional opportunities denotes a lack of sustainable leadership strategies, or that leaders of color are not identified as “leadership material” as often as their white male colleagues, it is noted that at least one participant felt overlooked for promotions and left her organization to accept a promotional position at another college. Many years later, after having gained invaluable leadership skills at another institution, she became the president after not being groomed for executive leadership at her previous institution. This leads the researcher to deduce that female leaders of color, by either lack of viable promotional opportunities within their organization, or due to lack of a culture of sustainable leadership, find their path to

the presidency having more hazards and roadblocks than that of their white male colleagues.

4.11 MOVING TARGET: FAMILY/LIFE BALANCE

For aspiring presidents, the dichotomy of mother/professional appears to have been somewhat of a struggle for the women in this study. While the presidents have either overcome or not engaged in this struggle, it was a recurring concern for those aspiring to the presidency. Accompanying this is the perception by some participants that they at times felt unsupported by men of the same ethnicity group, or felt invisible or excluded from primarily male professional groups' efforts to advance under-represented individuals to executive leadership positions.

Tracy, who is in her mid-forty's, anticipates she has at least 20 more years to work. As she shares her projected path, she claims:

It's too soon to say what my next step(s) will be. I'm going to stay where I can have a big impact, and I don't know exactly what that means. I know that I want to continue to stay in higher education because I enjoy helping college students. I want to start looking at a broader definition of what that means. Very early on I was ambitious. Then I think I kind of took a step where my ambition was kind of flat for a little while partly because I had children and I wanted to have a better balance in my life.

Participants also shared either spoken or unspoken sentiments of colleagues that their commitment to the position may waiver given their other obligations (or potential obligations) as a wife or mother. For some who found themselves facing life changes like divorce and deaths, having the added stress of weighing your personal and professional

lives gives them pause as they consider their continued pursuit of the community college presidency.

As Colleen stated, “it was important for young women coming behind me to see that while you may not do it all perfectly, you didn’t have to sacrifice having a family life to have a successful career. I think a lot had to do with the supportive environment and network surrounding me, but I also had to fight for some of that in terms of on-site childcare services, telecommuting, and flexible work schedules. The higher education environment has been a way for me to integrate the personal commitments, passions, and missions with my professional career.”

For Valarie, maintaining her sense of self was important. In her own words, “I’d like to think that I don’t define myself by my position. I think it’s a bit easier for me to view my career as a very important part of what I do because of what it enables me to accomplish, but not really have it be who I am. If you’re the president, it’s a 24/7 job. You have to live and breathe the institution, and I’m still trying to figure out if that is what I truly want at this stage in my life.” This sense of self was apparent for many of the aspiring presidents having witnessed colleagues and mentors get burnt out or used by the system.

In summary, family/life balance is a concerning factor for those in pursuit of the community college presidency. While also mentioned by our presidential participants, it resonated more profoundly as a concern for the aspiring presidents. Recognizing that the presidency is a high-profile, full-time job with long hours and competing demands for your time, it is prudent for those seeking to venture that high on the career ladder to analyze the personal investment required to be successful. The choice to pursue or not to

pursue a position at the highest level will affect one's entire family – whether the family unit consists of a spouse/partner, young, teenage or adult children, elderly parents. Job location, commute times and size of institution were also mentioned as factors affecting final decisions. Participants repeatedly shared that timing is paramount. The right opportunity at the wrong time in life can prove to be a disastrous undertaking if not considered carefully.

4.12 I'M NEW HERE: THE POWER OF MENTOR NETWORKS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A common theme among presidential participants was the importance of having mentors and being a member of a professional development network within their career paths. All participants acknowledged that their path to the presidency would likely have taken longer without the encouragement by their mentors to apply for higher-level positions or pursue projects or opportunities that provide professional development.

As Belle explained, “I have been invited to apply for every position I've attained since my first faculty position. I have been blessed to know great people who recognize my talents and recommend me to search committees, head hunters and recruitment firms. While this certainly may be a normal occurrence for white males, I would argue this is a positive anomaly for a black female.” Additionally, many participants shared they became aware of promotional positions through their professional networks, especially those that were gender or ethnicity-specific. Mentoring for the presidents worked both ways – being mentees and serving as mentors for others. For Yves:

From the knowledge that you have built up, you can advocate for yourself to perhaps create a different position or showcase your talents so people recognize

you when unusual or uncommon opportunities present themselves. I was quite deliberative and had mentors who helped me early on think about the opportunities you should think about taking advantage of to position yourself for that next level. It was done very subtly, and it was only after a few years that I realized I was being mentored in spite of myself. Others saw things in me that I wasn't aware of that were there, and that's when I took advantage of some of these professional development opportunities.

The leadership development programs were described as transformative experiences. At the time, the academies and institutes allowed the upcoming presidents to see themselves as an institution-wide leader, more of a community leader, a collaborative partner with the provost, vice-presidents and deans. The leadership programs enabled them to have mentors outside of their particular campus, mentors who encouraged them in different directions than their own campus would. As Anne Marie explained:

You end up being influenced by the people who share your passion and purpose. I was exposed to so many diverse people with different backgrounds which made a lasting impression. I was able to develop a closeness to and reliance upon that network of peers and mentors, where you can pick up the phone and leave a message for a president or a provost and they call you right back. Its hard to get that kind of access and response under normal circumstances. You see and experience the transfer of knowledge from one generation and campus to another. It's exciting to be a part of such collaboration.

Linda came into higher education through a small institution that was well

resourced and very committed to women's leadership. She shares:

I had role models and received mentorship there, not just from great women but from men who made sure I had opportunities to participate and lead board committees and do a lot of professional education. I just developed this network of relationships, which opened doors for me and showed me to areas of higher education and strategic planning that I never would have gotten the opportunity to learn about in a larger organization.

Colleen shares one seminal experience from her leadership development program that seems so simple, but it was really quite profound for her. In her own words:

Three weeks into my leadership development program, we were asked to develop a personal leadership philosophy. You draft this philosophy and you talk about it with your presidential mentor and you also discuss it with your team and you give feedback to each other and critique each other. At the end of the program, we revisited our original philosophy to really think about if that accurately describes where you are, who you are – for me, it was very, very different.

In summary, mentor networks, while mentioned by both aspiring presidents and presidents, was cited as a more prevalent component of success for the sitting presidents. While the participants strongly advocate for other women and minorities, their overall professional networks are not limited to women and minorities. In fact, two of the presidents cited their best mentors were white males who saw strong potential within them and assisted them with opening doors that may otherwise be closed if they pursued certain opportunities independently. Conversely, the mentor networks also helped the participants avoid opportunities with underlying tumultuous issues they may otherwise be unaware of.

The professional development opportunities and leadership development programs added value to their overall stock as leaders within higher education; the professional network established helped the women capitalize on advancement opportunities as they arose. This underscores the old adage of “it’s not what you know, but who you know.”

4.13 OVERALL FINDINGS

The researcher is exceedingly privileged that these ten female leaders of color within higher education embraced this study and invited me into their lives to share themselves and their stories with me. They told stories of their daily lives, stories of their pasts and shared aspirations for their futures. However, the findings of this study only demonstrate a snapshot of who they are as educators and as people. Through the nature of our narrative discourse, several layers of editing occurred between the researcher and the participants. These edits included the decisions each participant made to share a particular story or perspective.

The results and findings were molded by the manner in which questions were asked, data was collected, observations were made, and the choice of which stories to tell and which aspects of the stories were highlighted. With each layer of editing, there was another opportunity to reframe the focus by retelling the accounts through analytic descriptions. As such, the researcher is also a storyteller and through the theoretical frameworks, research strategies, transcription procedures, and interpretive perspectives – by constructing a comprehensive story and deriving its meaning. In this sense the story is always coauthored, either directly in the process of an interviewer eliciting an account or indirectly through representing and thus transforming others’ texts and dialogues.

Attitudes Toward Academic Leadership. The attitudes of minority female presidents and minority female aspiring presidents toward academic leadership roles, namely the community college presidency, are generally positive. Academic leadership is generally viewed as a privilege to serve. Although the community college presidency is predominantly occupied by aging white males, the presidency is perceived as attainable for those that choose to pursue that pathway. Notwithstanding common and often daily incidences of micro-aggressions that cause stress, hardship, and demoralization for female leaders of color, pursuit of the community college presidency inevitably induces feelings of isolation, marginalization, tension, and professional and intellectual undermining – however, these obstacles are not a deterrent for vying for the position. Instead, the challenges of the pursuit strengthen the resolve of these resilient women of color in higher education leadership.

Motivation to Lead. While all the participants have achieved increasing measures of success and advancement in their careers, the fact that none of the participant described ever having actually planned or even dreamed of being a president is quite telling. Rather surprisingly, they were all coached and encouraged to each subsequent promotional opportunity by a mentor at various steps along their journey. The realization that a community college presidency was within reach and attainable brought on self-reflection and contemplation. Preparing for the presidency, or any ambitious goal for that matter, requires risk-taking. This study provided insight into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and the influence those factors have on current or aspiring leaders. Intrinsically, the presidential and aspiring presidential participants spoke to their commitments to learning, commitments to students, self-integrity and a responsibility to

give back as their internally motivating factors. Extrinsically, the participants were To take risks, one must be internally motivated to supplement external factors, both incentives and fear of failure.

Perceptions of Leadership Potential. Mentors and professional networks were paramount to the professional and personal support for the women in this study in the following ways: providing professional advice, referring or recommending new job opportunities, serving as references, offering a listening ear, counseling on personal issues, and as a sounding board for new or innovative ideas. Many described being encouraged by mentors to take risks and pursue executive leadership positions, even when they did not recognize their own leadership potential initially. Given the apparent additional barriers women of color face related to race and gender, most executive leadership aspirants in higher education have to navigate career pitfalls. One pitfall is the traditional and often rigid, linear path to the presidency that begins with ascension through the professorial ranks, then stepping into the academic leadership trajectory of dean, vice president, and ultimately securing the presidency. Comparatively, the two groups differed narrowly on the importance of faculty experience to lead.

Career Paths and Pipelines to the Community College Presidency. The path to the presidency is more varied for the upcoming generation of under-represented minority females aspiring to the community college presidency compared to the paths of sitting under-represented minority female community college presidents. The pipeline of available under-represented minority females, with regard to general qualifications, does not appear to be diminished. Many of the participants had to engage in institutional changes to advance their career; the presidents ultimately acquired their first presidencies

by leaving their then current institutions as well. The risks one takes in leaving an organization for advancement has both great pitfalls and advantages. Where there is safety in long institutional memory and organizational history, there could also be inbred and stagnant systems thinking. When one's career experiences are limited in institutional diversity, one may be perceived as having a closed mindset about how to innovate and implement change. Thus, the participants have benefited professionally from the diversity of their experiences and institution types.

While it is certainly advantageous to an organization to preserve institutional memory and internal talent by developing their current aspiring leaders, they might also benefit by looking outside of their organizations as potential candidates might not only come from the traditional higher education routes, but they may also come from government, nonprofits, or the corporate sector. Additionally, organizations should investigate the usefulness of a climate survey to assess the leadership strength on campus. The results of such an internal audit would be to cultivate professional development training tailored to the particular campus or district that will identify and mitigate internal and external bias.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study raise important issues that warrant the attention of scholars and policymakers in addressing barriers and opportunities to under-represented minority female community college presidents and aspiring presidents. From career pathways to career mentoring, the study touched on both expected and surprising experiences from which to make meaning. The open call to available presidents and those aspiring to the presidency that met the study criteria produced participants from various ethnic, socioeconomic, personal, professional, and geographic backgrounds – providing rich data from which sound conclusions and recommendations can be made.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- RQ 1. What are the attitudes, motivators and perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders toward academic leadership roles?
- RQ 2. What are the perceptions of minority female community college presidents and minority female emerging leaders on their own leadership potential?
- RQ 3. For what reasons do minority female emerging leaders pursue or not pursue the community college presidency?

RQ 4. Are there attitudinal or motivational differences between actual and aspiring minority females for the community college presidency?

5.1 SIGNIFICANCE TO THE LITERATURE

This study was significant and contributed to the literature in four ways. First, this study attempted to go beyond the statistically articulated pathways to the presidency to understand the considerations underlying the career decisions of potential senior leaders. Furthermore, the study helped to illuminate career choices leading to the community college presidency by extending the presidential career path literature through personal narratives, similar to the Walton (1996), Padilla (2005), and Frankland (2010) studies and others (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Cohen & March, 1974; Moore et.al., 1983; Wessel & Keim, 1994). Second, this was the first study to apply the Theory of Planned Behavior and Career Construct Theory through narrative inquiry to capture attitudes, motivations and perceptions of career paths and considerations of leadership potential in higher education (Savickas, 2011; Squire, 2008a). This is an improvement on the Walton (1996), Padilla (2005), and Frankland (2010) studies that did not have strong theoretical foundations to base their narrative inquiries. Third, this study was the first to compare two groups at different stages of the same trajectory by examining where aspiring leaders were with a retrospective look from those that achieved the ultimate goal of the community college presidency. Prior studies on community college leadership (Montas-Hunter, 2012; Fong-Batkin, 2011; Frankland, 2010; Campbell, et.al., 2010; Gonzalez Sullivan, 2009) have addressed only presidents or did not specifically identify actual presidential aspirants. Finally, the study yielded interpretations about career development and career pathways that can assist other aspiring leaders in their career development, thus supporting the contributions of prior

studies (Fong-Batkin, 2011; Campbell, et.al, 2010; Kamassah, 2010; Kubala & Bailey, 2001).

5.2 DISCUSSION

First, the women of color in this study found their way to the presidency through a variety of means and gateways, but mainly through the scholar and steward pathways. Four of the five presidential participant was a traditional scholar and career professor before transitioning to administration and executive leadership. The remaining presidential participant, classified as a steward, ascended to the office of president or chancellor through leadership positions in student services, research and assessment, and special or system-wide projects. While the literature supports alternative pathways for women and minorities in higher education (Gill & Jones, 2013; Bailey, 2011; Hebreard, 2010; Campbell, et.al, 2010; Kubala & Bailey, 2001), this study provided evidence that alternative pathways to the presidency may not be necessary for minority candidates or to expand the pipeline of available candidates for presidential positions. Unexpectedly, and unique to this study, participants perceived the selection process to be more problematic and serves as the greatest hurdle to increasing the diversity within community college leadership and higher education leadership overall.

Secondly, the transgressions experienced by the under-represented minority women in this study are similar to racism, sexism and cultural differences noted in prior studies (Selingo, 2013; Fong-Batkin, 2011; Gonzalez Sullivan, 2009). The current findings highlight that individuals and organizations of the dominant racial group were not mindful of dis-conscious racism, white male privilege, and its legacy that underpins disparate treatment of people of color in this country. Because of the racial history in

America, minority women have demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity and have learned to survive and thrive. According to Ricks, in order for women of color to survive their multiple marginality and the resulting confinement of their oppression, women of color relied upon faith, social support, body ownership, and unique defense mechanisms to persevere (2011, p. 6). These survival techniques may be generalizable to other non-dominant groups (e.g. minority males, LGBTQ, and various religions) in higher education leadership as their experiences converge at oppression and resilience (Smith, 2012). This sense of strength and self awareness has been presumably passed down from generation to generation, and explains the presidential and aspiring presidential participant's motives related to advocacy. The inherent and learned resilience of women of color, and the professionalism with which they navigate dis-conscious racism as demonstrated by the presidents and aspiring presidents in this study and others (Smith,, 2012; Padilla, 2005), can be described as what the researcher calls double consciousness, an awareness of being both a minority and female.

Double consciousness is a term describing the internal conflict experienced by subordinated groups in an oppressive society. It was coined by W. E. B. Du Bois with reference to African American "double consciousness," including his own, and published in his 1994 work, *The Souls of Black Folk*. The term originally referred to the psychological challenge of always looking at one's self through the eyes of a racist white society, and measuring oneself by the means of a nation that looked back in contempt (DuBois, 1994). The term also referred to Du Bois' experiences of reconciling his African heritage with an upbringing in a European-dominated society (Wamba, 1999). The term

has since been applied to numerous situations of social inequality, notably women living in patriarchal societies (Wamba, 1999).

The researcher posits that double-consciousness, as it relates to women of color, is a form of emotional intelligence demonstrated by women of color in which unrequited gracious behavior, which is not necessarily merited, is granted to the transgressor(s) by the recipient in light of varying degrees of micro-aggressions of a racial or gender bias nature. Double consciousness is generally demonstrated through language and behavior that corrects and educates the transgressor so he or she is made aware of their slight and is discouraged from repeating it. Double-consciousness allows the minority female leader to respond in a dignified manner that is professionally acceptable, call out the offense and graciously demand the respect she deserves.

It is important to distinguish double-consciousness from an aggressive enforcement of political correctness and also from an apologist stance of “eating crow” for the sake of not making waves. Rather, based on this study’s narratives, double-consciousness allows women of color to recognize and confront dis-conscious racism in a way that causes the transgressor to challenge and question their own mental models that may inform their inappropriate actions and mitigate potentially negative outcomes that could result from them. Generally, activating a double-conscious mentality requires women of color to make an instantaneous assessment of the intentions and cultural competence of the transgressor. Wang (2012) cited this in her research on racial micro-aggression:

Racial minority targets often face the problem of determining the intention of someone who commits a racial micro-aggression (i.e., perpetrator), such as

whether the behavior is due to racial prejudice or not, and may use the perpetrator's characteristics (ethnicity, gender, etc.) to determine prejudice (Wang, 2012, p. iii).

This double-consciousness trait, that all the participants in this study exhibit regularly in their role as executive leaders of their organization, in the context of the intersectionality of race and gender, is both a burden and a unique asset. Crenshaw (1995) cautioned, "because of the intersectional identity as both women and of color within discourses shaped to respond to one or the other, women of color are marginalized within both" (p. 358). In instances where dis-conscious racism is apparent, to be able to discern the intent of the transgressor in a split second, maintain the dignity of all involved, and ensure organizational cohesion and effectiveness with the utmost professionalism is indeed an invaluable and remarkable feat. It is this same double-consciousness trait that propels the participants to engage in advocacy and activism for women on the rise and younger generations of future leaders.

Finally, the subtle and often pervasive instances of racial micro-aggressions can be somewhat traumatizing depending on the severity and one's ability to cope with such pressures. Given the continued racial history in America, exchanges like the examples shared come as no surprise to many minorities, including our participants. These instances confirm that access and equity are not the be all to a successful diversity plan, but demonstrate the importance of having a supportive environment that fosters a firm commitment to diversity. This finding of a supportive organizational culture has also been documented in prior studies (Donohue-Mendoza, 2012; Kamassah, 2010; Gonzalez Sullivan, 2009; McCurtis, et.al., 2009). The willingness of these participants to share this

often hidden side of racial interactions is commendable given the political and social capital needed to navigate at the presidential and senior administrative level.

To counter this marginalization, individuals and organizations must make committed efforts to ensure the identification, recruitment, professional development, and retention of highly qualified female leaders of color. Very few of the racial or gender slights experienced by the study's participants were of an overt nature. Rather, subtle and often unintended insults by colleagues who otherwise exhibit respectful behavior are much more common, yet just as hurtful. Given the historical importance and impact that community college systems have on their immediate communities and beyond, it is imperative that organizations, current higher education leaders, and aspiring leaders put in place organizational systems and cultures that do not create barriers to diverse leadership.

This study's participants demonstrated through their narrative stories that while the path may be difficult, aspiring female leaders of color can and do overcome and succeed in pursuing the presidency or chancellorship of single-campus, multi-campus, district or state-wide community colleges. In spite of various racial and gender micro-aggressions, concerns of family/life balance, advocacy for upcoming female leaders and unleashing the potential of mentor networks or professional development opportunities, the female leaders of color in this study yield complex coping skills that transform their adversity into resilience. It is important to note that while the themes presented emerged as pertinent findings, the themes themselves are not discrete and often intersect and overlap. The intersectionality and relatedness of the themes is reflective of the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, the Theory of Planned Behavior and Career

Construct Theory, where outcomes are dependent on or compounded by underlying factors influencing each other.

Understanding this, the findings are not generalizable to all minority females in executive leadership positions within the community college sector. These ten administrators, while unique and effective in their own way are not necessarily representative of any group. However, through their shared stories, we have a unique understanding of how they view themselves and their experiences navigating the echelons of higher education leadership. Hence, the findings in these participants' narratives are consistent with and supplement the literature review with regard to systems and environments at community colleges across the United States that shed light on the pipeline of female presidents of color.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This study sought to discover how the humanistic aspects of attitudes, motives and perceptions of female leaders of color catapult their ascension to the presidency at community colleges across the United States of America. The following recommended actionable solutions are offered based on the review of relevant literature and this study's research findings. First, recommendations are made for aspiring female leaders of color; secondly, for current leaders of color in higher education and professional development networks for people of color; and lastly, for governing boards seeking to attract, develop, and retain female leaders of color for representative leadership.

Recommendations for Aspiring Presidents. Based on the findings of this study, several lessons may be gleaned from the participants' experiences, especially for others interested in pursuing a community college presidency. All the participants advised that

aspiring presidents should avail themselves of professional networks for professional and personal support, mentor relationships, risk-taking, and seek leadership opportunities for professional development. One cannot merely wait for one's talent to be developed or recognized, and participants recommended aspiring leaders to seek professional development opportunities external to the organization. Having been recommended and encouraged by colleagues to further their own growth, many of this study's participants attended and led conferences and development activities that not only availed them of executive training but also exposed them to other best practices in community college leadership and a vast robust mentor network. With various challenges related to gender and racial bias, in addition to the universal challenges that all aspiring presidents face in navigating their careers, women of color are advised to explore all options for advancement to the presidency. These options include:

- pursuing a professorship prior to taking on leadership roles;
- considering leadership roles even if the timing is not perfect or a change of place is necessary, but unplanned;
- seeking internal and external professional development opportunities; and
- leading for the benefit of all, not just a personal agenda.

Recommendations for Aspiring Leaders. Aspiring female leaders of color who desire to climb the academic career ladder, should avail herself the opportunity to develop and refine core competencies for community college leadership, as mentioned previously (AACC, 2005). The personal narratives in this study and the pathways theme underscores the need for women to get involved in all aspects of the organization, including, academics, student services, research, and faculty governance. Aspiring

females of color should assume leadership roles within the community college system to attain these skills and competencies within the system. Doing so provides aspiring minority females the following:

- vital experiences in formal leadership, including organizational strategy, financial management, personnel management, and fundraising;
- visibility in their organization that could lead to other opportunities for advancement; and
- serve as an advocate for all students, especially disenfranchised women and minority students.

Aspiring leaders might also pursue participation in national professional development programs that affords mentees the rare opportunity to be formally partnered with a professional mentor who often remains a trusted confidant long after the professional development program concludes.

Recommendations for Search Committees and Governing Boards. From the organizational perspective, the value of implementation of mentoring programs at community colleges to identify and develop diverse leaders is not a new discovery, but these types of programs are not necessarily universally equal or comparable across the community college system in America. Based upon the findings of this study, there are four integral components of a mentoring program that could be implemented at college campuses. These components are as follows: (1) provide training in leadership skills, (2) provide participants with a national network for career opportunities, (3) encourage participants to seek leadership opportunities, and (4) encourage regional networking to improve working relationships and professional communications.

Training for leadership skills can take the form of examining and developing or refining a leadership style, to training on specific organizational components like economic development, community partnerships, financial management, stewardship and fundraising. Having a mentoring program that is associated with a national network of peers or mentors will not only benefit incumbents with professional opportunities, but it will also broaden the reach and scope of an institution. Mentoring programs are designed to train the next generation of leaders; thus it makes sense for such programs to identify and assist participants with pursuing new leadership opportunities as they arise and are applicable. Community colleges should look into regional mentoring networks, as their may be issues or nuances that are not encountered on a national level (e.g. immigration). From a systems-change approach, the benefits of successful mentoring are increased intellectual capital through shared knowledge and increased opportunities for aspiring executive leaders to develop and advance their professional career trajectory. Furthermore, leaders who have benefitted from active mentoring relationships are likely to assist other women of color striving to push beyond perceived or institutionalized limitations.

Based on the findings of this study and relevant literature, the researcher asserts that the most effective way to achieve a diverse hiring committee, a diverse composition of finalists for presidential positions, and an unbiased hiring process are to acknowledge white male privilege and mitigate the legacy of racism and sexism historically embedded in all institutions of higher education. This can be done by being intentional about the makeup of search committees, articulating the desire for a diverse applicant pool to search firms, acknowledge the institution's historical role in any disparate treatment, and

take tangible and actionable steps to communicate the type of organization an institution is presently. By doing so, the institution can create and monitor a culturally-responsive organizational culture while striving for a synergistic relationship between diversity and leadership. Diversity promotes change as an emergent agent in the structuring of higher education, while leadership promotes practices that identify diversity as a nested context for achieving balance in the social relationship between higher education and society (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006).

Perhaps an even more aggressive and appropriate strategy to increase not only the ethnic diversity but also the professional diversity of community college administrators would be to abandon the “good ol’ boy network” of hiring by actively seeking and recruiting candidates from diverse backgrounds within and outside higher education. This can be done by ensuring diverse representation on the hiring panel, advertising in platforms that are diversity friendly, conducting searches in an open and transparent manner, mitigate personal biases by acknowledging that biases exist for everyone. On a national level, community colleges are institutionalizing diversity by creating and enforcing human resource policies that monitor the hiring and retention of diverse leadership candidates. Such policies can be supported with best practices that also monitor and support the personal and professional development of diverse leadership candidates.

Succession planning. The presidential participants outlined successful endeavors for an organization to address and advance diversity in leadership that include mentoring and sponsorship initiatives providing faculty and administrators of color opportunities to fill leadership roles and development in the areas of consensus building, communication,

and overall improved confidence in ability to lead. Additionally, organizations could make diverse and representative leadership as a specific goal within their organizational strategic plan as such practices, when developed thoughtfully, take diversity from the ideal to tangible reality. Because of the cost of succession to an organization monetarily and emotionally and the short average tenure for presidents, trustees are encouraged to support professional development activities, and plan and participate in a comprehensive orientation program.

While there is no prescription for the ultimate inclusive and representative sustainable leadership plan in higher education, parallels can be drawn from the corporate sector's succession planning and adapted to higher education to ensure inclusion of and support to female leaders of color. To start, the organization requires a strong and engaged governing board who are continually exposed to multiple levels of executive leadership positions such as vice-presidents and vice-chancellors. This will introduce a level of talent to the board that traditionally they likely would not encounter. As community colleges work to develop a culture of succession management, the organization should engage in a constant and deliberate identification of internal talent, with a comparison to comparable talent external to the organization. Identification and encouragement of next generation presidents/chancellors is essential to ensure institutional memory is transferred from seasoned executives to upcoming executives. Furthermore, it legitimizes the succession management process by removing personal biases and interest from the talent management process.

Organizations striving for diverse and representative leadership have to instill these components in all facets of the organization, most notably human resources and

those involved in the recruitment of new talent. Candidates from diverse backgrounds are especially keen to the organizational culture of higher education institutions, as their success depends on their ability to thrive in any given environment. Prior to taking a risk and pursuing a presidency at a college, diverse candidates would investigate the organization's culture. A commitment to diverse leadership should be evident and inherent in all representations of the college, be that college personnel, student body, multimedia outlets, alumni/donors and athletics to name a few. One such way for an organization to attract and retain the highest quality and diverse leaders of color would be by working outward from the AACC core leadership competencies (2005) and their institutional needs to create prolific job descriptions or recruiting announcements that convey a culture valuing diverse leadership. Another strategy to mitigate institutional biases, is to write a narrative history of the institution, acknowledge any racial or gender biases in the institutions history and most importantly, highlight how the institution has evolved from its past to a comprehensive and inclusive 21st century institution. Other strategies include: training board members on diversity issues; move beyond representation to engagement, and measure diversity efforts by their impact. Once diversity is established as a strategic priority, community colleges and their governing boards will begin to see the benefits reflected their decision-making and reputation.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The areas of research on the issue of creating representative and sustainable leadership at community colleges is as vast and robust as the diversity therein. Based on the findings of this study, participants' suggestions, and review of the literature, the researcher suggests several areas for further research with regard to women of color in

executive leadership positions at community colleges. These suggested areas include expanded use of the Theory of Planned Behavior, use of longitudinal studies to understand career choices over time, surveys and mixed methodology to improve generalization, and in-depth analysis or assessment on leadership development program and their alumni with regard to learning and program outcomes.

The Career Construct Theory was useful in understanding the application of career choice in a narrative setting, but did not necessarily explain the rationale behind the career choices revealed in this study. Further examination is suggested to explore differences in personal and professional concessions made in career advancement decisions through the Theory of Planned Behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior is grounded in three interdependent variables that influence behavioral intentions and predict actual behavior of individuals. While the theory proved useful in this study, with a specific focus on the three three components that lead to behavioral intention, further research utilizing the full Theory of Planned Behavior is suggested to examine and predict the career trajectories of minority females with intentions toward the community college presidency.

Given the personal and professional concessions women of color make in attaining and maintaining executive leadership positions, a longitudinal study of career trajectories of women of color who attain doctoral degrees in education is recommended, similar to what El Sabaa (2001) studied with MBA graduates. To expand on the methodology of this and other narrative inquiry studies related to community college presidencies, quantitative surveys and mixed methodology should be explored across the

presidential and aspiring presidential populations. Utilizing quantitative surveys or a mixed methodology approach can open the data to generalization across the populations.

The two leadership development programs utilized in this study were very useful in identifying emerging leaders with an expressed interest in community college leadership. However, based upon their website, a high percentage of their alumni are not attaining or maintaining the highest leadership post. Further research on professional development programs is suggested to evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership development programs and explore whether placement or recruitment should be part of the program's scope. For additional perspective, the alumni of leadership development programs specific to community college presidencies should be studied to gain a deeper understanding of why they have not secured a presidency. Lastly, this study revealed that aspiring presidents have more diverse pathways in their administrative careers than prior generations. Additional research is suggested to examine more women on non-traditional career trajectories (e.g. no higher education experience and administrative experience without faculty experience) or other alternative routes to the community college presidency and their usefulness to the advancement of minority females looking to secure a presidency.

Exploration of these recommended areas of study will expand the knowledge gained in the current study and add value to the overall body of literature surrounding diverse and gendered leadership in community colleges. Through the use of longitudinal studies, mixed methodology and ethnographic research, much can be gleaned on the persistent gap in the makeup of community college presidents.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Female leaders of color have multiple and intersecting barriers to their success as community college presidents, but the barriers are not insurmountable. This study illuminates two things for organizations seeking to increase women of color in their executive leadership position ranks: (1) there should be more women of color recruited into the professorial and dean ranks, and (2) nontraditional scholars, such as those who ascend from non-academic areas of higher education or the public/private sectors, should be inserted in the executive career pipeline as they tend to develop core competencies for community college leadership through their diverse experiences. Additionally, aspiring female leaders of color must also be vigilant in their own advocacy, and pursue professional support and advancement through professional development networks and mentors.

The impending mass vacancies resulting from the retirement of a substantial number of executive leaders in higher education presents both a crisis and opportunity for community colleges to develop sustainable and diverse succession management strategies. These vacancies include the offices of the executive cabinet (president, vice president, associate chancellors, etc.), and will undoubtedly pose a challenge for organizations to maintain stability and institutional memory. Sustainable leadership involves not only knowing who might be next in line, but creating a viable and diverse pipeline of potential organizational leaders through professional development opportunities offered both internal and external to organizations. To ensure that this pipeline is as diverse and talented as the students and communities served, community

colleges across the United States must be deliberate and consistent in the recruitment, advancement, and support of aspiring female community college presidents of color.

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APPENDIX A

PRESIDENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION	PROMPT	PROBING QUESTIONS
Beginning	Tell me how you decided to pursue a career in academe.	What was your initial position? At the time, what were your aspirations?
	Describe the presidential leadership development programs you've attended.	What factors led to your application to the LDP of your choice? What has been especially meaningful about participating in that program? Did your experience change your career goals? Why or why not?
Middle	How would you describe the way in which your career has developed?	Are there memorable events and/or persons that contributed to your ascension to presidency?
	How do you see integrating leadership roles as part of your career?	Did you have a mentor encourage your leadership pursuits? Did your leadership cohort have any impact on your career? Have you taken any missteps?
End	As you derive meaning for your life in general, what role does your career play in that interpretation?	What has best prepared you for your presidency? What details of the journey stand out for you? Given what you know now, what is your ultimate career objective?
	What career advice would you offer future presidential aspirants?	What do you know now that you wish you knew before becoming a president?

APPENDIX B

EMERGING LEADER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION	PROMPT	PROBING QUESTIONS
Beginning	Tell me how you decided to pursue a career in academe.	What was your initial position? At the time, what were your aspirations?
	Describe the leadership development programs you've attended.	What factors led to your application to the LDP of your choice? What has been especially meaningful about participating in that program? Did your experience change your career goals? Why or why not?
Middle	How would you describe the way in which your career has developed?	Are there memorable events and/or persons that contributed to your leadership progression? Do you feel these have prepared you for a presidency?
	How do you see integrating leadership roles as part of your career?	Did you have a mentor encourage your leadership pursuits? Did your leadership cohort have any impact on your career? Have you taken any missteps?
End	As you derive meaning for your life in general, what role does your career play in that interpretation?	What has best prepared you to pursue a presidency? What details of the journey stand out for you? Given what you know now, what is your ultimate career objective?
	What career advice would you offer future higher education leaders?	What do you know now that you wish you knew before becoming a higher education administrator? What changes would you make to become a president?

APPENDIX C

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Dear [Insert Participant Name],

My name is Simone Gause, and I am doctoral student in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. My dissertation, entitled *Diversifying the Community College Presidency: A Comparative Study of Presidents and Presidential Aspirants* examines the career paths, attitudes and motivators of both sitting under-represented minority female presidents and of potential under-represented minority female senior leaders within the community college sector. The goal is to understand what attitudes, motivations and leadership perceptions minority female presidents and potential senior leaders in community colleges incorporate in their proposition of advanced leadership roles and personal career narratives.

Because you are a current or recent past president/emerging leader that meets the study profile, I invite your participation in the study, which involves submitting your curriculum vitae for review and conducting a narrative interview with me in person. The interview is expected to take no more than 60 minutes and will be scheduled at your convenience.

Here are some of the questions I would expect to discuss with you:

- Tell me how you decided to pursue a career in academe.
- Describe the presidential leadership development programs you've attended.
- How would you describe the way in which your career has developed?
- How do you see integrating leadership roles as part of your career?
- As you derive meaning for your life in general, what role does your career play in that interpretation?
- What career advice would you offer future presidential aspirants?

Because this is a qualitative study, it will be important to have each participant check the transcript of his or interview for accuracy. This review is expected to occur three to four weeks following the interview and to take you about 30 minutes to complete. Any conversation that ensues may be conducted via e-mail, although a follow-up phone conversation is also welcome.

Your data will be kept confidential and you have the choice to not be identified by

name in any subsequent publication of research findings by selecting a pseudonym, or you may choose to use your real name. You may also choose to have any institutional information listed on your CV or discussed in the interview to be de-identified. In addition to the dissertation, the findings from this study may be submitted to peer-reviewed publications and/or meeting proceedings. The informed consent document is attached with further details.

Thank you for considering participation in this research study. Although you would not be compensated for participating, I trust that you would find our conversation enriching and that you would appreciate being a part of a project that would inform researchers and professionals concerned with advancing leaders' career development.

To confirm your participation in this study, please send your reply to sfgause@email.sc.edu or 803-777-8602 within two weeks. Should you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me or my major professor, Dr. Katherine Chaddock at chaddock@mailbox.sc.edu.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Administration - Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership and Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

APPENDIX D

RESPONSES TO INVITATION FEEDBACK

E-mail to the Affirmative Respondent

Dear (Insert Participant Name),

Thank you for agreeing to participate in *Diversifying the Community College Presidency: A Comparative Study of Presidents and Presidential Aspirants*. The purpose of this message is to confirm your participation in this study.

Data will be collected through a review of your curriculum vitae (CV) (or your administrative résumé) and an in-person interview with you. During the next month, the total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is approximately one hour for the interview and 30 minutes to review the transcript generated by our discussion.

If you could please reply with your availability for a one-hour interview, the best number at which to reach you, and attach your CV to the reply, I will write back to confirm the interview day and time.

Thank you in advance for your participation, and I eagerly look forward to our interview.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Administration - Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership and Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

E-mail to Declined Respondent

Dear (Insert Participant Name),

Thank you for letting me know that you are not available to participate in the narrative inquiry I am conducting about the career and leadership experiences of under-represented minority female leaders in higher education. I appreciate your time.

All the best to you for your career.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Administration - Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership and Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

Reminder to Non-respondents

Dear (Insert Participant Name),

As a minority female community college president/emerging leader, you have been invited to participate in a dissertation research study on attitudes, motivations and leadership potential in higher education administration. The goal is to understand how under-represented minority females incorporate the proposition of advanced leadership roles into their personal career narratives. Thus, I hope you will consider participating.

Participation involves submitting your curriculum vitae (CV) (or résumé) for review and conducting a narrative interview with me via telephone. The interview is expected to take no more than 60 minutes and will be scheduled at your convenience. As a follow-up, I will ask that you check the transcript of your interview for accuracy. This transcript review is expected to occur three to four weeks following the interview and take approximately 30 minutes. Any conversation that ensues may be conducted via e-mail, although a follow-up phone conversation is also welcome.

To confirm your participation in this study, please respond to this message within two weeks. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Administration - Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership and Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

APPENDIX E

CONFIRMATION OF SCHEDULED INTERVIEW

Dear [Insert Participant Name],

Thank you for offering your availability for our interview. I also appreciate receiving your curriculum vitae. (Alternatively, if needed: As part of the protocol for the study, the review of your curriculum vitae is supposed to occur prior to our phone call. If you could please send it at your earliest convenience, I would greatly appreciate receiving it.)

I would like to confirm our interview scheduled for (insert date, time and location). I will plan to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to our scheduled interview. The informed consent is attached for your information and review. If you have any questions about it, please let me know.

Thank you again for agreeing to participating in this study. I am looking forward to meeting you in person and hearing about your career path and considerations.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Administration - Higher Education Administration
Department of Educational Leadership and Policies
College of Education
University of South Carolina
sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

APPENDIX F

REMINDER OF UPCOMING INTERVIEW

Dear [Insert Participant Name],

This is a reminder of our interview on (insert date, time and location). I will plan to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to our scheduled interview. Here are some of the questions I would like to discuss you:

- Tell me how you decided to pursue a career in academe.
- Describe the presidential leadership development programs you've attended.
- How would you describe the way in which your career has developed?
- How do you see integrating leadership roles as part of your career?
- As you derive meaning for your life in general, what role does your career play in that interpretation?
- What career advice would you offer future presidential aspirants?

Thank you for participating in this study. I am looking forward to our upcoming interview.

Sincerely,

Simone Gause, Doctoral Candidate
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sfgause@email.sc.edu
803-777-8602

APPENDIX G

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL DIVERSITY STUDY
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

January 2016

Dear Research Participant,

You are being asked to take part in a research study on diversity within the community college presidency. The researcher is asking you to take part because you expressed an interest to participate in this study. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to explore the paths, motivations and perceptions of sitting presidents and emerging leaders/aspiring presidents who are under-represented minority females in the community college sector of higher education. You must be an under-represented female community college president or under-represented female emerging leader in the community college sector to take part in this study.

What we will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, the researcher will conduct an in-person interview with you. The interview will include questions about your attitudes, motivations, leadership perceptions and career paths as they relate to the community college presidency. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes to complete. With your permission, the researcher would also like to audio record the interview.

Risks and benefits: There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your career story to be sensitive. Your reflections on your past experiences may dredge up sensitive circumstances. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study.

Compensation: There is no agreement to compensate for participation in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Your answers will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private, in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. In any sort of report made public, the researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you or your institution. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. If the

interview is audio recorded, the researcher will destroy the recording after it has been transcribed, which is anticipated to be within two months post interview.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is your decision and completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Simone Gause, Ph.D. candidate in Educational Administration – Higher Education from the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Simone Gause at sfgause@email.sc.edu or at 1-803-777-8602. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 803-777-7095 or access their website at <http://www.orc.research.sc.edu>.

Participation: Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please submit your preferred contact information to schedule the interview. Once you submit your contact information, you will be contacted to schedule the in-person interview. If you have any questions about participating after you have submitted your contact information, please contact me at the number listed below.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. By submitting my contact information to schedule an interview, I hereby consent to take part in the study.

Please print a copy of this form to keep for your records.

With kind regards,

Simone Gause

Simone Gause
College of Education
University of South Carolina
1-803-777-8602
sfgause@email.sc.edu

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND SCRIPT

Interview Protocol

I. Setting

These interviews will be conducted in-person at the participants preferred location. The principal investigator will travel to each participant to complete the interview. As a last resort, interviews may be conducted by telephone or other virtual avenues.

II. Introductions

- a. Reiteration of informed consent—questions/answers (throughout)
- b. Verbal consent by participant
- c. Identification of pseudonym, if desired
- d. Activation of digital recorder
- e. Re-confirmation of verbal consent and re-iteration of pseudonym

III. Interview

- a. Interview prompts and probing questions are outlined for the narrative discussion.

Interview Script

Name _____ Title _____ Date _____

Hello [Insert Participant Name],

RESEARCHER: As you know, I'm conducting this interview as part of my dissertation at the University of South Carolina. The purpose of the project is to examine the career paths and considerations of community college presidents/presidential aspirants in higher education with a goal to understand the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of leadership, and incorporate the proposition of advanced leadership roles into their personal career narratives.

RESEARCHER: What I've found in the literature is that there are too few qualified leaders willing to pursue a college or university presidency or other senior level leadership role at a college or university. Even though potential pathways for traditional leadership trajectories in higher education exist, we don't know the reasons individuals accept leadership roles as part of a career trajectory from either the traditional or non-traditional paths.

RESEARCHER: To investigate this issue, I'm interviewing ten to fifteen minority female community college presidents and ten to fifteen minority female emerging leaders aspiring to the community college presidency to understand their career paths and considerations. The interview takes about one hour. The interview focuses on the attitudes, motivations and leadership perceptions that mold your individual career story and how you incorporate the proposition of advanced leadership roles into your career. Do you have any questions before we begin?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: *Reiterate informed consent language.*

RESEARCHER: Are you willing provide verbal consent?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: Would you like to provide a pseudonym for confidentiality purposes or to retain the use of your given name?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: *Turn on recording device.*

RESEARCHER: Today's narrative inquiry on minority female leadership in community colleges takes place on (insert date and time). Please state the name you'd like to use for this interview?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: For compliance reasons, please confirm you have read the informed consent documentation, and affirm that you are consenting to participate in the study?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: Great! Let's get started...(Follow interview prompts and probing questions in Appendix A or B)

RESEARCHER: That concludes the semi-structured interview format. Do you have any additional comments you feel would add value to the research study?

PARTICIPANT: (Await response)

RESEARCHER: Thank you for your informative story. I do appreciate the time and insights you offered about your career. Good-bye.

APPENDIX I
THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Dear [Insert Participant Name],

Thank you for participating in my dissertation study, entitled *Diversifying the Community College Presidency: A Comparative Study of Presidents and Presidential Aspirants*.

I so appreciate your time and insight into your career and leadership experiences during our interview as well as your willingness to submit your curriculum vitae and review the interview transcript. (Insert a unique point about that person's interview).

Again, thanks for your participation. All the best for your future leadership endeavors.

Sincerely,

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