INTERSECTIONAL LEADERSHIP: A CRITICAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP BY BLACK WOMEN IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

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Daria-Yvonne J. Graham, M.Ed.

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Name: Graham, Daria-Yvonne J.

APPROVED BY:

_____
Molly Schaller, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____
Michele Welkener, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor

_____
Mary Ziskin, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor

_____
Leslie Picca, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor

_____
Kevin R. Kelly, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education and Health Sciences

ABSTRACT

INTERSECTIONAL LEADERSHIP: A CRITICAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP BY BLACK WOMEN IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Name: Graham, Daria-Yvonne
University of Dayton

Advisor: Dr. Molly Schaller

Little research exists that centers the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators in higher education. The challenges and barriers that exist for African American women student affairs administrators are complex and directly connected to the history of slavery, race and racism in the United States. Concepts such as mentorship, success, and leadership are situated in normative practices informed by White narratives and privileged vantage points.

The aim of this qualitative study is to illuminate how the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions support or contradict leadership models often used as frameworks for development and strategy. The research questions are as follows: What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender? How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators? And how do the experiences of African American women within

student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?

The research questions were answered using critical narrative to provide voice to a marginalized population. My dissertation challenges colleges and Universities to consider the impact of using White narratives to standardize behaviors and strategies across all social identities. The findings also urges universities to address environments that continue the oppression and exploitation of Black women student affairs administrators in higher education.

Dedicated to my father who knew before I did, my mother who made it so, my family for allowing me to love them, and to my best friend who keeps holding my hand.

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I cannot in this space sufficiently express my gratitude for the amount of support that I have received, but I will try. First, I want to express my gratitude to God who has been unchanging and unfailing. I am blessed beyond measure and fully recognize where those blessings come from. I appreciate that His plan for my life has included this experience and its impact has gone far beyond academic.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A colleague once told me that my leadership style was very strategic and that it seemed that I was always very intentional in my actions. I believe this style is a requirement for me as a Black woman who works in the field of student affairs in higher education at a predominantly White institution (PWI). Minoritized people often have to navigate professional environments that cater to dominant White culture. In order to feel safe, thrive, and achieve promotion, people with subordinated identities must be creative, multi-talented, resourceful, and imperturbable. I countered to my colleague that some may see my style as a leadership strategy; however, I see my style as one necessary for persistence and endurance.

In our conversations, popular leadership models and concepts have surfaced. For example, the model offered by Robert Greenleaf (1977) has not only surfaced as a tool for conversations with students both individually and within group settings, but the pillars and principles of the model are also referred to in campus marketing and messaging materials. When discussing leadership models that institutions use to situate their definitions of leadership, I noticed that a difference in interpretation and possible usage of the models was very clear. Concepts that provided some with ideals of liberation, renewed challenge, and encouragement, landed on others as burdensome, hegemonic, and

as sources of oppression. Our conversation further ignited my interest in how women in higher education perceive concepts of leadership.

Concepts of leadership are often infused in a variety of initiatives and programs, particularly in the field of higher education. Educators not only use the word to describe our perceptions of individuals and their behavior, but we also use it in relation to systems, frameworks, and learning outcomes. Many areas in higher education have made leadership the foundation of student development strategies and programs including orientation, training, and community building initiatives. Unlike specialized areas such as health and wellness or academic areas, leadership has become a subject that is addressed across the academy and specialized for the respective audience. The term now reflects the personal characteristics of a leader and the measurable abilities necessary to complete tasks. The term "leadership" has become generalized and often requires users to confirm the intended meaning within the context it is being used (Bass, 1995; Gardner, 1995; Harvard, 1986; Wood, 2009).

In my dialogues with colleagues and students regarding leadership, I have become aware of aspects of current popular theories and models of leadership that are presented as universal even if they are not accepted as such. Common leadership models offer set definitions or characteristics of leadership that at times do not align with the experiences of those with marginalized identities. In *Rethinking the "L" Word: The revolution of research on leadership* (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006), the authors offer an expansion of the concept of leadership to include connections to culture, gender and race. They argue that dimensions of a person's identity could have unintended impact on the repercussions of one's leadership style. The use of popular leadership practices could

lead a person to experience stagnation, detriment, or harm depending on one's social identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) and one's environment. Outcomes of the use of formulaic leadership strategies may vary as the results are not immune from the influences that cultural norms, social identity, history, and personal experiences have on organizational climates and the individuals within them. The environment of higher education would seem to be an ideal place for an individual to learn about and exercise leadership styles, but this may not be the case if the institution is not aware of the presence of systems of White supremacy, hegemony, privilege and oppression, particularly as it relates to marginalized identities and the concepts of social justice, inclusion, and equity.

My own experience in higher education birthed my interest in leadership philosophies and models and their application to diverse populations. More specifically, I am interested in understanding similarities in approaches to leadership for African American women administrators in student affairs in higher education. Both the deliberate and unintended messages and challenges that accompany working in the field of student affairs can be taxing especially for certain populations that lack applicable leadership strategies. This will be explored further in the next section.

Statement of the Problem

Minimal research exists regarding the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators in higher education. While quantitative data exist regarding the demographics of those who work as administrators in higher education ("Gender, Race," 2016), little research has been conducted to understand the experiences of non-faculty, African American women while considering work environment, relationships,

strategies, and personal impact. Similarly, little research exists that reports the details of their positions, compensation, years of experience, contributions and institutional characteristics. The successes and challenges of African American women in higher education have been mostly reported from the perspective of African American women who have occupied higher level administrative and faculty positions (Collins, 2001; Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2008; McKay, 1997; Patitu & Hinton, 2004; Patton & Catching, 2009; Weems, Jr., 2003; Williams, 2001) thereby ignoring the experiences of African American non-faculty women and rendering their voice virtually silent in the literature.

As higher education prepares individuals to be critical thinkers who are active citizens in a global community, it is reasonable to address the experiences of individuals as part of a community within higher education and the impact that their group membership may have on their ability to function within their community. Identity is connected to individuals' experiences and how those experiences form how they view the world. Acknowledging the diversity of culture, history, and social construct within a campus community assists the community in having a more critical understanding of the world and the multiplicity within it.

Master narratives are one of the tools used to analyze a community's culture and climate. A master narrative is considered the story that represents what is factual or reality for all while counter narratives offer alternative perspectives to dominance and a privileged standpoint (Zamudio, Russell, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011). To be considered an accurate narrative, the narrative must include a critical perspective that incorporates both the dominant and non-dominant account. A more inclusive narrative can serve as a stable

tool to address inequity and multiple recollections or perceptions of one interaction or environment.

Likewise, commonality can be beneficial as well. Knowledge and practices may be unique to individuals; however, similarities within a group's experiences present opportunities to consider themes that are specific to certain groups. The experiences of African American women in higher education vary with each person, yet commonalities persist. Alienation, a lack of mentorship, and a chilly climate are all familiar for Black women in higher education (Collins, 2002; Harper, 2012; Steward, Jackson Sr., & Jackson, 1990; Tierney & Bensimon, 2002; Turner, 2002).

Considering the narratives of those who work in higher education, identifying common themes in the narrative of diverse groups is critical given the focus on diversity and inclusivity across university campuses (Frenk, 2016; Schmidt, 2016). This approach also equips those within the field to address concerns and issues so that ultimately the experiences of students are strengthened. Students' ability to see their reflection and share social identities with others within the institution further connects them to the institution (Fleming, 1984; Weems, Jr., 2003). Integration and institutional connection increase students' sense of belonging and promotes academic success (Fleming, 1984). The student experience is directly connected to institutional demographics and the impact of institutional climate on faculty, staff, and students.

This study will add to the limited body of work that highlights the voice of a group that should be included in higher education's overall account. This qualitative research project will focus on the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at PWIs and their perceptions of a popular leadership model. I will use a

critical approach to narrative inquiry. This approach is appropriate and advantageous due to the structure of the research and the racialized and gendered constructs that have impacted the performance and practice of African American women in higher education. Through interviews and story-telling, this narrative inquiry will illuminate how the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at PWIs support or contradict leadership models often used as frameworks for development and strategy. This study will center a group that has not often been invited to share their experiences. My interest in the topic comes from 18 years of experience as one who identifies as an African American woman and works as a student affairs administrator at a predominantly White, Catholic, private institution. My years of experience may serve as beneficial to the study as they could serve to build a rapport with the participants. In contrast, my years of experience could serve as a source of bias due to my own experiences. Precautions to avoid bias and to protect the voices of the participants were employed in the data analysis.

Personal Statement

I am currently in my eighteenth year working in student affairs in the field of higher education. While those years have had their challenges, they have also been filled with rewards such as supporting and challenging students and creating relationships with both students and colleagues that have lasted for years. I have learned many lessons during my tenure that have influenced the content of my work and how I function as a student affairs professional. I have worked in several areas in student affairs including positions in housing and residence life, the student union, the office of multicultural affairs, and leadership development. In my current role, I have examined leadership

theories, including the academy's acceptance of leadership models that are prescribed and offered as concrete, yet rarely offer multiple perspectives on how they may be alternately viewed or executed.

As the director of student leadership programs, part of my charge is to offer leadership development from a holistic perspective and to create leadership development opportunities that consider multiple identities, the impact of socialization, and one that situates social justice at the core. In executing this charge, I asked myself the following questions. Who developed the leadership models that we espouse? How have the identities of those who created popular leadership models influenced the models themselves? How might these theories and models be received differently based on a person's diverse social context, such as one's history, social identities, or experience of and connection to current societal issues? Furthermore, I questioned: what are the experiences of diverse populations with leadership models that might not have been created with their particular identity in mind?

My passion for women's issues stems from not only my own identity as a woman of color, but the lack of research that highlights the experiences of non-faculty women of color within higher education. The option of tenure alone creates a significant difference between the faculty experience and the experience of student affairs administrators. The intersection of additional identities such as race and ethnicity compound the experience and makes the stories of African American women student affairs administrators more complex.

Leadership Theory

There are many leadership models used in higher education to describe the characteristics of an ideal leader. Students, faculty, and staff can find leadership themes incorporated in university vision statements, marketing strategies, and learning design. Individuals also often complete inventories or personality assessments aligned with leadership models to gain a better understanding of their skills and talents or areas of growth that they may need to address. The leadership model that was addressed in this study was the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1977). While there are several popular leadership models used within higher education, Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1995; Spears, 2004) was used as a framework to consider the experiences of African American women at PWIs due to the connections it makes between service and effective leadership, and the historical implications that this model has for African American women.

Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) urged for the consideration of history and culture as it relates to the study of leadership. There has been a shift from defining leadership through the lens of power and task completion to that of service to others. Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) is a popular leadership model that emphasizes the leader's positionality as essential to one's ability to be a successful leader. This model maintains that the position of servant to others should be a precursor or requirement for leaders, and that personal gain should come second to service to others. Greenleaf (1977) discussed how service can be a description of organizations and the individuals within them, and should be infused in practices. Servant leadership is often referred to in higher education in orientations, professional staff trainings, and evaluation

assessments, and presented as a universal model to inform leadership action. Elements of the model such as putting others before self, relinquishing power, and embracing mistakes could have a variety of repercussions for the individual performing these principles.

Key Terms

The following key terms used in this study were:

African American – term used as the racial and ethnic description for individuals from the African diaspora and who most identify with Black culture. For the purpose of this study, the terms African American and Black are used interchangeably.

Diverse Populations – diversity of social identities within a group that includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and other identities (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009).

Dominant Identities – racial or ethnic groups who have the greatest power and resources in a society (also called a majority group) (Feagin & Feagin, 1999).

Intersectionality – the intersection of multiple dimensions of identity that shape an individual's understanding, experiences, social position, and world view (Crenshaw, 1995b).

Student Affairs Administrators – those personally charged to support students' personal development and to address student needs including activities outside of the classroom, student conduct, campus safety, and community building (Glover, 2012; Pope, 2000). Positions could include deans of students, department directors, department assistant directors, and program coordinators.

Marginalized/Subordinated Identities – groups who historically have less political, economic, social power and advantages and experience oppression at a societal level due to their social identities (McIntosh, 1989).

Predominantly White Institutions – Unlike minority institutions, the term predominantly White institutions (PWI) is not recognized by the U. S. Department of Education, yet it is a commonly used term to describe historically White colleges and universities. The U.S. Department of Education identifies "minority" institutions as colleges and universities that serve a substantial percentage of students who identify as other than White (U. S. Department of Education, n.d.).

Social Identity – one's beliefs, values, and connections to others. The connections are due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual orientation (Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003).

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this study was to present a critical narrative of the perceptions of the Servant Leadership Model by African American women who work as student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions. The perspective of African American women was intentionally situated as germane experiences from an under-represented population in the field of higher education. It addressed their experiences and their perceptions of how they resist, transform, subvert or accommodate popular leadership models. Specifically, this study provided space to illuminate connections between culture, gender, race, and leadership models for African American women in higher education.

Research Questions

The questions at the center of this research project were:

1. What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender?
2. How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators?
3. How do the experiences of African American women within student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?

The goal for this study was to present a critical narrative of the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education and the influence that their social identities have had on the possible application of leadership models, whether intentionally or not. The study examined their experiences with a critical lens on the racial context of society, the institution of higher education, and present-day leadership models.

For the purpose of this research project, the definition of social identity used was by Torres, Jones, and Renn (2009) and included one's beliefs, values, and connections to others. Social groups include race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual orientation (Torres et al., 2003). When there are multiple social identities that have experienced historical oppression, the intersection of these identities must be considered in a holistic manner, and not as separate independent identities. The intersection of identities also

required an interrogation of structures of inequality and their impact (Thornton Dill & Zambrana, 2013).

Potential Significance

The experiences of African American women faculty have been the focus for many researchers (Bass & Faircloth, 2011; Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2008; Moses, 1997). The stories of African American faculty detail challenges in a manner where universities can identify and address equity and climate issues. Research regarding the experiences of African American student affairs administrators from a critical approach serves the same purpose. The critical approach allows for the milieu or social context of this population to be studied.

Although research has been conducted on the experience of African American women faculty, less research has been completed regarding the experiences of African American female student affairs administrators. In *How Race Matters*, Sulé (2011) addresses the experiences of tenured Black female faculty at predominantly White universities. Informed by Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) and Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000) theory, she conducted a qualitative study to explore how race serves as a resource and vehicle for considering the experiences of Black female faculty. She found that the participants worked in environments that did not match and denied their experiences. Race had played a significant role in their engagement and advancement.

Critical narrative inquiry has been conducted in similar research regarding racial fatigue for African American female faculty (Harley, 2008); recruitment, hiring and retention (Mertz, 2011); and success strategies for African American female faculty (Bass

& Faircloth, 2011). Many other studies exist; however, Yakaboski and Donahoo (2011) confirm the lack of research regarding women of color in student affairs administration in their text *In (Re)Search of Women in Student Affairs Administration*.

Furthermore, little research exists that considers leadership models from the perspective of individuals with marginalized identities. Leadership models are often offered and/or used as definite formulas that, when correctly performed, result in good relationships with followers, successful completion of tasks, and increased dedication and commitment. Some leadership models may offer challenges with execution, but they are generalized and fail to address that members of some groups may significantly struggle to follow the proposed formula. More specifically, individuals may experience mental, social, or psychological harm, not recognizing that the use of the model as a universal recipe for leadership only applies to specific populations. Along with adding to the breadth of study for African American women in higher education, this study will strengthen the field of study for leadership theory and development.

Framework

Foundational research on race and gender from a critical lens provides groundwork to consider the stories of African American women student affairs administrators. Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995), Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004a) together provide a framework to situate the experiences of the participants. Theories on race and gender from a critical frame allows for a broader consideration of leadership by situating the definitions through the assumption of a social structure of power and privilege. The subsections that follow explain and support this point further.

Race Theories

Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) establishes how structures of power and oppression are systemic and have caused certain populations to experience more privilege and access than others. The use of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) shows how systemic structures of oppression have impacted the experience of African American females in higher education.

The theory of Black Feminist Thought (Hill Collins, 2000) supports the impact of oppression and suppression of African American female student affairs administrators. As African American women student affairs administrators share their experiences, the use of Black Feminist Thought (Hill Collins, 2000) as a framework helps to manifest the impact of a devalued status, a feeling of isolation, and negative perceptions on African American women student affairs administrators.

Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004a), a feminist critical theory, challenges the definition of normative behavior and values an alternate experience in a dominant system. The point of reference of the "other" now becomes the central point instead of one on the perimeter. Furthermore, Standpoint Theory allows social location to become a resource and just as educational and relevant as research conducted with assumed impartiality.

The use of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995), Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004a) also provides for the possibility of positive experiences for African American women student affairs administrators. Critical Race Theory has been used to understand inequity within higher education by illuminating the fact that race remains a social issue (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002).

Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000) and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004a) underpin the pursuit to understand the ways race and gender influence the lived experiences of African American women specific to their professional role and type of institution. One of the positive experiences includes the act of mentoring. Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) and Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000) both speak to the importance of the voice of oppressed groups. The combination of having a voice and building coalitions, as described in both theories, sets a foundation for the role of mentoring. Studies have addressed the power of mentoring for women of color and the dynamics of race and gender inclusivity (Harley, 2008; Jean-Marie & Brooks, 2011; Patton & Catching, 2009). Gaëtane and Brooks (2011) argued that mentoring for women of color in the academy can be formal or informal in nature and is defined by such terms as encouraging, empowering, and one-on-one relationships.

Chapter Summary

Given the assumptive nature of leadership models and the lack of leadership research through the lens of Black women student affairs administrators in higher education, this study illuminates any implications on the leadership perceptions, behaviors, and strategies for Black women student affairs administrators in higher education. Specifically, racialized components of the Servant Leadership model are exposed. The use of critical perspectives, theories, and methodologies provide a feasible foundation for which to consider the counterstories of a marginalized population.

The following chapter presents a literature review of germane literature about (a) notions of systemic racism, (b) theories that center the narrative of Black women, (c) historical and contextual experiences of Black women administrators in higher education,

and lastly, (d) popular leadership theories in higher education. Discussion of the research design and methodology are offered in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents a joint profile of the research participants, their institutions, and the data. Chapter 5 offers the findings through a thematic analysis. Chapter 6 addresses implications for theory, research, practice, and leadership models and lays the foundation to adjust how leadership theories are constructed and imposed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a foundation for considering the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators in higher education via a review of the literature relevant to the topic. This chapter also recognizes and considers studies regarding this subject. I will define the Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) model in this chapter as well.

Systemic Racism

The system of racism structured in the United States sets a framework to understand the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators in higher education. Feagin (2010) notes how slavery was and continues to be the foundation in politics, the economy, and race relations. The system of racism continues to permeate political, organizational and educational structures as White supremacist views are considered the norm or master narrative. Dated to the creation of race, the impact of race directly relates to race being a factor in the foundation of society in the United States.

Historical events lay the underpinning for the perceptions and understanding of current structures. Debates regarding taxation, politics, and the economy have racial tones as the current structure for most institutions within our society were created to ensure the

rule of White men. The slave structure can be seen in the Constitution, and because there is no new Constitution, we live with the remains (Feagin, 2010). The legacy of slavery has thus created a system of racism and oppression. Systemic racism is overt and covert in power structures, ideologies, attitudes, and actions (Feagin, 2010).

When considering systemic racism and the influence of past events on current experiences, race, and specifically the racial hierarchy, is not an additional subject to culture and climate, but it impacts every part of society. This allows the realization that racism is not an illness, but a part of the fabric of our society. This realization situates racism as a consideration for colleges and universities to consider when understanding the experiences of African Americans within their institutions. There is no longer a need to debate whether systemic racism exists, but rather, how systemic racism impacts the faculty, staff, and student experience.

Several theories allow the experiences of African American women to be considered as part of the core of the dialogue instead of supplementary. Specifically, Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004a) promote the experiences of African American women to be at the center instead of being lost in the peripheral.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995a; Crenshaw, 1995b; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011) stems from the field of law, as laws barred racial and gender discrimination. Instead of providing protection for women of color, the law required identities to be separate and in isolation of each other. In Critical Race Theory, Crenshaw (1995) provides a foundation to consider how

multiple identities can present challenges as they relate to differences in understanding and experiences. For example, the intersectionality of race and gender presents an additional lens with which to consider the construction of society and the complex experiences of underrepresented groups. Critical Race Theory identifies White supremacy as the normal framework and validates the perceptions of those with marginalized identities.

In Critical Race Theory, Crenshaw (1995), focuses on women of color and sexual violence. She provides a foundation to consider how multiple identities can present challenges as it relates to intragroup differences. The intersectionality of race and gender presents multiple lenses with which to consider the construction of society and the multifarious experiences of underrepresented groups. Crenshaw maintains that strategies to support women of color must consider where systems of race, gender, and class intersect. The convergence of identities creates its own set of challenges (Crenshaw, 1995).

Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) provides a context to reconsider leadership assumptions and the unintended repercussions of adopting theories that use the majority experience as the center. Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) establishes that structures of power and oppression are systemic and have caused certain populations to experience more privilege and access than others.

There are five basic principles of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). First, based on hegemony and systematic structures, racism is normal and a common experience for most people of color in the United States. The act may not be intentional, but on the contrary, because structures have been created with a White frame,

racism is often inherent. By using the White experience as the focus and point of reference, racism is often unacknowledged and thus difficult to tackle. Second, the interests of both Whites and Blacks are often met due to "interest convergence" (Bell, 1980, p. 523). Interest convergence is the concept that progress is often motivated by the advancement or benefit to Whites. Benefits to Blacks are merely residue or a by-product. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), the third theme is race is a social construct because it is not biological. This was an important consideration as we create leadership development theories based on shared and similar physical traits. A fourth principle of Critical Race Theory addresses the individuality of a person's experience based on the intersection of one's social identities. There is no singular experience for every person no matter his or her identity. Experiences are varied, and while there may be similarities, they will never be identical. Finally, Critical Race Theory maintains that the distinctive histories of underrepresented populations and their experiences with oppression provide a counter-narrative that is often missing because it is seen as external to the "common" narrative.

Through Crenshaw's (1995) research, we are able to maintain that no notion of leadership is immune from social systems that create privilege and power. Furthermore, definitions and models of leadership must consider where systems of race, gender, and class converge as a norm versus considering them as addendums or exceptions to the standard. The convergence of social identities creates its own challenges for leadership concepts and models. A leadership model should not be considered universal if it does not consider social identity implications. Using Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) as a lens for leadership theories may show how the role of the environment and the

history of targeted groups are inadvertent factors of leadership development, perceptions, and practices.

Black Feminist Thought

In Black Feminist Thought, Hill Collins (2000) argues that there is a system of social control that has denied access to education, advancement, and resources to women of color. In doing so, a White male elite structure has been created as a result (Hill Collins, 2000). With no presence of women of color, the White male environment grows and expands. White male interests and worldviews become dominant. Ultimately, this system relegates women of color to subordinated roles and oppressive environments.

Hill Collins (2000) further submits that through the absence of dissent from women of color (and allies), they have inadvertently created a climate of collaboration in their own victimization. Women of color have colluded in their own oppression. The lack of dissent ultimately causes suppression. There are three patterns of suppression: omitting Black feminist ideas as normalized principles, placating the need for diversity thus changing little about performance, and failing to incorporate and socialize Black feminist ideas.

Hill Collins (2000) details the contradictions between dominant ideologies of American women and the devalued status of African American women. She shows the dispute between what is expected of a woman and what is expected of an African American woman. She mentions society's expectation that women perform as passive and fragile, stay-at-home mothers; the highest call being motherhood. This foundation for gender analysis is opposite of the assumptions and rules for African American women including treating African American women as a workforce for heavy labor, the

expectation for Black women to work outside of the home, and the pressure to use birth control. She terms this dichotomy as an "outsider-within," (Hill Collins, 2002, p. 468) and references the pressures of intersecting subordinate identities.

Harley (2008) likens the experiences of African American women in higher education to the position of house and field slaves. African American women have been relegated in position and in the type of work. She compares teaching to child care, research and scholarship to field work, and service to house slavery (Harley, 2008). The stress and physical consequences are directly compared to post traumatic stress disorder as African American women in higher education are allowed to be present in an environment but rendered powerless.

In Black Feminist Thought, Hill Collins (2000) maintains that Black feminist theory is not homogenous. There are a variety of experiences and ideas that form Black Feminist Thought. The theory is not objective, but rather a variety of views and standpoints that are fused together to create a new consciousness that considers the everyday experiences of Black women.

Hill Collins (2000) identifies three themes for Black women: oppression, work, and family. The first theme is the fact that work outside of the home for Black women is often situated in the oppression of intersecting underrepresented identities. She not only mentions racial discrimination but also the types of jobs often occupied by Black women. The second theme is lack of value placed on Black women's work in the home. There is little value placed on keeping families together and the education Black women provide in the home. Black women are caught between the expectation to work outside of the home and the separation that happens within the home due to their absence.

Standpoint Theory

There are gaps between the actual and ideal relations and between knowledge and power. Using the "outsider within" frame, the aspects of social relations that are not accessible can be identified (Harding, 2007). By shifting the origin of examination, a researcher can identify holes within research and theories.

Furthermore, the act of marginalization provides a perspective that is unique to those with privilege. The use of local knowledge systems can be experienced as a privilege and cause a restraint or bias to the research process (Harding, 2007).

Harding (2007) compares the androcentric understandings of gender relations to the roles of workers and bosses. Men are seen as the boss, designers, managers, and heads, while women are seen as workers and reproductive and productive laborers. The impact of androcentric research legitimized exploitation, domination, and oppression. A feminist standpoint provides the ability to shift the framework from dominant establishments to women's everyday lives (Harding, 2007). Standpoint Theory critiques objectivity as a White male dominant stance. It acknowledges that objectivity is code for White, male, heterosexual norms.

The traditional scientific method excludes the voices of the marginalized. By doing so, race and sex biased values and interests may not be identified. This not only impacts what should be studied, but also the methodology and the hypothesis. While an inquiry that begins from the perspective of women's lives addresses a missing aspect of research, it is often the recipient of much critique. Yet a feminist standpoint allows us to identify variables that were possibly missed by the scientific method (Harding, 2004a, 2004b). Critics of Feminist Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2007) see the research

conducted to design this theory as futile, yet as a framework, it addresses context, conduct, interpretation, and information dissemination procedures.

Using Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995), Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2007) as lenses show how the role of the environment and the history of the targeted groups are obligatory factors of the participant's experiences and how they provide a hidden curriculum for the population this study engages. The opportunities for African American women to structure environments that acknowledge and celebrate their voices, views, and value structures have been minimal. The White paradigms created and in which these women occupy have made their perspective unwelcomed or perceived as offensive dissention. Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995), Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2007) shift the focus which allows for better understanding, enlightenment, and a catalyst to change our environments.

African American Women Student Affairs Administrators

African American women are an important group to examine due to the size of their presence in higher education. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (2016), there are a greater number of women (55 percent) than men who serve as college executives, administrators, and managers within higher education. The study states that the percentage of women at private, four-year institutions is 55% as well (Chronicle, 2016). The numbers of underrepresented populations are less. Members of minority groups make up only approximately 21 percent of all college executives, administrators, and managers. Blacks are more highly represented (17.30%) among college administrators than among faculty at all colleges and universities. When comparing to

private institutions, there are 8.1 percent Black executives, administrators, and managerial staff at private, four-year institutions. While the Chronicle of Higher Education (2016) did not report the percentage of executives, administrators, and managers that identify as Black women, the conclusion can be drawn that Black women do not hold the majority of these roles, and therefore, the research of those in these roles is not a complete reflection of the experiences of all administrators in higher education.

The research on Black females in higher education is scarce, especially on the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White colleges and universities. Some literature does exist on the importance of diversity in leadership (Lloyd-Jones, 2011), mentoring (Gaëtane Jean-Marie & Brooks, 2011), the role of faith and spirituality, and life balance (Hinton, 2001).

Holmes (2003) takes a pointed look at the impact of gender and race on the experience of African American women student affairs administrators in PWIs. The remnants of the contrived images of African American women and their influence on the treatment of Black women persist as they were often seen as objects instead of people. This aligns with the experiences of African American women in higher education as they are often called upon to support students, provide mentorship, and maintain high visibility (Harley, 2008). Reid Wolfman (1997) states, "In White institutions, Black women administrators often are ghettoized in low-status positions; they may be squeezed between White institutional power and Black students to whom they provide services and who often place heavy emotional and unrealistic demands on them" (p. 163). Additional burdens include reconciling self and others' perceptions versus reality, managing the act of being undermined, and addressing feelings of fatigue and exhaustion (Holmes, 2003).

Although legislation and other advances have shifted access to fields and positions, access and an increase in representation have not served as a cure-all. The numbers of African Americans in higher education remain small and the climate remains toxic (Holmes, 2003).

Historical Context

Because education has been used as a socialization and liberation tool, the history of Black women and the academy must be considered as it has a direct impact on the current experience and stories of women. History is scattered with racist expressions that Black women have had to navigate. White protestant missionaries were key participants in the education of Blacks, and as a result, a White paradigm was used to educate Blacks and to set expectations on behavior (Collins, 2001). Educated Blacks were expected to have a different conduct and set of morals than those of Whites because they were seen as property.

With the changes in laws and legislation, the shift in societal norms also included a shift in how Black women were considered. Black women were seen as the vehicle to raise and to transform the socialization of Blacks (Hill Collins, 2001). Socialization through education came under the façade of an increase in social status. Education was a tool for Blacks to improve the current social condition and the future one as well. Education seemed to promise benefits in treatment and income, yet that promise was not fulfilled across race, gender and socioeconomic status. The benefits of education were neither equitable nor equal. Issues important to the education and the progression of Black women in higher education were in many ways unique to this population. First, the positive relationships between education and income or between education and

occupation were not guaranteed. A disparity in advancement, treatment, and support continued to exist between Black women and their counterparts (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Other factors linked to Black women's social status included the behaviors of her family and those to whom she was connected. A Black women's legitimacy and validity were informed by factors external to her education and skills.

While the rules and assumptions for Black women were different and unspoken, there were positive outcomes that accompanied their education (Reid Wolfman, 1997). Black women may not have experienced a compatible increase in the individual rights and other advantages that accompanied education for their counterparts from other groups, but they did acquire a liberation of thought through the content of the courses and the empowerment of increased knowledge.

Educating Black women was an attractive societal strategy because this tactic brought with it more options as Black women continued in subordinate roles. Black women were considered the perpetuators of their culture, so education had more valuable outcomes that superseded any inherent expectations held by Black women (Collins, 2001). Yet, education still served as a method to impose an agenda of servitude and regulation. The subject matters offered and the delivery of the content were intentional to this end. Black women began to identify unanticipated complications. The strategy had a binary construct in race, gender, and social economic status. The construct did not address the complexities that accompany education for those with intersected identities, and was presumptuous in assuming a linear and predictable outcome. Unanticipated complications included a lack of support and mentorship, a restraint in mobility, and an expectation to know and follow a variety of informal rules (Collins, 2001; Hinton-

Johnson, 2006; Kawewe, 1997). These obstacles still exist today.

Intersection of Multiple Identities

There are unique circumstances that accompany the intersectionality of identities, specifically with race and gender. A double oppression exists for women of color that dates through the history of education (Wilson, 1989). For example, women are often motivated by the acceptance of their family and friends, yet women of color have the additional burden to perform to standards set by White males and meet external responsibilities that are steeped in their culture (Carter, Pearson, & Shavlik, 1996). There is a faulty premise that there is a single standard across the board for women and that women of color automatically identify with issues exclusive to either gender or race. The combination of both present an additional set of challenges.

Intersectionality provides further opportunity to center the stories of African American women in higher education. Due to the presence of a White dominant ideology, not only in higher education but in the world, the stories of Black women and those with identities that are not White or male are considered the stories of the "other". On the contrary, the stories of minoritized populations are just as important and prevalent. Those stories illuminate how African American women have had to navigate the struggle of racism, bias, oppression and an attempt by some to minimize their dignity while they pursue their personal growth, professional development, and promotion (McKay, 1997). This struggle cannot be assigned to either a difference in gender or a difference in race and ethnicity because both differences exist (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). In order to create a more accurate and inclusive narrative for higher education, a paradigm must be created that dismantles the White, male, middle class framework and

allows for an intersection of identities. A complete narrative must incorporate such components as historical implications, the use of language, social norms, cultural indicators, and trends in rewards and punishments for all identities at their intersections. Narratives that differ from those who represented in a majority population are not additives or exceptions, but instead, parts to a whole.

Performance Burden

Administrative positions in higher education were created to be student-service positions that focused on supporting students outside of the classroom (El-Khawas, 2003). Through the years, support has grown to include discipline and health services, vocational understanding and pursuit, and counseling. More personalized support has been encouraged as the student body has grown more diverse in race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and sexual orientation (El-Khawas, 2003). African American women continue to provide a system of support at PWIs that are often described as having an unfriendly and unwelcoming climate for African American students (Fleming, 1984; Glover, 2012). African American women student affairs administrators are expected to not only perform in the roles in which they were hired, but also in informal roles such as mentors and advisors to students and their colleagues. African American women student affairs administrators have the additional pressure of a complex performance burden and must decide if and how they will address the informal rules that exist for them (Kawewe, 1997).

Additionally, African American women in higher education are often invited to perform in programs, on committees, and in staff roles as representatives of their identity group. Holmes (2008) would argue that African American women student affairs

administrators are invited to enter spaces often managed and structured as White supremacist systems and are then chastised as a voice of dissonance or dissention. African American women in higher education must then decide whether to be authentic and transparent or perform in a way that maintains or increases their image, job security, and opportunity for upward mobility. Performance stressors are created by the burden to do twice as much as their White counterparts, complete tasks better than requested, all while they continue to address the challenges external to their position (Reid Wolfman, 1997).

Challenges of intersectionality and multiple marginality include the feeling of being on display, the pressure to conform, the struggle to gain credibility, the challenge to face and negate stereotypes, and the need to persist despite less support at individual and institutional levels (Turner, 2002a). There are multiple challenges for women of color intersecting concurrently. Due to the fact that they are an underrepresented population on campus, particularly at PWIs, African American women are underemployed, overused, and targets of the institution's climate while simultaneously being charged to influence it.

Leadership and Institutional Influences

Racism, sexism, and misogynistic cultural ideologies make leadership styles of women of color unnamed. The qualities of leadership and leading, mentoring, supervising, supporting and validating staff must be considered outside of the paradigm in which they were constructed and privileged from a historically White and masculine world view. The absence of race and gender perspectives in leadership research removes the voices of African American women and influences the type or magnitude of the issues and concerns faced by these leaders that are addressed in higher education

(Clayborne & Hamrick, 2007). Methods and models of leadership have not matched the leadership challenges or styles of Black women.

Flowers (2003) uses the theory of Representative Bureaucracy as a framework to communicate the importance of having a demographic representation of leaders that is similar to the group they serve. The need for diverse leadership is only one aspect to be considered. There must also be stakeholders that allow for diverse leaders to be successful. The theory maintains that the decisions of the leaders will be responsive to the desires of the public. While there is a passive representation and active representation, they are not opposites. This framework supports the need for diversity and the connection between diverse programs, services, and representation and change.

Jackson (2003) highlights research that states a diverse environment is essential in students' development. A diverse population further provides an opportunity for students to encounter a variety of perspectives, thoughts, and experiences. The need for diversity also extends to the recruitment, retention, and thriving of African American women student affairs administrators.

By centering the experiences of African American women at PWIs, several issues are unearthed. There is a constant negotiation for women of color at PWIs where others have the luxury to never consider the additional burdens that others experience (Holmes,) African American women in higher education must navigate academic and social environments in ways that are often not a consideration for their White colleagues. Also, psychological stressors accompany the awareness and attempts to live up to institutional expectations. African American women at PWIs are also excluded from the dominant population's experience or mind frame. African American women in PWIs also have to

consider the present and future. There is a struggle to do their best where they are, identify places and spaces for promotion, while they attempt to move their career along that trajectory.

Defining Leadership

Many theorists have attempted to define the word and concept of "leadership". From great man theories to behavioral theories, individuals have attempted to define leadership in a way that explains and predicts the cognition and actions of individuals in leadership roles and those not in leadership roles (Carlyle, 1995). Many of the theories that exist do not consider the social systems and structures that impact how leadership is defined and experienced. By considering leadership theories through a critical framework, we are able to identify and address aspects of leadership theories and strategies that inaccurately assume universality, specifically across gender and identity.

While a plethora of leadership theories exist, few use the experiences of underrepresented populations as the center or focus without being referred to as "diversity" leadership theories. Furthermore, those leadership theories that adopt a social justice or inclusive perspective are often referred to as specialty theories specific to activism or social justice. Instead, definitions of leadership have been constructed assuming a White construct which inadvertently limits those who adopt the theories (Balgopal, 1984; Bass, 2008; Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Gündemir, Homan, Dreu, & Vugt, 2014). They may not be aware that their actions and behaviors based on those theories are faulty because their understanding of leadership is circumscribed by theories that do not consider a diverse experience. As an example of the impact of the use of a critical lens, Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) serves as a vehicle to consider the

perspectives and perceptions of leadership theories and philosophies through an intersection of race and power. By doing so, adoption and practice of the theories better enable the users of these theories to appreciate the broader experience and impact of leadership styles on a diverse population.

Leadership Concepts

The important concepts of leadership are not simply stated. While many authors choose one perspective, a definition of leadership warrants multiple considerations. Additionally, although approaches have changed, and shifted through time, many have defined leadership theories using one view. Having now learned multiple theories and paradigms, it is my stance that a single dimensional definition of leadership can be problematic. Formulaic definitions may be attractive, but leadership that lacks consideration of a combination of traits, behaviors, environment, consequences, and development are limited in analysis and application.

It is understandable that many theories originate from one area of thought. The attempt to define leadership can be difficult, and many authors have spent years of research in an attempt to simplify an extremely complex concept. In *The Cry for Leadership*, Gardner (1995) acknowledges the complexity of defining "good" leadership. He states that social disintegration, moral disorientation, and the changes in the societal moral compass throughout time makes creating a definition a difficult task. Instead, Gardner (1995) connects leadership to group purpose and highlights tools in accomplishing that purpose. While he provides a useful framework for addressing issues of leadership, Gardner's work discusses issues of leadership being more than providing a definition.

Historical Views

In *The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership through the Ages*, Wren (1995) compiles writings that in their totality provide a historical context of leadership. Historical views of leadership include ideas from Plato, Aristole, Machiavelli, and Lao-Tzu. These philosophers each provide relevant concepts of leadership. Plato (380 B.C.E./1995) connected circumstances to leadership. He stated that the ideal leader comes from an ideal state. Plato's pupil, Aristotle (350 B.C./1995), provided a framework for leadership to include concepts that may be considered opposite of each other. With this framework, we can maintain that the end and the intention both matter in leadership. Machiavelli (1513/1995) assembled a more progressive complex consideration that applied to leadership. While mercy, good faith, integrity, humanity, and religion provide an important sense of balance, appearance and results are both more important. An additional important philosopher, Lao-tzu (500 B.C./1995) provided the opportunity to discuss leadership in a more humanistic way. Lao-tzu proposes that leadership needs selflessness, a lack of bias, and the leader to serve in the role of a midwife.

Other important historical views of leadership include Gandhi (1928/1995), W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/1995), and Carlyle (1840/1995). Gandhi (1928/1995) discussed the personality traits necessary in leadership including self-discipline, self-control, self-purification, and the need for passive resistance. W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/1995) added to the discussion the negative impact that prejudice and oppression can have on leadership. He submitted that there would be a small group of special men, and those men would be the "talented tenth" of the Black population. Carlyle (1840/1995) rounds out a historical view of leadership by presenting the popular "great man" view that the characteristics of

a king which make a good leader that include valor, spirituality, and education. Characteristics like having heart, being just, showing nobility, being directive, and exhibiting wisdom are associated with men in powerful positions and thus are the ideal qualities of a leader.

Leader Qualities and Skills

With the progression of time and society, theorists shifted the discussion on leadership to not only include a philosophical approach, but also an attempt to provide a formula or prescription for leadership. Different types of leadership theories and models were created in connection to traits, behavior, situations, transactions, and change; yet, these theories were not combined nor did they consider a critical lens in their design.

Trait theories provide a sweeping, generalized definition of leadership. The theories maintain that there are certain leadership qualities that are common to all leaders and uncommon to all followers. Yet Stogdill, as cited in Bass (1990), is noted as the theorist who found that there were no discernable or reliable patterns in leadership traits. On the contrary, individual and situational deliberations must be incorporated in the process of naming leadership traits as socialization, culture, and identity are inextricably connected to perceptions of leadership (Chemers, 1995).

Other theorists (B. M. Bass, 2008; Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2012) further claimed that behavior was directly linked to leadership. Different styles, including autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire styles of leadership, were thought to have an influence on the results of leadership (Chemers, 1995). Ultimately, researchers found behavior was connected to leadership, but not an indicator of productivity. Yet, the studies on behavior and leadership failed to consider any

relationship that may exist between social identity and environment and possible influences on behavior and leadership styles.

Contingency theories considered a more multifaceted concept of leadership by recognizing a possible impact of leader behavior on the subordinate's psychological state, performance, and morale. Common contingency leadership theories consider member relations, task organization, and power due to positionality (Chemers, 1995). The Contingency Model placed a considerable amount of focus on leadership training. Other contingency theories propose that the structure provided by leaders assists the group in clarifying their path and goal (Chemers, 1995). Group support is essential to these leadership theories. Contingency theories are based on the styles of the leader, the group, and satisfaction.

Transactional approaches to leadership are focused on output. Researchers studied the relationship between the leader and the subordinate and the connection between satisfaction and productivity. Specifically, researchers found that acceptance has a positive effect on leadership (Chemers, 1995).

There are cross-cultural approaches to contingency theories that state that cultural differences influence the environment and thus impact leadership behaviors and organizational outcomes. The research is weak and there is work available.

Leadership qualities have been identified with a narrow focus on ways of thinking, culture, facilitation, management, productivity, and strategy. Leadership theories and models must have a broader accommodation for difference and diversity of identity and experience. Diversity of identity and experience not only provide a context

for traits and behaviors, they also set a frame for which to process the outcome of leadership performance and what is considered ethical and effective leadership.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf (1977) proposed that one can be both servant and leader. He stated that the important qualities of a leader included listening to prophetic voices, both of the past and the present. Greenleaf acknowledged that issues of power and authority have manifested as critical considerations in leadership, and shifted how leadership is defined. Leaders are now required to deserve the act of being followed and the way to do so is by first being a servant. Greenleaf maintained that the desire to serve should proceed the aspiration to lead, and the practice of putting others before self was integral to leadership. To put leadership before service manifests a desire for power and material acquisitions (Greenleaf, 1977).

Servant Leadership also focused on the impact of leadership on followers (Greenleaf, 1977). Model leadership was identified by the growth and development of those led by the servant leader. Although Greenleaf (1977) addresses that this view may be problematic, he does not address the repercussions of this form of leadership on the one serving in the leadership role. Spears (2004) promotes Servant Leadership as an alternate lens for leadership that honors the contributions of the followers and the modeling, honesty, service, and empathy of leaders.

Servant leaders are marked by several attributes (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leaders listen not only to understand but to own issues or problems that surface. They seek to own the experience even when it may silence their own voice. Servant leaders are also mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the

experience of the follower. Greenleaf (1977) offers that this may require creativity where there is a lack of understanding. Servant leaders also use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation. Acceptance and empathy also characterize servant leaders. Servant leaders understand imperfection is a fact of life and they accept those who they lead without reservation. Servant leadership also requires the ability to see the unseen and to anticipate the unknown. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make decisions without the privilege of information. This does not negate the need for a sound decision base, but a servant leader as not paralyzed by a lack of information. Similarly, but not the same, a servant leader must also be able to use the past to predict the future. Greenleaf (1977) warns that the absence of this quality inhibits leadership at its core. Servant leaders must also have a high level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others (Greenleaf, 1977). These are vital characteristics because with self-awareness and perception of how others see them, leaders have a critical ability to see themselves in the context of their leadership. This may often cause dissonance or frustration, but a servant leader understands that this approach allows for creativity and astuteness. Persuasion is also an essential quality for servant leaders. The ability to influence with sincerity and gentleness is a worthy virtue.

Greenleaf (1977) presents the ability to conceptualize as a principal leadership talent. The ability to combine an understanding of the current condition with a vision of a potential beneficial outcome is a true gift. Conceptualization sets the environment for action and perseverance towards a common growth goal. Another strength of servant leaders is to use their capacity to heal. Motivated by their own pursuit of wholeness,

servant leaders see their role in the healing of others. This ability is ideally connected to servant leaders' ability to build community. Greenleaf (1977) offers that any organization that has individuals can be formed into a community. Communities are most marked by love.

Greenleaf's (1977) perspective of leadership is multifaceted and when compiled, charges leaders to behave and perform in extraordinary ways. The standard he sets speaks to values that set the development and progress of others over oneself. Servant leaders are not defined by the positions they hold, but by their motivations and actions. Education, affluence, and pedigree are distinctly missing from his assertion. The position of servant is the precursor to legitimacy and greatness as a leader.

Servant Leadership and Higher Education

While Greenleaf's (1977) work had clear connections to religion and business organizations, he understood that the concepts of leadership being taught in higher educational institutions needed to be challenged. The concepts and principles of the theory of servant leadership are now present in many aspects of higher education. There are degrees, courses, scholarships, and grants connected to the topic (Keith, 2010). A servant-first model served to shift the academic dialogue from an individual and power-based view of leadership to one that considered the community and service to others as integral aspects of leadership. The principles of his model also served as examples, particularly for those in positions with direct positional authority, of how to make the model a life philosophy and easily applicable to daily leadership challenges (Prosser, 2010). Servant leadership in higher education has become connected to ethical leadership

and the ultimate benefits that accompany leadership styles that focus on empowering others, broad and inclusive thinking, and compassion.

It is understandable that servant leadership is considered a popular and valuable model to use to encourage effective leadership. The principles address the need and desire for practical and functional characteristics with which to scaffold leadership so that it is understandable and accessible. It seems that it would be a rational assumption that infusing the model in the curriculum, marketing strategy, and mission of the institution would strengthen the experiences of all constituents both at the institutional level and in the local and global community.

Servant Leadership and Black Females

There has been some consideration of servant leadership as it relates to the experiences of Black female leaders. Alston (2016) described many Black female school superintendents as having characteristics of servant leaders, including a care for children, a strong ability to build collaborations, and a desire to serve. Alston notes that although the superintendents have been considered successful and effective leaders who have had a strong positive effect on their schools and students, racism in education has hindered the ideal leadership of Black female superintendents from being offered as a model for leadership. The experiences of African women leaders further supports connections between servant leadership and Black women leadership (Ngunjiri, 2010). African women in several leadership positions adopted a position of care, believed spirituality was essential for effective leadership, and actively promoted positive change. Women in the study acknowledged the patriarchy of leadership models and urged a reframing of leadership to include characteristics such as collaboration, support, negotiation, and

advocacy (Ngunjiri, 2010). Transforming the concept of leadership offers individual and organizational benefits, yet the impact of executing this form of leadership, particularly for Black women, must also be measured.

When promoting or adopting the servant leadership model, it is appropriate to ask what are the implications for a population that has been historically and socially conditioned to see servitude not as a marker of leadership, but as a requirement for livelihood and safety? The mere title of servant leadership requires a level of power that Black women may not possess depending upon their environment. The ability to decide to be a servant in any given social, political, or professional setting requires that there first be an option to assume the role of servant.

Trompenaars and Voerman (2010) acknowledge that the leader may struggle with processing the concepts of servant leadership outside of their own cultural identity. The leader is charged to shift their thinking in order to execute the principles of servant leadership. Whitfield (2014) offers including cultural dimensions to the principles of servant leadership in an effort to provide a framework for diverse settings. While servant leadership can be adjusted to include a more critical lens, the leader must do additional work. The additional work is beneficial, but depending on one's social identity, the leader could experience burn out due to adding to pre-existing performance burdens (Reid Wolfman, 1997).

Executing the principles and attributes of servant leadership could cause further taxation and fatigue for Black women and other members of underrepresented populations. Harley (2008) likens the experiences of African American women at PWIs to being a maid during times of slavery. It could be problematic for those who believe

this to be an accurate depiction of their work in higher education to have this message reinforced in the curriculum, marketing, and mission of the institution. Servant leadership may land on individuals differently, specifically as it connects to their social identities. Negative consequences could be associated with furthering feelings of servitude as minimal requirements to being seen as a leader, particularly when individuals may feel that the position of servant is required and not an option.

Identity and Leadership

Critical Race Theory and Leadership Theories

With the notion of race, power, and privilege as a social construct, we can use the five principles of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011) to analyze leadership theories. Through the act of overlaying Critical Race Theory on familiar leadership theories, whether the goal is to become agents of change, to increase productivity, or to create relationships, we are better situated to successfully meet the intent of the theories.

When adopting the principles of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011), theories such as the great man theories are difficult to espouse. Not only are there examples of great men who caused harm and terror for those they led, but also a system of inherent racism and masculine supremacy calls into question what the so called great men had in common, who decided they met the criteria for being “great”, and the voice of the “other” that may be missing. Critical Race Theory supports some of the

criticisms of the great man theory, which includes the lack of perspective taking and the exclusion of women and minorities in the core principles of the theory.

Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011) indicts that there is a system of racism and that the experiences of underrepresented populations provide a voice or story of the other that shifts what is considered standard. If we accept these principles, we are then able to delve deeper into trait theories and whether the requirement of those traits is reasonable across identities. When the hardship and histories of underrepresented populations are considered, it may be appropriate to interrogate how traits such as passive resistance, self-control, and self-purification have been racialized and are a privilege for some groups. Postmodern and social constructivist leadership theorists (Bolman & Deal, 2003) may submit that circumstances, history, and change must be considered and thus Critical Race Theory is not needed for this analysis (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). The acknowledged need for multiple ways of understanding brought about the concept of social constructivism, which is the belief that reality is defined by self-interpretation and social context. (Kezar et al., 2006). However, Critical Race Theory extends beyond the fluidity of history and the random change of traits based on modern views of the world. Critical Race Theory acknowledges the constant implications of racism and oppression and acknowledges that the ability to own and manifest certain traits may be a challenge for people of color. Certain traits could be detrimental to the experience of people of color or may be difficult due to "cultural taxation" or "racial fatigue" (Tierney & Bensimon, 2002). The fact that race is not biological and is based on characteristics and traits that are neither definite nor

universal suggests that theories that assert that there is a list of traits that verify leadership should be considered in a new way.

Contingency, Transactional, and Transformational Leadership Theories (B. M. Bass, 1990, 1995; Burns, 1995; Chemers, 1995) could be further illuminated when executed through a framework that utilizes the principles of Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011). The concepts of interest convergence and intersectionality are particularly useful in assisting leaders to consider a broader deliberation of the actions and behaviors of leaders of a diverse representation (Bell, 1980; Turner, 2002). If the center or the focus is shifted to those in underrepresented populations, systemic barriers would be acknowledged.

The promotion of popular definitions, models, and theories of leadership is not the problem in its entirety. What is problematic is the act of normalizing a White, male standpoint that is likely steeped in misogyny and patriarchy as a comprehensive understanding of leadership. Ignoring the implications of a broader understanding and execution of a leadership epistemology creates a hierarchy of experiences that silences alternative perspectives that can be influenced by gender and race (Taliaferro Baszile, 2006).

The formula for "good" leaders and leadership would have to incorporate how concepts of control, relationships, and management could actually be problematic for people of color. For majority populations, such tactics are seen as strategic and progressive, yet for underrepresented populations the same actions result in the leader being labeled as an agitator, control-freak, impersonator, and manipulator. Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) acknowledges the impact of stereotypes and biases

on issues of productivity, change, and motivation, which are often thought of as leadership concepts.

Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) is also an ideal introspective tool for Greenleaf's (1977) Servant Leadership Theory. Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) highlights the inherit assumptions with the Servant Leadership Theory that are based in White, male, hegemonic environments. Greenleaf's (1977) leadership theory is simply stated as servant first. There are implications when we remember Critical Race Theory's (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) principle that racism is normal and a common experience for most people of color. This and other statements have different implications when said to people of color and are expected to be digested. Other statements reflect a lack of a race construct.

Greenleaf (1977) fails to acknowledge that many marginalized populations have been stripped of the power to choose leadership as he defines it. Furthermore, this very definition could become a cleverly dressed excuse for oppression. Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) illuminates Greenleaf's (1977) assumption of a universal experience that does not consider a system of oppression. This is not to state that the theory is a faulty one, but to highlight opportunities. This is not to state that the theory is a faulty one, but to highlight opportunities

Political Considerations for Identity and Leadership

Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2002; Zamudio et al., 2011) speaks to one of the foundational issues with adopting servant leadership. In a system of racism, privilege and

oppression, those who use the Critical Race Theory as a tool to shift and challenge the narrative used to create and execute leadership theories as frameworks may be seen as agitators and deconstructionists. It is more socially acceptable to conform and acquiesce to the dominant White culture than to question it. A lack of knowledge or a hostile environment may make it still uncomfortable for some, but this shift is still necessary (Obidah, 2001).

Application

Patton, McEwen, Rendón, and Howard-Hamilton (2007) state that the foundation and use of a critical race viewpoint normalizes the understanding that racism and misogyny have shaped society and the experiences of those with marginalized identities. The use of Critical Race Theory to unearth oppression and White supremacy in higher education and theories used within the field is a strategy to move us toward liberation and understanding of the human experience.

Existing Scholarship

While minimal in number, some research does exist that considers specific components of this study. Researchers have contemplated a variety of angles to investigate the experiences of Black women leaders in higher education. The following studies should be noted as on the peripherals of the focus of this study.

Women as Leaders

In *Women in Higher Education: An Encyclopedia* (Amey & Eddy, 2002; Schramm, 2002; Tyson, 2002), the experiences of women in higher education are parceled into different sections. The comprehensive collection of themes and relative topics includes information on African American administrators (Tyson, 2002),

leadership (Amey & Eddy, 2002), and entries on the intersections of gender and race (Schramm, 2002). The following details relevant entries in the text.

African American administrators. Tyson (2002) provides a brief history and overview of African American women administrators in higher education. She confirms the lack of data available regarding their representation, environment, and voice, and appropriately concludes that their reflection has been extracted from the landscape of higher education (Tyson, 2002). Tyson (2002) notes the barriers that have existed for African American women, which include racism and sexism, and the two continually working together against the entrance and advancement of African American women in leadership roles in higher education. She further notes that the little information that is known comes from the few who have ascended into upper administration. These numbers are not significant enough to make the necessary shifts in campus culture and policy to exact significant change. A chilly climate, competitive environment, and limited opportunities for advancement have made advanced positions unattractive. Tyson (2002) concludes with describing the challenges for African American women administrators as both external and internal as barriers are also self-inflicted as African American women internalize the oppressive messages from the environment in higher education. These messages include that the demands on their lives would make them unsuccessful in administrative roles.

While Tyson (2002) details history, climate and barriers for African American women administrators in higher education, she does not address the impact of the climate and barriers on women as they navigate their day-to-day work in the field. Tyson (2002) also uses the term “administrator” to refer to both student affairs and faculty positions.

Intersections of gender and race. In her section in the encyclopedia, Schramm (2002) recognizes the inability to parcel out issues of gender and race in perspective, experiences, and meaning making. She recognizes the patriarchy that exists in higher education but warns against the natural inclination to assume all minoritized individuals have identical experience. Schramm (2002) explains how race and gender are both social constructs that work rather effortlessly due to the power differentials assigned to them. She concludes by acknowledging racial and gender hierarchies that work together is complex and can be confusing, but the repercussions of perpetuating systems of oppression that block access and progress have dire effects on more than just students.

Schramm's (2002) presentation of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1995; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; C. S. V. Turner, 2002) and social identities challenges an errored perception of equality in higher education. She elevates concepts that are often attempted in consumption at an individual level instead of a systemic one.

Leadership. Amey and Eddy (2002) begin their piece by confirming that there is no singular definition of leadership. After a brief snapshot of leadership theories and models, Amey and Eddy (2002) revert to a typical perception of leadership and discuss the challenges of positionality. The article details challenges for women based on the type of leadership position, only lightly addressing women's ability to reflect a patriarchal form of leadership. They specifically highlight difficulty for women of color, single women, and women with families to consider with advancement, work-life balance, and the danger of burnout (Amey & Eddy, 2002). Interestingly connected to this study, Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) is among the alternate forms of leadership styles they offer as better frames with which to assess women's leadership competencies.

Leadership, identity, and higher education. Additional resources highlight the experiences of Black women leaders in higher education from a variety of perspectives. Research includes the experiences of midlevel higher education administrators (Rosser, 2004), Black women in higher education (Gaetane Jean-Marie, Williams, & Sherman, 2009) and Black women's feelings of alienation, isolation, invisibility, and taxation that they describe as characteristics of their experience in higher education (Dawson, 1997; Homes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; McKay, 1997; Patton & Catching, 2009; Steward et al., 1990). There are also several dissertations that peer into the topics of leadership, Black women, and higher education (Barnard, 2015; Choates, 2012; Curtwright, 2013; Griffin-Willis, 2001; Louise Alexander-Lee, n.d.; Minnis & Callahan, 2010; Patitu & Hinton, 2004; Sobers, 2014; Stroud, 2009); however, I did not find a resource that considered the intersections of race, gender, leadership theory, and positionality.

The researcher was unable to find literature that centers and deliberates concepts from a specific lens that combines race, gender, leadership, and student affairs administration. An interrogation from the intersection of social identity, leadership, and position in higher education can give voice to an important population in higher education and provide a foundation from which to assess the work environments that have been created for that population.

Conclusion

By polarizing leadership theories as either general theories or specialized theories, we have created incomplete leadership definitions. Leadership theories have been instrumental tools for change in personal development and in systems and structures, but we should not settle for the achieved transformation when more effective results are

possible. Many theories are incomplete in their definitions. Missing attentions to the elements of race, gender, class, power, and privilege have impaired research, theories, and models designed to provide a critical understanding of leadership. The use of Critical Race Theory might be controversial, but the use of the theory as a framework to ask broader questions does less harm than the assumptions made as we blindly promote concepts that at the minimum cause confusion and at the maximum cause intellectual harm.

Previous research focused on the experiences of Black women in higher education and the dynamics of leadership. This study adds to the body of work that centers the voices of Black women by using a critical race fame with which to consider race, gender, student affairs positions, and leadership models as a collective for Black women student affairs administrators. Additionally, this study reveals how Black women determine the accessibility of leadership models and the consequences of applying them. Moreover, this study fills a gap in the literature regarding how leadership theories perpetuate a faulty assumption of race- and gender-neutral leadership tactics. Chapter three provides an explanation of the approach I used, research ethics, limitations to the study, how I recruited participants, sample selection, data collection, and how I addressed trustworthiness.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study used a critical approach to narrative inquiry. Critical qualitative research allowed for human experiences to be considered with the assumption of social inequities and for the purpose of positive social reform (Carspecken, 1996). The nature of this study considered participants' reflections on leadership positionality and behaviors in light of the intersectionality of their social identities. Historically and currently, African American women have experienced inequities due to their social identities and historical oppressive systems. The combination of the critical approach and narrative inquiry allowed for participants to reflect on their experiences in this light.

Approach and Rationale

The purpose of this qualitative, critical narrative study was to present a critical narrative of the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at PWIs in higher education and the influence that their social identity has had on the manifestation of leadership models. This study placed in public discourse any disconnections, problematic assumptions, and cultural oversights for Black women and leadership models. This study conducted a critical analysis of leadership theory through the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators. The qualitative methods used in this study were most appropriate because they allowed the researcher to consider

the experiences of the participants, and because they permit the participants to provide context to their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A critical approach to this research was fitting not only because African American women are under-represented in the field of higher education, but also because of the marginalization of the population. The narrative of systemic marginalization of African Americans must accompany the narrative of those in the majority population. With an expanded perspective, assumptions and transferability were tested and challenged.

The critical approach was constructed to help illuminate oppression, expose systems of dominance, increase knowledge and initiate change (Carspecken, 1996). The inclusion of a narrative counter to the perceptions of members of the majority population expands the ability for effective leadership for all members of the organization across difference. The critical approach also addressed power differentials and social conflict, which are often critical to the role of leader. Adopting a critical approach in the creation of leadership theories and models was appropriate not only because of the importance of the experiences of underrepresented individuals, but also because of the systemic marginalization of certain populations.

The social context of African Americans must be considered in the experience of African American women because it serves to set a frame of reference for the research, and helps to set the foundation for understanding the experiences of African American women. By considering the experiences of African American women, a broadened view can be acquired. A more inclusive examination may serve to diffuse ignorance and misconceptions. Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) calls for an analysis of the experience of people of color by identifying contradictions in an effort to shift the

definition of the norm. Crenshaw (1995) suggests the use of counterstory to unmask, examine, and challenge narratives that are historically from a privileged perspective in race, gender, and class. One of the benefits of using this theory as a framework is the ability to address social injustice and propose critical questions about ways of considering leadership models that are sophisticated and complex in thought. Critical Race Theory (CRT) grounds the critical narrative inquiry methodology by alleviating the need to prove privilege, racism, and power differentials granted through social identity.

Critical Social Theory

The critical social theory I drew on in this study is based in the work of the Frankfurt School, beginning in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Bredo, 2006). Its creation was connected to a collection of theorists who were critical of constricted, traditional Marxism and the narrow way of thinking associated with the academy (Bredo, 2006). Researchers in critical qualitative research note that trustworthiness for the critical approach is determined by the ability to have an open discussion and dialogue, which was also noted as preferred (Bredo, 2006; Carspecken, 1996; Lillrank, 2012). Open discussion allows for discourse that challenges what is considered normative thinking.

Historically, critical approaches are constructed to help initiate change and increase knowledge (Bredo, 2006). The combination of the voice of the researcher and the voice of the participants imparted knowledge that calls for action, as it contributed to a narrative that represents more than the reflections of those with dominant identities (Birks, 2014). For the purpose of this study, those with dominant identities are those who identify as White and serve as faculty at predominantly White, private universities. For the purpose of this study, the role of faculty is considered a dominant identity due to the

historical tension between academic and student affairs, and the view that student affairs is not an integral function of the educational process (Kuh, 1996). The social identity of the researcher has no bearing on their role as an advocate for the subjects due to the nature of the methodology.

The critical approach also addresses power differentials and social conflict. Critical theory calls for an analysis of the experience of participants by identifying contradictions based in power and privilege in an effort to create new knowledge (Leonardo, 2004). One of the ways new knowledge is created is by addressing social injustice and proposing critical questions about new ways of being and doing.

Narrative Inquiry

A narrative inquiry was appropriate for this research because of the power of stories and the human experience. Several theorists are noted as contributors to the creation of narrative inquiry. John Dewey, Mark Johnson, and Alasdair MacIntyre are noted for highlighting the need to consider social context in the human experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The knowledge that results as a part of an individual's experience sets the foundation for narrative inquiry as it connects the narrative and life. Narrative inquiry was first named a model by Connelly and Clandinin (1990) as a research method that looks for linkages, connections, repetition, and shared data through storytelling. This form of research allows for rich detail, social context, and real life complexities to serve as educational tools (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011). Narrative inquiry is a tool used to unearth information that can be overlooked by other research methods, such as emotion and context of the experiences.

Critical Narrative Approach

While the critical approach of narrative inquiry was an appropriate method, some challenges existed regarding this methodology. The data and data analyses have the ability to be transformative for the participants and readers; however, it may difficult to meet some of the elements of the definition of the critical theory paradigm and methodology, including the goal to create change. Such goals can more achievable at an individual level and more difficult at a systemic level.

The findings illuminated the comparable experiences of student affairs administrators who have similar identities and how they enact, support, and disturb leadership models. I believe one of the opportunities of the research design was the ability to impact social change at the individual level. The goal of critical narrative is to share stories in an effort to produce and empower change. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) state that the research might even call for a revolution.

Qualitative Methods

In order to conduct the study, I interviewed African American, women, student affairs administrators who were at predominantly White universities and colleges. After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I interviewed 15 African American women. I recruited participants by connecting with the American College Educators International's (ACPA) Commission for Graduate and Professional Student Affairs, ACPA's Coalition for Multicultural Affairs, and ACPA's Coalition for Women's Identities. There was the possibility for each group to have some repetition in membership; contacting each group increased the opportunity to select participants who met the criteria of identifying as an African American, woman, student affairs

professionals working at a PWI. I captured the region of the participants' institution, their experience level, their institutional structure, and their role within student affairs. ACPA collects these data points as part of their membership application. The intention of the study was not to generalize the narrative, but to provide a counternarrative that interrogates the Servant Leadership model as a strategy for African American student affairs administrators in higher education.

Research Ethics

It was imperative to reduce the opportunity for risk or harm to the participants. Due to the nature of working at PWIs, the identities of participants may be more easily discernable. Some risks included (further) isolation, judgment, or an increased lack of sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In order to reduce this risk, participants were first contacted via email in an attempt to introduce the purpose of the study and offered an introduction to the researcher and the purpose of the study. Participants were given the opportunity to complete the interview by web conference or by phone, so that they could have the option to have their participation processed without full exposure of their identity to the researcher, or to meet in person. Providing this option recognized the sensitivity of the topic and the small number of those in the community of Black women student affairs administrators. Also, the participants were asked to member check the researcher's findings based on their portion reflected within the study , which better ensured that the participants' voice is present and accurate (Carspecken, 1996).

Lastly, due to the size of the population studied, the institutions also remained confidential. No item was included in the invitation sent through ACPA asking for institution or any other questions that ask for identity (other than race and gender). By

naming the institutions, the reader could have easily identified the participants, especially depending on the number of African American women in the institution's student affairs division. Keeping the institutions confidential also assisted in helping to construct trust between the researcher and the participants.

During each interview I attempted to build rapport by sharing the details of my career and path in higher education, and my motivation for the study. I employed active listening skills, including clarifying what I heard, asking probing follow-up questions, and showing an invested interest in the act of joint meaning-making (Talmage, 2012). Respondents selected how their one-hour interview would be conducted in order to help create a safe environment.

Initial Contact with Participants

An application was submitted with the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). Respondents through connection with ACPA received an email from me detailing the process and possible avenues that could be used to ensure confidentiality (see Appendix B). We worked together to schedule one initial interview and decided at the conclusion of the interview if a follow-up interview would be needed. All interviews used web conferencing or phone conferencing as an alternative method. Interviews were recorded in either case. Creswell (2012) indicates that the study must include common elements such as a general setting, theory, and informative analysis. The use of video or phone recording both meet these requirements. Participants were made aware that demographic questions would be asked as part of the first video interview. Participants were given the option to decline answering the questions if they were concerned about confidentiality.

Data Collection

Fifteen participants were interviewed as part of this study. Data were collected through three methods. First, I emailed each participant to confirm a date and time to interview, and to request the best method of collection. For the second method, participants could choose to use the video and audio recording portion of the online conference service or just the audio recording option of the service. The third method of collection was a follow-up email or online conference call to further process or ask clarifying questions, if necessary.

Once interviews were scheduled, I used an active interview method (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) with an open-ended format where the participant and I co-constructed meaning.. The data was collected from August 2017 to October 2017 through semi-structured interviews. All interviews were recorded. The active interview method was the appropriate method for this study due to the sensitive nature of the study, the potential impact of sharing one's story that is counter to the majority's, and the possible current challenges of hostility, oppression, racism, and sexism in the workplace. The active interview method allowed the researcher to join the subject in times of vulnerability, and to participate with them instead of simply becoming a repository (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Furthermore, the interaction that happened as a result of this methodology became just as important as the data collected. The content and sampling methods for this study in particular were directly connected to how the participants felt about their interview. Due to the potential for the interview to surface or renew negative residual interpretations of their experiences, I hoped that a connection would be created and that ended each interview with an appreciation for the space and time to voice often ignored narratives.

This outcome addressed the possibility of the interview doing harm. There were some indicators that this hope was achieved. Sherrie shared, “I enjoyed this. I needed this today. I appreciate the good karma that you put out this way because I needed this. It has been amazing just to talk.” At the end of another interview, when I asked Samantha if she had anything further she wanted to share with me, she stated,

> Um, you know, I think that this work is very needed. For me, I think about, I always get excited to participate in these pieces because for as much as the quantitative research is out there about how we connect and how we engage, I think that we've got to continue to understand folks' lived experiences, and that's where, at least for me, the game gets messed up, because if you are the only one on your campus then you have no idea that the sister that's right down the street from your institution, you have no idea what she's going through and what she's had to overcome and that you are seriously not the only one. So, for me, this research is important. It is needed, and I'm glad that you're doing this research.

Whether it was from my familiarity with the topic, the questions asked, or the chance to discuss a topic not often pursued, the active interview process assisted me in building a rapport with participants and providing them with a sense of support.

Finally, an active interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) method allowed for reflexivity during the interview. Through journaling and partnering with a peer debriefer, I was better able to identify my influences on data collection, data analysis, and the findings (Hickson, 2016).

Before the end of the interview, I offered the participants an information sheet that provided the tenets of Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1997). I then asked them to

speak to their perceptions and the practicability of the Servant Leadership Model (Greenleaf, 1997) for Black women who work in student affairs in higher education. I began this portion of the interviews by asking the participants to assign each tenet to one of three categories: (a) the tenet is universal and would be read as intended by its author no matter a person's social identity, (b) race and gender impact this tenet; therefore, the tenet would be misinterpreted if deployed by a Black women student affairs administrator, or (c) race and gender impact this tenet in a severe manner, so it would not be recommended for a Black women student affairs administrator to employ this tenet because the promoted action or strategy would cause a detriment to and for the Black woman student affairs administrator employing the tenet. With each interview, the participants began to provide more structure to this section of the interview, and with their input and suggestion, a fourth category was identified: (d) race and gender impact this tenet; therefore, a Black women student affairs administrator is required to reflect this tenet in order to be seen as a leader. Participants who were interviewed before the categories were identified were contacted for a second interview for the purpose of reconsidering their original categorizing of the tenets.

The active interview method and CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2009) worked together to situate the participants of this study as credible and adept narrators to reveal where a White dominant narrative may be coded as "good leadership". By defining leadership and upholding and utilizing the tenets of Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1997) without deeper consideration of how social context covertly changes the fundamental principle of the definitions and tenets, well-meaning leaders become perpetuators of systems of oppression onto members of marginalized

groups, even when they are a member of the group. That is not to say no good would be experienced by marginalized groups from the reference or use of these models, but rather, any good would not be absolute, but instead unpredictable byproducts of White privilege (Bell, 1980).

The active interview (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995) approach is appropriate for the focus of this research. Gubrium and Holstein (1995) argue that the researcher and the subjects are both participants in the research. The challenge is to construct the interview and questions in a way that extracts data that provide an untainted representation of the information shared. The researcher and the participants are partners in this process. The active interview model (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995) recognizes social context and the interactions in the interview process of communicating knowledge.

Data Analysis

By grounding this critical narrative study in CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) and using active interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) methods, this study became a tool for the researcher and the participants to use to evaluate and reflect on the influence and inherent presence of race and gender in the understanding and execution of leadership styles and strategies (Webster & Mertova, 2007). As society continues to recognize the residue of its history with slavery, including the existence of systemic racism and structures of privilege and oppression (Feagin, 2000, 2010), the narrative inquiry approach surfaces the complexities of the social condition and the many factors that impact it (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

To begin data analysis, I used a standalone computer application to transcribe the interviews. While reading the transcripts and listening to the interviews, I made

corrections to the transcripts. I then coded the transcripts and my notes by first detailing the interviews with little inference by using the exact words and phrases of the participants to create an index of emergent codes. Carspecken (1996) recognizes that several factors allow for the researcher to apply hermeneutic inferences, one of which is a shared familiarity of culture between the participants and the researcher. Categories began to emerge from the codes as I looked for repetition and similarities. By applying Carspecken's ontological objective, subjective and normative realms, I considered the categories that surfaced within the codes. I noticed categories that addressed the desire to provide student support, the act of maintaining multiple positions within the institution, the lack of support, the presence of unintended messages, codependent leadership definitions, and an unconscious trend to compare experiences with those with privileged social identities. For interpreting the data, Saldaña (2016) highlights that narrative research allows for a variety of ways to code including the use of themes. I placed the categories into two themes to reflect work expectations and institutional-imposed pressures. After assigning themes, I recognized that a few participant expressions were both expectations of and pressures from the institution. The fluidity of the themes required that I revisit my codes.

In qualitative research, it is not unusual that an initial attempt at coding may need to be reconsidered (Saldaña, 2016). I worked to refine the codes by merging, manipulating and revising them. The index grew into a refined directory of codes hyperlinked to specific quotes within the transcripts. After re-categorizing the codes, working to arrange them in systematic groupings, and refocusing on the purpose of the research, the following themes more clearly developed: high expectations, deficient

institutions, and intersectional leadership. The new themes framed the participants' perspectives of leadership, leadership development, and critical viewpoints of leadership. While taking into consideration unique dynamics of the data, reconstruction of the data surfaced culturally (race and gender) common patterns for leadership experiences in student affairs and in the principles and behaviors named in the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1995).

Ethical and Political Considerations

There were ethical considerations that were considered. One concern was that participants may have shared information that had ethical implications for the institution for which they worked. If multiple participants were interviewed at one institution instead of at several, data could have shown that the institution has an ethical responsibility to address the climate and work environment for the African American women student affairs administrators. Although the presentation of data did not cause an ethical dilemma, the study conducted with a critical approach left the question of what should be done as a result of the research and whose responsibility is it to act?

An additional ethical concern was that small numbers of African American women student affairs administrators at selected locations may also impact the participants' right to privacy and confidentiality. The possibility of participants being easily identified and targeted by others within the institution needed to be considered due to multiple factors. Factors included size of the institutions and the stories that they shared. Participants were informed of the possible consequences of the findings and of any consequences they may have possibly received as a part of their participation. In efforts to protect the confidentiality of their comments, I assigned each participant with a

numeric filing code number, and stored the encrypted files electronically on my local computer.

An additional ethical dilemma was the possibility of doing psychological or emotional harm to the participants. The interview process had the possibility to be cathartic or detrimental (or both) to the participants, contingent on their relationship with the institution and the individuals to whom they referred. Participants could find the process supportive or as further confirmation of a toxic environment.

I was aware of the internal turmoil a participant could experience by reliving experiences that were difficult to live through. In *Racist America*, Joe Feagin (2010) identifies seven costs of racial oppression and describes one as the psychological impact. He describes the experience as "outsiderism" (Hill Collins, 2002; Williamson Nelson, 1997) and equates it to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He states that the act of marginalization and dehumanization of Blacks by Whites can cause not only psychological but also physical conditions such as depression, phobia, and anxiety attacks (Feagin, 2010), which are the same symptoms of PTSD. The act of relieving and reviewing traumatic memories could cause further damage, especially as they continue to work for the same institution.

Trustworthiness

Rolfe (2006) contends that validity depends on the type of study. Carspecken (1996) notes that validity and trustworthiness for qualitative research have two qualifications: observation and measurement. Although claims of validity in qualitative research are rare, Carspecken (1996) states that validity claims in qualitative research can be supported or argued from two considerations. Validity can be addressed based on if

the data can be reproduced, and if the analyses are consistent with each participant. If observations cannot be reproduced or repeatedly show the same measurement, validity is questioned (Carspecken, 1996). The content of the questions are also imperative (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). To increase trustworthiness, Carspecken (1996) suggests conducting member checks in the third step of his five step process. Via email, members confirmed the accuracy of their interview. I also shared my own meaning to confirm reconstructions. Also, a peer debriefer was identified to assist with processing my interaction with the participants and the data. Notes were kept after the debriefing sessions (see Appendix F). According to Creswell and Miller (2000), the peer debriefing process can serve as a determinant for validity in critical qualitative research. The authors suggest that the peer debriefer be a researcher in the same field but not share the same social identity. The peer debriefer provided support by answering questions regarding my interpretations and frustrations, and challenged me by asking questions regarding the questions and assumptions I made. The peer debriefer also assisted me in checking biases or holes in my reconstruction. Lastly, in recognition of my own biases, I kept a reflexive journal to monitor my own reactions to the questions and the information participants shared. It was important to me to allow the participants to be as authentic as possible. These mechanisms were used to monitor the influence of my thoughts on reporting the experiences of the participants.

Limitations

I was mindful of my influence on the research, yet Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2013) state that the researcher's voice has a place in critical research and the construction of critical theories. Furthermore, feminist research acknowledges that space

must be allowed for stories that contradict each other and the master narrative (DeVault & Gross, 2007).

Diverse Narratives

One limitation was the possible diversity of narratives. Feminist research promotes the awareness that stories are impacted by language, the occurrences in the moment, the importance of listening and sharing, and the role of history in the shaping of listening and storytelling (DeVault & Gross, 2007). Feminist research is constructed as collaborative encounters (DeVault & Gross, 2007). Experiences are shared by similarities in culture, gender, and experiences. Active listening (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995), also an integral element of feminist research, calls for full engagement in order to avoid reproducing a dominant misogynistic narrative. Narratives allow for an illumination of themes and they identify gaps and absences in the research.

Ethics in Feminist Research

Ethics in feminist research includes aspects that may not be present in conventional scientific research. Concepts such as confidentiality and appropriation are seen as pitfalls to avoid (DeVault & Gross, 2007) as they do not always assist in meeting the goals of feminist research and can further perpetuate hegemonic methodologies and considerations. The goals of feminist interviewing include: make knowledge applicable across the world, produce “relational knowledge”, map the political, intellectual and institutional context, and transform dominant ways of thinking. Also, feminist research acknowledges the co-ownership of knowledge by including the participants in the analysis and reporting process. Participants provide feedback regarding the data, construction and by providing feedback to the researcher.

Create Social Change

Finally, the purpose of critical research is to create social change (Lincoln et al., 2013). If defined as organizational transformation, a barrier for social change may be the researcher's lack of influence on specific institutions and the inability to influence change at an organization level. However, if individual change is considered as the foundation for organizational transformation, this was no longer a limitation of the study.

While stories that detail issues of race and gender in the workplace were essential to creating the narrative, stories sensitive to the respondent were approached carefully and with caution. Weiss (1994) suggested that the researcher create a relationship with the participants before conducting any interviews, and confirm why the study is necessary. An issue of trust or transparency could have an effect on the data collected. While concrete descriptions and eye-witness accounts are in line with the critical narrative approach and should encourage social change, the use of stories could have negative repercussions. Remembering and sharing a story could reopen old wounds or cause a participant to relive a painful experience. The use of the story should be considered a powerful experience with the possibility of both positive and negative outcomes. Throughout the interview, the researcher was careful to share her own experience when appropriate and to shift the focus of the study away from the participant.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the qualitative approach that is most appropriate for this study. This chapter provided an overview of recruitment of participants, data collection and analysis and surfaced and responded to questions of trustworthiness, ethics, and

social change. The voices of Black women student affairs administrators remained at the center of the study as the approach and framework serve that purpose.

The next chapter details the identities of the participants in a way they will remain anonymous. Participants will be presented through sharing information about the institutions where they work, years in the field, and types of institutions they currently work in. The narratives of the participants are offered without connection to their identities.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS

This qualitative study was conducted to investigate the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators at PWIs and their perceptions of common leadership models. I conducted the study to provide a narrative that would interrogate the Servant Leadership model through the experiences of a minoritized population in higher education. The study included the (a) experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at PWIs through the lens of race and gender, (b) how participants observe, consider, and execute leadership models in their work, and (c) how participants interpret and consider the practicability of the Servant Leadership model for Black women student affairs administrators. The three guiding research questions were:

1. What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender?
2. How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators?
3. How do the experiences of African American women within student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?

A convenience sample (Given, 2008) was selected by recruiting participants through an email to the American College Educators International's (ACPA) Commission for Graduate and Professional Student Affairs, ACPA's Coalition for Women's Identities, and ACPA's Coalition for Multicultural Affairs. The identified criteria were that the participant self-identify as a Black, woman, student affairs professional. ACPA provided some ease of recruitment by allowing me access to a database of individuals who are already self-catalogued by identity and positionality through their membership and the identifiers captured in the membership application. Due to the small pool of qualified participants, when compared to the number of their counterparts in higher education – approval to add snowball sampling was acquired from IRB in an effort to increase the sample size. Snowballing also recognized the informal network that exists within the field of higher education for Black women student affairs administrators. Through their networks, participants were able to suggest enough additional participants to complete data collection. An initial set of nine participants responded to the email to participate. A follow up email was sent to confirm their participation, the topic of the study, parameters of the study, and to confirm an interview date, time, and contact phone number. At the conclusion of the interview either the participant or I inquired if there were other individuals who might be willing and qualified to join the study. A total of 15 subjects were interviewed as part of this study. A hazard of snowball sampling is the possibility of obtaining biased data due to the likelihood of participants identifying others who have similar experiences or perspectives (Given, 2008). In an effort to diversify the original pool as much as possible, participants' institutional region and Carnegie classification, their experience level, and roles within

their institution were recorded before contacting any additional participants through snowballing.

In this study, I had to be aware of my own years of experiences as a Black woman in student affairs at a predominantly White institution. It was imperative that I seek a balance of listening while also engaging with the participants so that a reconstruction of knowledge could be achieved. With each interview came an opportunity to connect with student affairs professionals who have navigated spaces impacted by structures of power and privilege while navigating.

Introduction of Participants

In order to maintain confidentiality, the participants are described as a group, highlighting the diverse standpoints and variety of work environments the cohort provided. Describing the participants as a group minimizes the opportunity to unintentionally share descriptors that will reveal the participants. Aligning with the considerations for feminist research (DeVault & Gross, 2007), confidentiality was offered and accepted by all participants. Some participants in feminist research may prefer to be named in the research as a way to honor their survival of an event or to expose a violation of rights (DeVault & Gross, 2007). Negotiation of confidentiality allowed me to respect each participant's wishes and furthered solidified their voice as the center of the research. All of the participants indicated they would prefer a pseudonym, and I selected a pseudonym for each participant.

Profile of the Institutions

All participants worked at predominantly White institutions from locations all over the United States. At least one university or college was represented from each

college region (4-Year Colleges, 2018): northwest (1), southwest (2), Mideast (6), southeast (3) and the Great Lakes region (3). Most of the participants worked at institutions that have Research 2 Carnegie Classification ("Basic Classification Description," 2018) while there was also a diverse representation of institutions, including participants from Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger programs, Master's Colleges and Universities – Medium programs, Doctoral Universities – Highest research activity, associate colleges, baccalaureate colleges in diverse fields, baccalaureate colleges with arts and sciences focuses, and colleges with special focus four-year: business and management. The size of the institutions ranged from small with a high number of transfer students, to medium and large size schools who have higher research activity and a high number of undergraduate students. There were also participants from two-year and four-year schools with representation from, public, private, and private for-profit schools. While the sample included participants from snowball sampling, the final sample was diverse.

Profile of the Participants

This section provides a description of the personal information of the participants, including years in the field and information on their positions within student affairs. All but two of the participants entered the field of student affairs post graduate school or through an entry level position in higher education. One participant entered the field from K-12 education, and one entered from the private sector. All participants named an attraction to supporting students as a motivator for entering the field, while one participant stated she was also drawn to the opportunity to secure a position where housing and utility costs were included with the position. All participants have been in

the field of higher education four or more years, while three have been in the field 10 or more years and one participant reported a tenure of more than 20 years in higher education. Seven participants shared that their first positions were in residence life or housing departments and the other eight entered the field from a variety of positions in both student and academic affairs.

The sample contained a diverse representation of positions and administrative levels. Two participants held coordinator positions, four held assistant or associate director positions, five participants had director titles, and four held assistant dean, dean of students, or vice president titles. No president was interviewed as the role of president is not considered a student affairs position. While only two participants held dual position titles, all participants detailed multiple working roles outside of what is detailed in their position title and position description.

Interview Structure

After contacting the participants by email, I confirmed their comfort in capturing both audio and video record of the interviews through an online web-based conference service. Once the interview was complete, both the audio and video files were automatically downloaded as encrypted files to my personal laptop, which was password protected. The audio files were then transcribed through a computer transcription application. I confirmed the content of the transcript by listening to the audio files while making basic corrections of punctuation, extreme grammar errors, and basic transcript errors. This process assisted me with staying in close proximity with the data. I then listened to the interviews again while searching for patterns and their meanings (Carspecken, 1996; Hardcastle, Usher, & Holmes, 2006).

Before finalizing the interview questions, based on Carspecken's (1996) model, I first interrogated my own biases that may have been inherently present in the questions I was considering. I explored where my values may have informed the information I was seeking. This is the step where I began keeping a field journal. The field journal often begins with the first interview (Carspecken, 1996; Ravitch & Mittenfelner Carl, 2016), but I began journaling at this point in the research to set a standard for self-interrogation and to acknowledge the potential impact of the research not only for the participants, but also for me as the one collecting stories that could have a cumulative impact on my own emotions and resiliency. The field journal, along with having a peer debriefer, also helped me to identify any preconceived notions and expectations I had about the participant's responses.

Participants were asked three sets of interview questions. The first set of open-ended questions generally focused on the participant's role within student affairs. These questions were fluid and may have been adjusted based on the participant' responses. The second set of open-ended questions served as a preparation for the third set of questions, which focused on Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1995). By asking participants about their early lessons in leadership, reflections of their definition of leadership in student affairs, and the role gender and race had in their leadership journeys, I was able to build trust and to situate participants to better consider a more critical interrogation of the tenets of Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1995) through the lens of their experiences in student affairs.

Compiling the Data

With each interview, I added thick description to the field journal. I included description of any portion of my day that may have impacted how I might perform as the interviewer and co-constructor of knowledge. Whether it was details about my day or my personal journey, I used the field journal to assist me in tracking any personal aspects that may inform data analysis. Components of the description included any observations about the setting the participant chose in which to be interviewed. Notes included observations from the location, background, and opportunities for disruption. All but one of the participants chose to dial in using the video option. One participant chose to use the audio format due to time constraint and access to a video camera. Twelve of the participants logged into the video conference from a work or home office, and the other two participants dialed in from their kitchens or living rooms. One participant chose to dial in using the audio recording and later shared that she was participating while completing the hour-long drive home from work. I also made note of possible distractions that existed for both the participant and myself. This included the presence of family members, pets, or colleagues in the vicinity of the interview. Other distractions were noted such as time constraints and differences in time zones. Due to the different time zones for some of the interviews, setting a specific time to conduct all interviews was difficult. In an effort to respect a participant's time, I attempted to conduct all interviews at a time that was best suited for them. Four out of the 15 interviews were conducted during the work week, Monday through Friday, and six of the interviews were conducted after 4:30pm Eastern Standard Time.

Throughout the interview, I also used the field journal to record observations regarding facial expressions and vocal inflexions. I made note of laughter, pauses longer than 5 seconds, and whether a participant performed other tasks during the interview (such as eating or drinking). Additionally, I recorded the length of the interview at each of the three sections of the interview to gain a sense of any trends in the response times and the total length of the interviews. Although most of the interviews were conducted by video conference, the field journal still contained thick description by capturing details on surroundings and behavior. Portions of the journal are be included in the findings section in chapter 5.

The following table (Table 1) is an organizational tool to further introduce the participants. I have included the length of their interview, which could indicate comfortability, and a condensed answer to their responses to the question “Where did you learn leadership from?” to provide some insight on their perspective of leadership. Any additional information may inadvertently expose the identity of the participants.

Table 1

Study Participants

Pseudonym	Years in the field	Length of interview	Her response to "Where she learned leadership from?"
Bailey	9	1 hr 1 min	my mom
Betty	20+	37 min 45 sec Follow up by phone 16 min 09 sec	my father
Chantel	4	53 min 22 sec Follow up by phone 18 min 23 sec	my first supervisor

Denise	7	52 min 19 sec	my resident assistant in undergraduate school
Kelly	12	48 in 24 sec	my relationships in undergraduate school
Lani	6	1 hr 2 min	11th grade in high school
Linda	4	1 hr 25 min	my mother and sports
Marcellous	8	52 min 3 sec	in my home growing up
Natalie	8	53 min 58 sec	my parents
Parker	11	55 min 56 sec Followed up by phone 24 min 4 sec	my mother
Rachel	4	51 min 27 sec	from my father
Samantha	8	58 min 29 sec	my mom
Shay	4	23 min 38 sec Followed up through email Follow up by phone 16 hours 15 minute	high school leadership programs
Sherrie	9	1 hr 2 min	my first supervisor
Tina	4	1 hr 7 min	high school, mom, and undergraduate school

The Interviews

The questions are listed below in the same order they there asked during the interviews. The active interview and the critical narrative processes encourage the researcher to first provide an atmosphere to build trust between the researcher and the participant. The significance of the order of questions extends beyond assisting the reader to notice the trust between the interviewer and the participant. The order of questions also served to intentionally build to a pivotal point in the interview. Questions about their own leadership style led to a request to name the places at their institution where they see a reflection of their leadership styles and philosophies. By detailing the questions in a consecutive manner, the reader is able to capture the impact on the participant as she responds to the questions. Responses that were not as impactful to the participant were summarized.

When conducting the interviews, after pleasantries and expressions of gratitude, I reminded the participants that the interview would be confidential and that I would share their portion of the research to confirm their comfort in what would be included in the study.

Introductions

Tell me about yourself. The first question I asked each participant was "Tell me about yourself." This question was asked as a way to build rapport and to give the participant the leeway to share information about themselves from whatever standpoint they preferred. Although the question was formed to ask for a broad introduction, all of the participants included some information about their career path and their experiences in higher education when telling me about themselves. There were a few participants who

shared additional information that was not work related. Bailey shared that she owns a pet, Chantel shared that she is pursuing a master's degree, and Marcellous asked if she could eat dinner while we talked. The length of the answers to this question varied as well.

Some participants immediately shared their personal challenges as part of their response to the invitation to share information about themselves. Additional information shared included personal challenges in their current position and with their institution. Bailey shared that she was new to her position and she was finding one particular challenge in her new role. Referring to herself as a "fish out of water" in her current position, she shared, "I have always been in charge of my environment, and now I'm not." By mentioning her lack of control over her environment, Bailey shared her discomfort with having to manage an environment not structured for her success or comfort.

Chantel shared that she has worked at several institutions and one of the concerns she had at each institution is identifying support structures available for Black women. While attempting to "find her home" in higher education, she noticed that many schools lack support structures designed to assist in the success of Black women student affairs administrators. She shared that upon her entry to higher education, she

> …quickly realized, in terms of leadership and professional development, that there weren't as many opportunities in terms of how to network or just how to further cultivate those [leadership] skills and how to be more effective at being in student affairs, and that obviously varies by institution.

She further stated,

> I kind of was the prodigal higher ed. professional trying to find where my home was and what I tell people that I interviewed for, as I converse with other people in the field, is that, you know, that was a good time period to kind of pick and choose and define what I like about work and it pretty much shaped my identity as a professional in student affairs. Now knowing what I'd like to do ten to 15 years down the line in doing this work, and being a Black woman in student affairs, I am looking for what are schools doing right in terms of supporting our group?

Chantel was aware that professional experience and expertise were required for her future in higher education, and institutions prepared to support her and the challenges that accompany being a Black women in student affairs were also necessary for her success and growth. Leadership experiences were so salient that some participants began to share information about their position and leadership experiences within the first few minutes of the interview.

Role at work. After having the opportunity to share information about themselves, participants were asked to describe their role at work. All but one of the participants mentioned additional work along with the work within their official position. Participants named several reasons for the additional work. Some felt it was assumed or implied they should take on the responsibility, or they were directly told to fulfill the role. Others mentioned taking on additional work as a strategy to stay relevant or to position themselves for promotion. Participants detailed additional roles that included student support, programming, judicial affairs, and serving as the department figurehead for the institution. Sherrie stated,

> At a community college you have to wear many hats. I have some HR (human resources) responsibilities as well as some responsibilities on the student side…this is kind of like a dual role, but right now my chief priority is setting up a multicultural center.

Sherrie's story is one example of how broad participants' job responsibilities were within student affairs. The expectations of Sherrie by her institution is another example of how the participants, who have elaborate and demanding jobs must also create programming and offer services that the institution refuses to address, making the oppressive state a systemic issue.

Marcellous shared that with her promotion came an additional position that was presented as an interim structure.

> I was promoted to (…) and was doing quite well at that and since I was successful, my dean of students at the time came to me and said, "…we want to start a multicultural department, but trying to get it off the ground we really need somebody at the helm", and because of my experience and my connection with students I created the office. I am now the director of two departments in two locations.

When I asked Marcellous if the plan was to continue with this structure, she replied, "…I was supposed to get promoted [out of this dual role] and that was supposed to happen a year and a half ago." She is still hoping that the promotion will happen and has not pushed to let go of one of the roles. A hierarchical environment steeped in privilege and White supremacy can cause members of underrepresented populations to believe oppression is reasonable or justifiable. It could be argued as to whether her continued

dual-status is ethical or not. Additional crucial questions include, whose responsibility is it to relieve Marcellous from her dual position, how will the promise of her promotion be addressed, and how will the institution acknowledge the hardship that has been placed on her? After more than a year, she still waits and these questions still go unanswered.

Linda noted the vacant positions within her department as the reason for maintaining multiple roles at work. Along with the positions, she was also requested to represent her department on multiple committees. She recognized multiple factors that have led to her filling the roles that she does. She stated,

> I got selected for a couple of committees, and I did them, but after the committees were over, I said, "You know, I think I was on that committee to validate that committee…I was the only woman. I was the only person who didn't work in that department. I was the only person of color." You know as a Black woman I have to work harder, and then I'm like I've got two strikes. I'm also a woman of color…"

The institution's lack of representation has become a burden on individuals instead of on the University as a whole unit. Similarly, Denise shared that she currently holds the position she was hired for and two additional interim positions. The combination of the three roles requires her to serve as a designated school adviser, an orientation coordinator for international students, manager of the programming and staff of the intercultural center, chief adviser for student crisis, and as an academic adviser.

As the study continued, I realized that one of my assumptions had surfaced in this question. By asking the participant to describe their singular role at work, I had assumed a certain experience each participant was having and some nominal assumptions about

their institutions. The theories used in this study allowed for me to consider the intersection of the participants' identities; however, I had not considered that the structure of the departments that they work in would also be complex.

The final two questions in the opening section of the interviews invited participants to describe what they liked and disliked about their current position(s). Answers to these questions provided a glimpse of the preferred leadership styles of Black women student affairs administrators.

Job likes. Participants' responses included the gamut of work often found as part of the work in student affairs. Bailey expressed an appreciation for an environment that values creativity in a fun and supportive work environment. Parker noted the impact of the collaborative nature of the division and the university on her position as a strength. Betty noted the autonomy to empower students as one of her favorite aspects of her position while Kelly mentioned her ability to build relationships across the university and the local community as important aspects of her position. Although there was a variety of responses, all but one of the participants reported that the opportunity to support students was an integral part of their position. Chantel specifically spoke about supporting students as they navigate their academic journey. She stated, "Making students agents in their own change, that's what I truly enjoy." Shay spoke specifically about students from a developmental lens. "I really enjoy the development piece, the development of students. I enjoy the grooming, the smoothing out of the rough edges, and then seeing that come to fruition." Sherrie took a different angle as she shared her call to advocate on behalf of students. The ability to impact students' journeys was integral to many of the participants.

> What I like about my job is that I get to fight for students who know they are under-resourced. You know you are already coming in with all these labels and people treat you like those labels so I get to fight for those students and make a space for them and be their voice around the table when they're not present. I love that I get to do that every day for people who are marginalized and not recognized. Like that's my favorite thing, to speak for those who may not be in the room to speak up.

Sherrie recognized the taxation of underrepresentation and addressed the need to provide a voice for those who did not have one by being the voice. This is another example of where the participants responded to the university's deficiency on an individual level without being required to do so.

Similarly, Marcellous stated, "My students are phenomenal. They are grateful for the work that I do for them. The relationships that I share with my students, you know, I cherish those greatly." Also, Natalie stated she enjoys being a support person for the students she has been charged to support, and Lani focused on the importance of making a difference in the lives of students. She shared,

> I realized that a big part of higher education, regardless of what your title is that you have an opportunity to share in the journey with our students, and for me personally, it's an honor. It's a blessing when you can look and see that part of inception to graduation, and to see that growth, there is nothing more priceless and precious than being a part of that.

Linda found great value in assisting students in processing their life decisions, while Denise said she appreciated seeing students to graduation, particularly when there

was a challenge that a student had to overcome. Lastly, Rachel noted that her reason for entering the field of higher education was to support students. She stated, “I think that's why a lot of us join student affairs and get into the field. It is because of the students.” A shared appreciation of supporting students was evident in many of the participants. A position of support and also aligns with the United States’ historical opinion of Black women’s purpose in society (J. R. Feagin, 2010).

Job dislikes. There were no consistent responses to the question “What do you dislike about your job?” Participants noted a variety of perceived challenges including staffing, infrastructure, and challenges with communication. Bailey and Chantel mentioned their dislike for the office politics that existed within higher education as a whole. Chantel stated, “There's the politics. You know you have to tread a very fine line of, you know, considering how do I put myself out there without jeopardizing my own professional security?” Chantel understood how temperamental networking was for her. Others also mentioned dislikes that included salary, the rigidity and the difficulty to execute change within student affairs, issues with values and policy alignment, and challenges with trajectory and promotion for Black women student affairs administrators. Bailey addressed concerns with her supervisor. She shared a conflict in personality characteristics including communication styles and navigating different ways of handling conflict.

Chantel and Betty shared a dislike of the lack of diversity and representation of Black women within student affairs. Chantel stated, “There's just too few of us (Black women) in terms of leadership…over the extended period of time, roughly four or five

years of being here and this is the first time where I'm not the only person of color." She went on to state

> I have found that the lack of diversity has played a huge role in my experience, just in terms of the mindset and the approach in terms of programming. What are some of the things that may be necessary in the breadth and the guts of the work. You know, in student affairs, you have to think about everyone, not just the majority, and I think that, you know, some have very good intentions in trying to be safely inclusive, but I think sometimes you just need to be able to carve out a space where groups that need their own space have their own space to address certain things.

Chantel recognized that her university's dedication to diversity had its limits. Betty connected the lack of representation to the weight of representation. Betty stated,

> The part of the position that may not be my favorite is although this is a forward-thinking institution, when I go into a meeting, we're still the minority, meaning person of color and woman of color. So again, when I look at student affairs, we may be represented. Every other place in the institution is predominantly Caucasian. So, for me, it's like I need my staff to understand that everything that you do impacts the future of everyone else coming. It's not just about you, but what you do today is going to impact what the organization does in the future.

Betty showed the inherent responsibility a minoritized person feels to be a representative of their entire identity group. Sherrie spoke similarly in her reflections. She shared,

> It's bad. It's really bad, and higher leadership, if we look at it, it's all White. All White people, but in certain areas like student development – I was just talking about this with a colleague – in student development or certain student services fields or departments, they're Black. So, whereas you have the upper management all the board of trustees, the chairman, the VP's, all the non-student related divisions are all White, and anything dealing with the students are all Black because the students that we bring in are from the urban areas. My assumption is that they feel that we can relate to them more so than our counterparts. It's the good ol' boys club. There's a good old boys club. That's my observation. I never said that to anybody.

Sherrie reaffirmed that the optics of representation have an impact on Black women in student affairs. There is a visual reminder that they do not belong.

Leadership Reflections

As the interviews progressed, participants were invited to begin a critical consideration of the lessons and messages they have received regarding the concept of leadership. I first thanked participants for sharing their stories of their professional positions and asked their permission to shift the conversation to leadership. Participants were asked to share (a) where they remember receiving an initial understanding or lesson regarding leadership, (b) in what ways have they seen their definition of leadership reflected in their work within student affairs, (c) how their definition of leadership guides their work, (d) how race and gender influences their perspective of leadership, (e) how race and gender have manifested in how they navigate their work within student affairs, and (f) what strategies have they instituted for thriving, self-care, and fatigue.

All of the participants agreed to move to a more detailed conversation regarding the concept of leadership, the origin of their definition and understanding of leadership and how their concepts may have been informed by their identity.

Leadership lessons. While many of the participants referenced learning leadership from a parent or family member, they spoke of observing the lessons as instrumental to internalizing a definition. Bailey shared that her first lessons in leadership came from her mother and watching her be the best at what she did. She shared, "She wasn't a leader by title, but by action and competence." Parker's reflections were similar to Bailey's. She stated, "I learned leadership from my mother who had a military background. She was very giving and offered trust until it was broken, instead of making you earn it." Relationships with other Black women informed how many participants viewed leadership. Betty shared that her first lessons on leadership came from her father. She shared,

> My father, early on, told me that my younger brother and sister were always watching what I do and that because of that I needed to be mindful of the words that I use and the decisions I make because my decisions don't only impact me, but they impact them as well. He made it clear that I'm leadership. It's not something that you speak; it's something that you live.

The responsibility of being a leader was dense. Participants saw leadership as an identity more than a descriptor.

Natalie shared that she learned leadership from both of her parents who expected her to be a leader and not a follower. Their definition of leadership included being a trailblazer and learning to think for oneself with conviction.

Samantha's definition began at school by connecting leadership to visibility, but her mother helped her to see that leadership must also be exemplified in one's behavior. She credits college for her additional understanding that leadership must also include service to others. Linda credited her mother with teaching her the connections between leadership and mentoring, modeling behavior, and being a good communicator. Rachel's dad taught her that she was a leader with her own gifts and talents. She said her father taught her, "to be a leader is to be a light, but I knew what he meant was a leader being someone that others can look up to."

Other sources for leadership lessons were supervisors, sports coaches, and academic courses. While this is not representative of all participants, the variety of positions highlights the variety of people and places where leadership was taught. Participants shared an understanding of a human element to leadership that can be lost or overshadowed by concepts of positionality and hierarchy.

Leadership defined. Participants noted some reflections of their definition of leadership in higher education and student affairs. Several of the participants referred to current and past supervisors as reflections of their definition of leadership, while others had to seek other reflections of their definition of leadership external to the division of student affairs and at times external to their institution. Most participants noted that reflections of their definitions of leadership were often times seen in other Black women in higher education.

Bailey noted seeing her definition of leadership manifested in the behavior and values of past university presidents and supervisors. She noted evidence of the definition as their care and concern for others. She offered the example of leaders working

alongside their staff as colleagues pursuing a common goal. She also mentioned the act of mentoring and investing in other's development as evidence of her definition of leadership.

Parker expressed a lack of reflection of her definition of leadership due to the bureaucracy that exists in student affairs and the resistance to change. Her reasoning included that she has not observed the concepts of trust and partnership are not conveyed or exemplified. On the contrary, she stated, "People are stuck on the old way, including calling new staff by the former staff person's name. Current leadership often looks through a lens of comparison, whether it is comparisons with current staff or former." She further stated, "People are still communicating in old models with new people. This shows a l00% lack of trust because they want things done the way they used to be done with the former person." Parker connected leadership with forward-thinking, recognition, and trust.

Both Tina and Chantel stated that the reflection of their definitions of leadership was not readily recognizable. In fact, Tina shared that from her vantage point it seems senior leadership gives orders more than they "do the work." Chantel stated that she only saw a reflection of her definition of leadership once she sought it. She first had to use a sense of discernment to see if a person was really invested in her development. She did not see her reflection of leadership until she intentionally reached out to women of color leaders outside of her university. Through those relationships she also gained mentorship and support. Chantel also stated individuals who reflect her definition of leadership have not been easy to identify. She stated,

> I've had to seek it out…I found that the supports and the individuals that reflect leadership models that I've been able to kind of gravitate towards have been outside of student affairs. Whether they have been in the academic departments or whether they have been in the college leadership roles, I've been very intentional in trying to find either women and mainly women of color in those spaces.

Betty named her current supervisor as one who reflects her definition of leadership. When asked if she saw her definition reflected in higher education in the work of others, she stated,

> I would say probably in my current supervisor because she's also a woman of color. She's African American, and she's the vice president. She is one of the reasons I chose to come to the organization I'm at now because I know that she also had that stance and similar philosophy. But outside of her, I have not seen that style of leadership through others, unfortunately.

Betty reaffirmed the importance of underrepresented groups seeing their reflection in the demographics of the university. Her example shows a direct connection with recruitment of diverse staff.

Natalie shared two specific examples of individuals who reflected her definition of leadership. She stated,

> I've seen that everyone doesn't have that same mindset in terms of leadership. I've had some really good leaders in terms of one of my first leaders in student affairs was a Black woman…And then a former supervisor once told me, "Your job is to make your supervisor look good", but I also learned by watching him where on move in day, he's the director of housing most people ride around on a golf cart.

> He’s out there helping people move. I mean all hands-on deck and it's definitely showed. I definitely modeled that because I realized I can't expect someone to do something that I'm not willing to do.

For many of the participants, leadership and effectiveness are connected to modeled behavior. Their definition of leadership is also directly connected to how it is perceived and impacts others. This is another example of the co-dependent state of leadership for Black women student affairs administrators. The challenge to complete their work and fulfill their assigned tasks becomes more complex as they now have assumed the daunting principle that their success is not determined by their own merits, skills, gifts, and talents, but how those whose social identities have endowed them with more access, influence, and social capital interpret their influence and impact.

Samantha stated that she had seen a reflection of her definition of leadership in her mentors and her life coaches. She had also had to intentionally pursue relationships outside of her institution in order to connect with those who have similar leadership perspectives. Again, participants’ relationships had a direct influence on their definitions and perceptions of leadership.

Leadership influence on self. Participants in the study each were able to articulate how their definition of leadership guided their work. Bailey, Parker, Shay, Sherrie, Marcellous, Natalie, and Samantha each indicated that their definition of leadership was evident in how they support their students and staff. They mentioned specifically that they cared about the experiences of their staff members, trusted their ability to successfully fill their responsibilities and saw themselves as mentors.

Bailey stated, “I like getting work done, but also I want people to enjoy the process while getting the work done.” When asked about how leadership guides her work, Parker offers the importance of trust, “When it comes to supervising, and working with people, I assume you are competent and know what you are doing. I trust that the job that they were hired to do will get done.” Bailey saw a direct connection between leadership and competency and empowerment, yet environments may not be designed for Black women to be seen as competent and capable leaders.

Betty noted her commitment to assessment and reflection as examples of how her leadership definition informs her work. “I think it’s very important to assess where we are as a division to assess the impact of what we do on a daily basis because your perception is your reality.” By valuing assessment, Betty submitted that she reflected her belief that leadership is consistent action and that actions impact self and others.

Lani provided an example of how her definition of leadership, that included leading by example in a nurturing way, showed up in her work. She stated,

> I'm typically referred to as a ray of sunshine. I want to lead by example. I take that to the boardroom. I take that to my colleagues, and peers, and others. I am that example. I'm that example of hope, that example of optimism, that example of positivity, that example of making a difference. For me it even translates beyond, not just to my team, but in my everyday walk and talk here throughout the college.

Denise and Rachel made connections between their value for diversity and their definition of leadership. Their value for diversity and inclusion was evident as they spoke of being advocates and valuing diverse choices.

Race and Gender. Participants were asked to reflect on the ways race and gender have influenced their perception of leadership. Participants considered how working at predominantly White institutions have influenced their definitions of leadership and how they navigate their work in student affairs.

Bailey shared that her definition of leadership has been influenced more so by race than by gender. She shared that she has always worked at PWIs and has been motivated to leave no room to question her abilities as an African American student affairs administrator. She stated, "I know as an African American woman, I will be questioned by students and staff, mostly White staff. In response, my leadership style is to lead with confidence and a commitment to excellence." Bailey felt the proper response was in her sense of self. Her response did not address any responsibility the university might have to support her and simultaneously challenge an environment that makes her believe she has no room for error.

Parker shared that her identity has impacted how her leadership is seen in student affairs. She stated that she noticed at her current and previous institutions she was considered more credible due to her race and gender. She stated, "Being a Black woman in diversity work has given me more 'street cred' because there is a perception that Black women should be able to answer and address issues of diversity." She shared that her identity has made her very conscious of the demographics on campus and within the division. Representation had a direct impact on her campus involvement, her interactions on campus, and what she had been charged to do. She spoke of the internal battle that accompanies underrepresentation and marginalization, and specifically mentioned stereotype threat. Parker stated,

> Stereotype threat shows up like it does for students. You struggle with questions like, "Am I going to say something that looks bad, lessens people's view of me, or lessens my ability to impact the climate?" It is true the climate impacts those who have to influence it.

Parker made specific connections between her experiences at PWIs and her perception of leadership. It manifested in how she navigated her work in student affairs, as she managed politics, accepted or declined committee charges, and navigated spaces on campus. Parker shared that her identity as a Black woman also situated her to ask questions and challenge those on campus who claimed to value social justice and inclusivity. She often asked questions that surfaced disconnections between policy, claims of feminism, and inclusivity. She spoke specifically of highlighting times when the voices of marginalized individuals have been silenced.

When asked how race and gender have influenced her perception of leadership, Chantel referred to the dynamics that surfaced specifically with White women, who "as well-meaning as they are, sometimes allow their own insecurities to negatively impact the work environment. White women see competent people of color as competition and as a threat." This impacted leaders' abilities to have relationships and support systems on campus. Chantel created strategies to address the ways that race and gender manifested in how she navigated her work in student affairs. She shared that she created checklists to assist her in decision making and with "choosing her battles" by listing what she has control of and what issues are in her sphere of influence. She also considered how the battles that surfaced regarding race and gender may have impacted her productivity and whether they warranted her attention. She spoke of leadership experiences being

inextricably tied to climates created by White women whose feelings of insecurity were race-based. She stated race was a clear issue for White women as they often dismissed her, rendered her invisible, or behaved towards her differently than they did to others. She also spoke of the need for skills in code switching and having a strong sense of self.

Betty also shared the need to be strategic as she noticed the influence of race and gender on her perception of leadership in student affairs. Seeing the indicators as separate from each other, she stated gender has impacted her perception of leadership as she has observed how she was held to different standards than her male counterparts. She stated, "For males I have worked with, they're not as open to how others may feel. They often get information and then make a decision and implement the decision." She raised this as a stark difference to the expectations placed upon her as a leader to empower others, engage others, and disclose information in efforts to build and maintain trust. Regarding race, she recounted instances of her work being co-opted by her White male counterparts. She stated,

> I may come to (a White male) after a meeting to get some insight from you but it won't be in an arena where people will hear that I was honored or considered as having something to contribute. And there's been opportunities where I've shared and it's gone back to the bigger group as if it was that person's idea.

Betty shared several lessons she learned having to navigate these environments. She stated,

> What it's taught me is that you have to be very mindful of watching and overthinking more than others may have to do. So, what I mean by that specifically is that in the past I would be very open to share and very open to

> speak to people offline and have dialogues, have conversation you have brainstorm meetings and I still am open but what it has taught me is to follow up with an email as a memory marker.

As Kelly shared her perspective on the impact of race and gender on her perception of leadership, she also mentioned her relationship with White women. She shared, “I’ve worked along White women and they could say some things, but of course it could come back as if I said it, and now I’m labeled as the angry Black woman or as being a little abrasive or standoffish…” Kelly said she used this phenomenon to her advantage when navigating the university. She stated,

> I use it as a privilege, again, I hate this type of thing, the smiling and batting the eyes, and “I'm so young” and “help me”, and the innocent and damsel in distress type thing, I will use that to specifically make sure my voice is heard, and that things that need to be addressed or acknowledged are acknowledged. I also will use almost every identity possible I can to make sure that one, I’m acknowledged in that space, but then, two, I'm speaking for the students whose identities align with mine to be heard and acknowledged.

Sherrie also mentioned a White-Black dichotomy when responding to the question of race and gender and her perception of leadership. She shared her thoughts:

> I think that men get away with a whole lot more than women. White men. I feel as a woman, and especially a Black woman, when I'm in leadership, when I’m running a meeting, or when I’m making a comment in a meeting, I'm always trying to check my tone because I don't want to be the angry Black woman, but it’s really just me being passionate. But I know that people will read that as angry

> and she always has an attitude, so I'm always self-checking which is annoying and constantly having to code switch in between conversations, colleague to colleague… I feel like women have to constantly self-check, but Black women have to double self-check. We got to do the self-check because if a White woman says it, that'll be cool, but when we say it, we're angry Black bitches. If a White man can say some things. He's a boss. He's a good leader strong leader. I can say those things. Same tone, "Oh, she's bitchy today." You know like, what I know race and gender and leadership has taught me is that, especially being a Black woman, I have to I prove I'm twice as good especially within the leadership position.

Sherrie felt that the expectations of her leadership were extraordinary and unrealistic, yet she worked to meet them. Marcellous admits that race and gender have influenced her perception of leadership by making her recognize that society has structured a standard of leadership, one of which she can choose not to accept. She stated, "It's one example. And so you set your focus on dismantling this perception that this is the norm leadership style."

Natalie also compared her experience to the perceived experiences of White men and women. Natalie stated that her perception of leadership has shifted as she understands that White men can do things that no one else can. She named language and dress code, and also mentioned less qualifications are required to be offered a professional position or promotion. She specifically stated,

> I feel like White men can do a lot more things that not everyone can. They cannot show up and get promoted. They can dress the way they want to and get

promoted. They can address people the way they want to and get promoted. They can have less qualifications and get promoted. I've seen that at every school I've worked at.

She offered additional rules that are different based on race and gender. She stated that White women receive more soft responses, hand holding and coddling. She stated that leadership expectations are influenced by race and gender. She mentions other differences in treatment in the context of patience and grace and how they are extended being different as well. She mentioned the additional burden for Black women as they are expected to represent all Black women, especially when in leadership roles. Natalie noted the extra pressure that accompanies leadership roles for Black women in student affairs as she recalled that she used to believe that she must accept all invitations and meet all requests. She accepted inferred pressure to be constantly present and available for Black students. She stated that many of these pressures would not exist if representation of Blacks in higher education administration positions was better.

Samantha shared specific examples of how race and gender have influenced her perception of leadership in student affairs. She stated she has had to adjust her leadership strategy due to the experiences she has had as a leader in student affairs at her institution. She shared several issues that prompted a strategy shift: bias manifested regularly in the region she worked in; she often heard whispering when she entered a room; and she had been professionally bullied by a White woman. She also shared a story when individuals were allowed to transfer out of her department without her prior knowledge. She stated that these issues individually may have some other origin, but as a collective they clearly stemmed from race and gender.

Samantha navigated her knowledge of the difference in expectations or experiences by reminding herself of three of her truths: racial battle fatigue (Smith, Yosso, & Solorzano, 2011) and microaggressions (Kondrat, 2002; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008) are real, biased treatment of Blacks in student affairs is universal, and there are racialized experiences in any field. Samantha's view of her experiences directly connect to the principles of CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2009) and the embedded presence of racism in higher education and society at large. Her understanding of racism, oppression, and White supremacy had actually become a protective mechanism.

Tina describes her perspective of the impact of race and gender for leadership in student affairs as very traditional. She credits her mother for her perception, which includes the perception that the "rules" are different for Blacks, particularly for Black men. She listed the following rules that have impacted how she views leadership and shows up as a leader: "Don't be loud, don't be bossy, and don't be rude." She stated that her racialized view of leadership has informed which leaders she admires, and the expectations she has for herself as a leader. Much like leadership theories birthed from the perspective of the one creating them, her rules seem applicable to a certain population, further confirming leadership concepts are racialized.

Shay shared how the manifestation of race and gender could show up at times you did not expect and were not necessarily prepared to process or address. She recalled,

> What comes to mind is when we launched a foundation like a few months ago, and what resonated with me is when I looked back at the photo and there were Black people at the launch party or kick off if you will, but when the photographs

were taken and posted there were only pictures of White males. I believe there was a good handful of us, some sprinkles there, but not one was in any of the photos. No type of diversity just pictures of the good old boys.

Chantel, Rachel, and Linda noted that their perception of leadership was influenced by race and gender due to the demographics of upper management and individuals who provide a direct service to the campus or students. Linda mentioned how long the issue of homogeneity has existed for higher education and the unintended messages attached to the optics.

Self-Care. As a way to close the conversations regarding leadership, participants were asked to share any strategies that have to address fatigue and self-care. There were no consistent responses, and one participant stated that she did not have anything she could refer to as strategies for self-care.

Bailey and Marcellous shared that one of their strategies is to take time off from work. They stated the importance of getting away for rejuvenation and rest. Chantel and Betty shared the process of mindfulness, which included exercises to assist with focusing on a plan for the day and purposefully paying close attention to one's surroundings, being mindful of introducing stress and avoiding it when possible. Betty also shared that she has a spiritual life that includes meditation and reading the Bible. Rachel and Tina shared that their main source for self-care was owning and caring for a pet. They not only considered their dogs loving companions, but also leveraged the dog as a valid reason to work reasonable hours, instead of extended ones. Kelly noted her self-care strategy being highly related to her ability to step away from work. She mentioned that she does not check her email when away from work. Tina and Linda listed their hobbies as methods of

self-care. They listed exercise, crocheting, and good sleep habits as good ways to address stress and fatigue. Tina and Natalie both mentioned the importance of therapy and having good support systems as a part of a good mental health care plan.

Denise offered one strategy for self-care. She used a mantra to help keep the challenges that surfaced at work in perspective. She made it a habit to repeat to herself on a regular basis: "Stop bleeding for the university because they don't bleed for you." This strategy may be seen as contradictory to many leadership principles and may have even been considered as selfish unless considered from the perspective of women whose history includes enslavement, rape, and systemic oppression. The experiences of Black women are shaped by discrepancies in pay, unequal treatment, and a façade of equality.

Servant Leadership Analysis

For the third portion of the interview, I invited the participants to conduct a critical analysis of the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1996). The interview design was structured in a way that would not only address the research questions, but it would also serve to center the participant's experience as a preparation phase for a critical examination of the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1996). Centering the participant's approach to leadership strengthens the analysis process (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Given our dialogue about their positionality as leaders and their leadership philosophies, participants would then reflect on the complexities of their leadership experiences and speak to the practicality of the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1996) from the context of their race and gender.

As the last phase of the interview process, participants were invited to classify the tenets of the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1996) in these possible groupings: (a)

tenets that are universally applicable to all leaders with no cultural implications for Black women student affairs administrators, (b) due to cultural context, the social construct of race and racism, and the historical oppression (J. R. Feagin, 2010) of Blacks in America, if employed by a Black woman administrator in student affairs, these tenets would not be interpreted as they have been written, and (c) due to cultural context, the social construct of race and racism, historical oppression of Blacks, and the intersection of identities (K. W. Crenshaw, 1995) for Black women, it would not be advantageous for a Black women student affairs administrator to perform these tenets. Three possible classifications were initially identified as part of the initial conversation with the first participant, Bailey. We discussed possible considerations and implications for the model, and as part of her interview, identified the three categories as a framework to consider the complexity of the model. As I spoke to more participants, an additional category of "required" was identified that would acknowledge a tenet as mandatory of Black women student affairs administrators in order for them to be considered an effective leader.

Universality of Servant Leadership

At the conclusion of part two of the interview, I emailed the tenets to each participant and they were given time to review them and to ask any clarifying questions before we began to process the tenets as the last portion of the interview. The tenets were not shared with the participants before their interview to allow for an initial reaction to the tenets, which is similar to how individuals encounter perceptions of leaders and leadership strategies. Time is often limited for individuals to process leadership strategies or tactics they have to navigate.

The tenets shared with participants were (Greenleaf, 1977):

- Servant leaders listen not only to understand but to own issues or problems that surface. They seek to own the experience even when it may silence their own voice.
- Servant leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower.
- Servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation.
- Acceptance and empathy also characterize servant leaders. Servant leaders understand imperfection is a fact of life and they accept those who they lead without reservation.
- Servant leadership requires the ability to see the unseen and to anticipate the unknown. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make decisions without the privilege of information.
- Similarly, but not the same, a servant leader must also be able to use the past to predict the future.
- Servant leaders must have a high level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others.
- Persuasion is also an essential quality for servant leaders. The ability to influence with sincerity and gentleness is a worthy virtue.
- Greenleaf (1977) presents the ability to conceptualize as a principal leadership talent. The ability to combine an understanding of the current condition with a vision of a potential beneficial outcome is a true gift.

- Another strength of servant leaders is to use their capacity to heal. Motivated by their own pursuit of wholeness, servant leaders see their role in the healing of others. This ability is ideally connected to a servant leaders' ability to build community.

We also discussed the option of a follow up interview at a later date if the participant would like to provide more thoughts or if I would have more questions. Each participant agreed to that plan. The decision for a follow-up meeting was made collaboratively. Three participants were contacted for additional information or to request clarification on their critical critique of the model.

Participant Critical Analysis of the Servant Leadership Tenets.

Participants conducted a critical analysis on each Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) tenet from their leadership lens. Solórzano and Yosso (2009) stipulate that the following five elements must be present in educational methodologies, theories, and frames to be considered grounded in CRT. The first element maintains that race and racism must be assumed and seen as pervasive. The history of race and racism must be seen as essential elements to social structures and the human experience. The second element maintains the rejection of a neutral ideology of meritocracy. Critical race analysis recognizes that claims of equality, colorblindness, and objectivity are masks for power dynamics, privilege, and a racial hierarchy. The third element calls for social justice and racial liberation to be the central purpose of the analysis. Critical race constructs actively seek to disrupt oppression. The fourth element informs many liberatory frames and methodologies and strongly aligns with the narrative inquiry. Critical

> race practices accept and value the lived experiences, stories, and knowledge of people of color and sees those as necessary tools to dismantle the assumption that White notions are norm. Lastly, the fifth element accepts race and racism as both historical and contemporary constructs that call for recognition that both are functioning concurrently and abstrusely. The content of the first and second parts of the interview confirmed that participants had adopted a lens informed by the five elements and confirmed that their analysis of the Social Change model would be critical in nature.

Tenet Classification. A table has been included in the study to provide a condensed view of how the participants in the study classified the tenets of the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1977) (See Appendices D and E).

Having already discussed the leadership likes, dislikes, and challenges that accompany being a Black woman student affairs administrator, participants classified the tenets and provided context regarding their decision. The first tenet states that servant leaders listen not only to understand, but to own issues or problems that surface. They seek to own the experience even when it may silence their own voice (Greenleaf, 1977). Chantel, Kelly, and Rachel considered this tenet universal to all leaders. From their standpoint, Black women would not have to consider any cultural implications. Chantel stated,

> Leaders must be prepared to own issues when they arise, even if the issue wasn't their fault. If the opposite were true, we would think that person was a bad leader. If something goes wrong and the leader avoids responsibility or casts the blame on others, we usually think they are a poor leader because leaders set the tone.

> They are in charge. Even if you have delegated something, it does not absolve you of responsibility. And sometimes, you just have to take the hit…

Rachel's reflection was similar. She stated, "Taking responsibility seems like a fundamental expectation of all leaders. This expectation would remain no matter who was in charge."

Lani, Samantha, Denise, Sherrie, Parker and Bailey identified this tenet as one that Black women student affairs administrators might experience as a hardship or further oppression; thus, the intention for this tenet to be used as a leadership strategy could not be considered universal. Bailey stated,

> The voices of Black women are already marginalized. Silencing one's voice as a leadership strategy clearly ignores the experiences of women and women of color. This tenet may be difficult to do as it may cause more harm. To require this tenet as an indicator of leadership minimizes or ignores the social structures that exist to oppress women and people with marginalized identities. It actually supports an oppressive power structure, even though it may be doing so inadvertently.

Samantha also stated, "(Black women student affairs administrators) do this tenet a lot and we don't recognize that we shouldn't. We have been socially conditioned to do this and often don't realize that we are." Samantha surfaced the role of internalized oppression and how people of color can be complicit in their own subjugation.

Betty, Shay, Marcellous, Natalie, Tina, and Linda felt this tenet was required by Black women within student affairs. From their perspective, the absence of this tenet would have negative consequences. Marcellous stated, "If Black women (student affairs administrators) do not exhibit this tenet, the woman will be labeled a dissenter and

selfish. So few spaces have been structured for us to have a voice, silence has become the expectation." Each group focused on a different aspect of the tenet, seemingly focusing on the portion of tenet that was salient for them. For some it was maintaining responsibility. For others, it was relinquishing one's voice and the connections between voice and power and socialization.

The second tenet states servant leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower (Greenleaf, 1977). Chantel, Kelly, Lani, Denise, Bailey, and Rachel considered this tenet universal. They did not indicate any major concerns for this tenet. On the contrary, Parker had strong opinions about this tenet. She shared, "Language is crucial even though I want to be authentic because what I say or do gives others license to say and do what they do." Betty, Shay, Sherrie, Marcellous, Natalie, Samantha, Tina, and Linda also identified this tenet as one required by Black women who work in student affairs. Natalie connected this tenet to code switching (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012) and other survival techniques used by Black women student affairs administrators (Holmes, 2003; Patton & Catching, 2009; Yakaboski & Donahoo, 2011). After a short laugh, Tina stated, "Black women must always be mindful of their language… at work or at the grocery store, this is not a life option."

Most of the participants had strong sentiments about the third tenet: servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation (Greenleaf, 1977). Bailey shared, "This tenet doesn't work for us though. Withdrawal is not a strategy. I try to withdraw, but it doesn't work because people draw me back in." Parker,

Chantel, Kelly, Marcellous, Natalie, Lani, Linda, Shay, Sherrie, and Denise felt differently about the tenet. Parker shared,

> We don't withdraw from anything until we begin to fall apart. We don't back away, but shift gears completely. The angry Black woman stereotype is actually rooted in some realness. It can be frustrating to always push at things and not back down, which means withdrawal cannot be an option.

When asked about this tenet, Chantel shared,

> Using withdrawal as a strategy, as black women, there is this perception of being confrontational and that plays a part in this tenet. We must be objective while keeping the subjective at the focal point. We must also be aware of how that surfaces. So for example, negotiating policy, resolving matters that include policy and state your stance, we must be assertive not confrontational. Withdrawal is not a strategy because withdrawal is not an option due to stereotypes, and if we want to move a strategy forward, we must have a voice.

Withdrawal can be interpreted many different ways. Kelly offered,

> If I were to withdraw from something, I would get that conference call of "Are you happy here?" So, I just chose to back up because I didn't want anyone to be offended by my assertiveness. It's a different interpretation in regards to someone withdrawing or kind of stepping back to let you get to know someone else or let them get a bit more information about what's going on. To let them make a decision that is interpreted differently on the environments. I've been at PWIs where it comes across as if you're no longer engaged, or at an HBCU and you feel defeated or silenced. It can be a little difficult in some respects at any institution.

Participants' interpretation of this tenet revealed an innate understanding of the role of power in the concept of withdrawal (Minnis & Callahan, 2010). The perception of withdrawal is informed by the individual and thus the motivation for withdrawal can easily be mistaken.

The fourth tenet states acceptance and empathy also characterize servant leaders. Servant leaders understand imperfection is a fact of life and they accept those who they lead without reservation (Greenleaf, 1977). Parker, Lani, Bailey, Sherrie, Shay, and Rachel felt that this tenet would be interpreted differently if executed by a Black woman within student affairs. Parker expounded on why she classified this tenet as different for Black women.

> We rely too much on our emotions to make decisions as opposed to what is best to do as a whole. Furthermore, this tenet really depends on our role because the reliance of empathy could be seen as a negative. This tenet presented on a man could be seen as positive. As a director of a multicultural center, there would be more room for her to be passionate because it's an expectation in a meeting, particularly around the subjects of diversity and social justice. That may be why we see more women of color in these roles because we can be more vocal.

Sherrie shared her frustration about what she perceives as an expectation to accept what accompanies leading imperfect people. During her response to the fourth tenet she stated:

> Yes, and I'm done teaching people when people ask me stupid stuff. You know, if you can get on Pinterest© and find your recipes and your bridesmaid dresses, and your little DIY projects and your collages then you can Google© "White

> privilege.” Don't run up on me talking about you don’t know. No, not for somebody that works directly with students. No way. No. I'm going to redirect you to the internet. Get you some resources. Educate yourself. I'm done with empathizing. It’s too much. It’s too wide open now. There is too much stuff to walk around blind and pretend like, “Oh my gosh. I never knew. No baby. Hit Google©. How you going to know the words to “Ol’ Yeller”, but you don't know about White supremacy? Get outta here. I want you to go on this journey to self-discovery because, guess what, I didn't get a partner to take me on this journey, Shit. It just kills me. I never know how – at these ages – if you don't know it's because you choose not to know.

Sherrie connected the fourth tenet to empathizing with someone who is deficient in multicultural competence and a knowledge of White privilege. By doing so she further affirmed how the tenets are seen through the lenses of race and gender.

Chantel, Kelly, Denise, and Tina considered this tenet universal while Betty, Samantha, and Natalie considered the tenet required by Black women in student affairs. Natalie stated, “Black women ‘SA pros’ don’t have the option to be imperfect because we represent a race universal. A mistake by one is repercussions felt by all.” Marcellous and Linda saw this tenet as one that could not be utilized by Black women student affairs administrators. Marcellous offered an explanation, “As a Black woman, you cannot trust everybody. It’s not how we work. Our history has shown us not everyone should be trusted. White men can maybe afford to do those things. We can’t.”

The fifth tenet states that servant leadership requires the ability to see the unseen and to anticipate the unknown. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make

decisions without the privilege of information (Greenleaf, 1977). Chantel, Kelly, Lani, and Tina saw this tenet as universally applicable to all leaders without any ramifications impacted by race or gender. Shay and Denise felt that this tenet would be differently interpreted due to race and gender. Denise stated that this tenet is essential to the success of Black women student affairs professionals as this is a technique for survival. She stated, "Black women are not often given access to information, and must use their instincts. Immobility due to a desire for information may be interpreted as wanting access to resources outside of one's parameters."

Nine of the 15 participants felt that this tenet was required. Bailey, Natalie, Betty, Parker, Sherrie, Marcellous, Linda, Rachel, and Samantha shared the belief. Marcellous shared very succinctly, "I have to anticipate and I have to produce." Similarly, Shay stated, "This one is hard to do because we are not privy to information. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make decisions without the privilege of information. We get very little information to perform accordingly." Lani unknowingly agreed with Shay when she stated, "This is particularly crucial as we have to make decisions without the privilege of information. I think that's kind of required of us all. I think that's just indicative of our leadership."

The sixth tenet states, "Similarly, but not the same, a servant leader must also be able to use the past to predict the future" (Greenleaf, 1977). Marcellous, Denise, Lani, and Kelly shared that they saw this tenet as somewhat of a fact of leadership. The skill to forecast is beneficial in a variety of capacities. Rachel stated, "A Black woman has to consider different aspects of privilege such as race, gender, and social economic status", as she implied that her White counterparts do not have to consider the same aspects in

their predictions. Natalie expounded on her perspective that reflecting the tenet is required when she said,

> Black women student affairs professionals must be visionary and must be able to see what is coming. This tenet speaks to the necessary skills of assessing what is working and what is not. What can we change? This should be universal, but it seems to me it is more vital for one culture than another.

Samantha, Sherrie, Shay, Betty, Parker, and Bailey also saw the tenet as a requirement for Black women student affairs administrators.

Chantel, Tina, and Linda stated that this pillar is interpreted differently by and about Black women student affairs administrators. Tina stated,

> …for example, for me as a Black woman, I can say, “I think that historically I've seen this happen. We should probably put things in place for this to not happen again.” Someone else of a different race or gender may say, "No. I don't think we have to go that far. I think it'll be okay." Based on whether there's privilege behind their race or their gender, their decision may be looked at as more thought out or, you know, might have more clout. I have witnessed this happen before.

Chantel stated,

> Using the past to predict the future can be impacted by generation as well. Black women’s generational frame of reference impacts the interaction between the parties and the prediction. We must consider who we are supervising, supporting, leading, those we report to and those who report to us.

There was high agreement that there are multiple factors that influence one’s ability to predict the future.

The seventh pillar says, “Servant leaders must have a high level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others” (Greenleaf, 1977). Bailey, Chantel, Kelly, Lani, Linda, and Rachel felt this tenet was a universal skill that all leaders should have. Parker, Betty, Shay, Sherrie, Marcellous, Tina, Natalie, Samantha, and Denise felt this tenet was required of Black women student affairs administrators. Sherrie stated,

> More than anybody, Black women must have a high level of self-awareness and good understanding of how others perceive them. We should know areas that we are deficient in so that we can hire to our weaknesses and not someone who will illuminate our weaknesses. I think we must be very aware of it because if anybody’s gonna get the blame why something didn’t go right it will be the Black woman.

Marcellous stated, “We must carry ourselves while being aware of the perception of others. We must be more attuned to that than a White man would have to.” Tina believed that this tenet would be impacted by racial and gender identities. She stated,

> This is another situation of “a Black woman can, but.” When a Black woman has self-awareness, you start to get in the lines of degrading. Women getting degraded because you shouldn’t feel that way or you’re “stepping into a man’s shoes.” This is something Black women must remain aware of.

Likewise, Denise stated,

> You're constantly aware. Sometimes you have a hyper-awareness that kind of makes you operate on a different level than maybe, you know, White women who don't have to do as much. But also, you know, not just the perception of others, but how others perceive you because that directly impacts your leadership.

Participants connected the concept of self-awareness to other dimensions of their concepts of leadership and how they believe they are perceived as leaders. Self-awareness was seen as a necessary tool.

The eighth tenet included in the study purposed persuasion as an additional essential quality for servant leaders. It stated, “The ability to influence with sincerity and gentleness is a worthy virtue.” A good number of the participants felt this tenet would be interpreted differently than how it has been presented as part of the theory if exemplified by a Black woman. Parker, Kelly, Sherrie, Marcellous, Lani, Samantha, Tina, and Denise felt that social identities would impact this tenet. Parker did not necessarily believe that persuasion was a necessary leadership quality. Instead she offered the ability to influence as an essential leadership quality. She stated, “I want to give information so that individuals are informed. Influence is crucial and essential for leadership role because people are looking to you on how they should work respond, and accomplish tasks.” Tina stated,

> You know, I feel like number seven and eight could go almost hand-in-hand. Given how having that self-awareness gets you called a "b" or gets you called this or that, and then on the flip side of that is, you know, when you are being genuine, and you show sincerity then you're weak or you're this or, you know or you're that. So I feel like that's another characteristic of Black women…

Marcellous shared that sincerity is not interpreted the same when expressed by Black woman as it is when expressed by others. “Our gentle is not someone else’s gentle and sincerity on us can look like ‘RBF’ or resting bitch face.” Kelly shared her struggles with this this tenet. She stated,

> I struggle with persuasion and some aspects so if I don't use my cutefulness or youthfulness or something like that, that makes people feel comfortable then it becomes more difficult for, you know, to persuade them. And I see that a lot when it comes to, honestly, the ageism concept. So for me, it's something of "I can't persuade you or even influence you to hear me because you can't get past the fact that I'm not seven-years-old."

Bailey shared that as a leader, the ability to influence others is essential. She stated that the challenge is to do so with sincerity. Chantel, Shay, Natalie, Linda, and Rachel agreed that the tenet was universal and applied to all leaders. Chantel made an interesting connection to another role often assigned to Black women student affairs professionals: mammy (Harley, 2008). She stated,

> The tactic of persuasion, and I think that the fine line here is you know not falling into that called the mama bear or you know the mammy role. Yes, I can be here as the sounding board, but you know I'm not the mammy. I have a role here. I am an authority that needs to be respected. I can be persuasive, but you know there's some lines here.

When asked how she connected the stereotype of mammy to the concept of persuasion she stated, "When I think of the "mammy" role I think of the institution wanting us to serve as persuaders and comforters instead of educators, which isn't always comforting or persuasive."

The ninth Greenleaf (1977) presents the ability to conceptualize as a principal leadership talent. The ability to combine an understanding of the current condition with a vision of a potential beneficial outcome is a true gift. Chantel, Kelly, Marcellous, Lani,

Linda, Denise, Rachel, and Natalie saw this tenet as universal one. Natalie shared her perspective.

> Sometimes being a visionary means you realize you may not be the one with the vision. That means someone else on your team may have the vision and you may need to be the one to support that vision. And sometimes that can be hard as a Black woman because I've had people steal my ideas. I have to remind myself part of my job is to make my supervisor look good. I remind myself when one of us shines, we all shine.

From her perspective, the role of visionary may not always include the owner of the vision. This is a privileged position and state to occupy.

Tina viewed the tenet as one whose meaning could be misinterpreted if expressed by a Black woman student affairs administrator. Tina stated that the pillar would be seen differently if executed by a Black woman. Bailey, Parker, Betty, Shay, Sherrie, and Samantha categorized the tenet as required of Black women student affairs administrators.

Another strength of servant leaders is to use their capacity to heal. Motivated by their own pursuit of wholeness, servant leaders see their role in the healing of others. This capacity is ideally connected to a servant leaders' ability to build community. While Bailey, Kelly, and Rachel saw this tenet as universal, many of the participants disagreed. Bailey expressed a desire for individuals to have a positive encounter when they are in her presence. She stated, "This tenet speaks to me. People must leave me feeling better having interacted with me." Parker, Chantel, Sherrie, Marcellous, Natalie, Lani, and

Denise saw the tenet as one that might look differently based on who is modeling it. Chantel stated,

> We must show up as ourselves and the wholeness is too multilayered to be able to know how to heal and what to heal. Intersectionality impacts this because we may not be culturally attuned to heal because we are always called upon to be a healer. And we are relegated to the mammy role.

Lani's reflections considered why this tenet would be different for Black women student affairs administrators. She connected the tenet to the historically oppressed role of Black women in society. She stated,

> It goes all the way back to slavery and Jim Crow days when the father was sold away to break the family. For me, by nature, we are loving, giving, nurturing, healing type of creatures and human beings. I think it would potentially be judged or looked at very differently coming from us. But I definitely think that it's essential to part of the beauty of who we are to this universe.

Shay, Samantha, Betty, Linda, and Tina considered the tenet as a required leadership tool for Black women student affairs administrators. Tina stated,

> I think that this tenet is something that's expected of us to do as Black women. I think we are expected to heal people. We are expected to whether we are expected in our families to be a healer, expected in our workplace to be a healer, or even to heal one another. And although most of the time we are not whole, we're expected to push other people to be whole.

CHAPTER V

THEMES

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to present a critical narrative of the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators at the PWIs and their perception of the practicability and universality of leadership models. The study sought to understand the lived experiences of Black women student affairs administrators and how they resist, engage or accommodate popular leadership models. Specifically, this study examined how the intersections of race and gender impacted the applicability of the Servant Leadership Model of leadership (Greenleaf, 1977).

Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks of CRT (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995), BFT (Hill Collins, 2000, 2002), and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004b, 2007; Hekman, 1997) provided a foundation from which to center the voices represented in this study. I considered the counterstories of Black women student affairs administrators as truth narratives that did not need to be vouched for or confirmed. However, by using Carspecken's (1996) critical qualitative research methodology, the researcher seized and preserved the power of the critical narrative. Through a thematic analysis and through the application of critical race theory, the following research questions will be addressed in this chapter:

1. What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender?
2. How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators?
3. How do the experiences of African American women within student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?

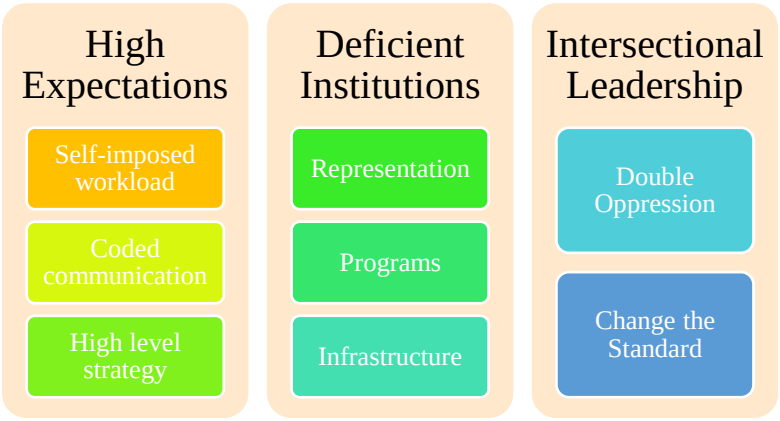
This chapter offers the findings from interviews with 15 Black women student affairs administrators who hold a variety of positions at various locations throughout the United States. In the previous chapter, I provided information about the participations in a collective way for the purpose of honoring and preserving their request for confidentiality. In efforts to provide some context, I shared some information regarding their years in higher education, and who they attribute their first lessons of leadership to. I did not share the information to substantiate the participants. CRT (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995), BFT (Hill Collins, 2000, 2002) and Standpoint Theory (Harding, 2004b, 2007; Hekman, 1997) situate the participants as well-grounded additions to pre-existing, majority narratives about leadership that are incomplete and skewed.

Through the use of Carspecken's (1996) critical methodology, claims about leadership and participants' experiences were identified. Through exploring the participants' responses to the questions of which elements of leadership were important to them, their perceptions of race and gender in how they navigate leadership

interactions, and their interrogation of a popular leadership model, the following themes surfaced from their collective voices.

The three themes identified in the data not only address the research question, but they also reflect the underlying frames in the three research questions. If examined closely, the research questions can be distilled to three domains: internal self, external to self, and leadership. The three themes can be presented similarly. Figure 1 outlines the three major themes and the categories in them.

Figure 1. Major themes and categories



High Expectations

When synthesizing the data, the theme of high expectations emerged. Much of what the participants shared addressed the complexity and amount of work that was a part of their past and current positions. Participants also shared how the expectations of the office required a level of performativity in order to maintain or be successful. Even with meeting these expectations, participants knew that they may have to leave their institution when seeking advancement or promotion. Although some participants shared they were considering or actively seeking to leave their institution, each participant spoke of

strategies they have utilized to maneuver challenges at both the individual and systemic levels.

Heavy Workload

Participants spoke of multiple ways they worked to meet a variety of expectations from multiple sources. The participants surfaced a variety of experiences, some specific to their positions, some consistent across positions, years in the field, and location. As the women surfaced stories of challenge and frustration the complexity and magnitude of their work became a common thread. Many women assumed multiple positions or work assignments voluntarily. When asked about her role at work, Bailey stated,

> I do a lot. In my role, I am responsible for a lot of the signature programs…My role is I do a lot of things on behalf of the office, and I am the only one with that role. I am at the helm of all signature programs, supervise two staff members, and advise leadership ambassadors.

She later shared how she chairs multiple committees, two of which she created because she recognized the need. Although she was aware of the discrepancy between what she was hired to do and her workload, she created additional work without being directed to do so. She did not interrogate her submission to an internal oppressive narrative she followed that told her she must do more, produce more, and manage more than her counterparts.

In similar spirit of workload, Parker mentioned that her favorite part of her job is doing the things she is not supposed to be doing. She shared, “This is a small institution and we have a collectivist mentality so collaboration is necessary.” She served as a clearinghouse which allows her to “address the needs and demands of the campus.” It is a

heavy load for one person to serve an entire campus, even if the campus is small in size. Parker had defined her role in a collaborative relationship as the one to fill roles and complete tasks that were actually outside of her responsibility. A critical perspective revealed that Parker was perpetuating a historical expectation for Black women to meet the needs of a group who has more privilege, power and access. A role that began with the enslavement of Blacks had shape-shifted but was still present in the culture of her institution.

Chantel recognized the enormity of her workload yet continued to propose the creation of new programs she would oversee. She described her most recent idea by stating,

> I presented to the director at that time. You know, maybe students would gravitate to the office if we offered programming that spoke to certain multicultural groups? You know, one of the big issues that was presented from a lot of the African American women on campus was the issue of hair or cultural dress. Even being able to identify micro aggressions in the interview process is important.

Her energy was clear through the excitement on her face and the details she had already identified about the program. As she considered a new program series that could look at hair, dress, or how individuals treated each other across difference, she did not mention in our conversation any consideration on where she would find the time to add an additional program. Chantel provided another example of a biased structure that was interpreted by Chantel as one requiring more of her than her counterparts.

Chantel also questioned about whether to be honest about accepting work with the hopes to be considered for promotion.

> Do you tell them outright? Again, you're treading those tricky waters. You know am I jeopardizing my position here? You know is it going to go up the chain. If I do work for promotion it is going to come up? And can I sabotage my chances? It's been the most tension not in terms of just being able to navigate those spaces they want to be inclusive, but don't be too uncomfortable.

Chantel highlights how difficult it is to navigate the multiple considerations Black women student affairs administrators must manage to be considered for promotion. It is further exacerbated by the possibility that she may be considered invisible or may be her own barrier. Betty shared a belief that accomplishing tasks that her supervisor may not be aware of is an indicator of professional growth.

> I say, well, these are the things that I have accomplished this year, and these are some of the things I wish I could have accomplished this year and this is a plan to accomplish them for the future. Most people won't do that in an evaluation, but I've learned that if I do that then it shows growth and it shows that I am growing professionally, and I've learned that most people are not prepared to combat that so I won't have push back.

Betty did not mention an alternative, but she did mention being so intentional with extra work that she would want it documented in the annual evaluation process. She also shared,

> You know as a Black person, a person of color, you need to work even harder because they're not going to see you as a person that is valuable because of their perception of you, not because a woman. It's now double, so you have to work two times harder in order to show them who you really are because, you know,

they think they know who you are, but they may not know. And he taught me that all of my life so what I've done now is that that has come to fruition.

Betty's perception of her leadership was imbedded in her with a racial and gendered foundation. Her definition and execution of leadership was heavily dependent upon a comparison to others, particularly those who identify as White.

Shay shared the number of roles that she plays at her institution.

> We're the nurse. We're the lawyers. We're the mediators. We're sometimes the academic advisor, and we are career services. We are everything, and that's frustrating. Whereas when I see other institutions, they don't even do half of what I do?

Shay did not mention wanting to leave her institution or pursuing other opportunities. She indicated being frustrated with the number of roles she has to play, but did not offer a plan to address it.

Understandably, Marcellous is motivated by a desire to stay relevant. She shared,

> The other alternative is stagnation. Invisibility comes with cuts. You have to make yourself needed. Because when they are at a place where they are talking about money, then I have to make sure you know, that you need me, when a need arose then they saw the value in my work, so even having to create the need and then fill the need so that when people start looking they go "oh, no not her. She's got four different titles and we're only paying her for one. She went from people stopping by her office to running two areas. We need to keep her."

Marcellous spoke of her leadership challenges as understood and assumed. She connected her livelihood and advancement to an excessive amount of work and the

acceptance of highest expectation of productivity. Her concept of leadership could be challenged as effective due to the enormity of the role and the lack of collaboration and involving others.

Lani also stated, “I had to work twice as hard. We know that’s the unspoken rule, but when it’s spoken it will influence how I look at things.”

The narratives shared by participants align with Reid Wolfman’s (1997) findings for African American women in higher education. The high expectation of productivity not only surfaced as completing a high number of tasks, but also holding multiple positions. Whether an internal battle or through an implied or explicit directive, the heavy work load on Black women student affairs administrators is part of their experience in higher education at predominantly White institutions.

Coded Communication

A number of the participants spoke to the expectation of coded communication. Some participants used the term “code switch” (“Code Switch,” n.d.; Cross Jr. & Strauss, 1998; Williamson Nelson, 1997). Other participants referred to the expectation of having to navigate their own needs and cultural values while recognizing those of their White counterparts in a way that perpetuates their counterparts comfort in an environment that is fraught with racism and has rendered themselves invisible.

Parker shared her experience with the expectation of coded communication. She shared how she has had to work in an environment that can be described as chilly, yet she must remain impartial to be considered a good leader. She stated, “We not only have to use a coded language, but we have to do so to address the codes.” The use of coded

language is complex in that it constricts opportunity for authenticity and requires an ongoing performance that may not benefit the performer.

Chantel listed code switching ("Code Switch," n.d.; Cross Jr. & Strauss, 1998; Williamson Nelson, 1997) as an integral skill for a Black woman student affairs administrator. Code switching is the act of changing how one communicates to match the environment that they are in. Code switching can happen rapidly based on where one is and who they are around. She offered examples of her code switching as assessing others to create a plan to maximize communication and to prepare to navigate multiple environments during her work day. She stated, "People of color, we become experts at, you know, code switching, and you know, scenario switching in our heads so we can survive, particularly as women of color on these campuses." I asked her to define scenario switching because it was an unfamiliar term. She stated,

> Scenario switching is when you change how you see a scenario so that you can be more comfortable with it. Scenario switching is switching how we see things even though we know what they really are. Code switching is adjusting our language or responses to an environment or person in order to perform, be relevant, or stay safe.

She identified the expectation of code switching as a survival tactic.

While Chantel introduced "scenario switching" as a necessary skill, Kelly added behavior or role switching. She mentioned her dislike of having to play the role of a damsel in distress, but recognized that there are some who expect her to fill that role. By the example she provided, Kelly defined role switching as behaving in a way that is counterintuitive. Kelly also recognized code switching as one the inherit expectations in

the Servant Leadership model (Greenleaf, 1997). In her reflections of the model, she surfaced that the model's expectation of a leader to be persuasive adds an additional charge to Black women to code switch. She surfaced that the very act of persuasion calls for language or behavior that may not be inherent for Black women.

Both Natalie and Sherrie also saw fragments of code switching in Servant Leadership. Sherrie stated, "I think when certain leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower, I think Black women do that all the time and it's called code switching." The participants spoke to the invisible expectations that are infused in the tenets. These additional factors shifts the nature of leadership and are dependent upon a person's social identity.

High Level of Strategy

An additional high expectation for Black women student affairs administrators is the expectation of a high level of strategy. Black women student affairs administrators must consider multiple angles, navigate a variety of personalities, and remain focused on the task(s) at hand. Betty shared her strategy for staying relevant and needed at work. She spoke of her work philosophy as if it is a common one.

> Okay, I ask myself: what should I do to take things to the next level? So, I hear people leaving meetings and say, "That was a great meeting and it was very productive", and then they say, "Okay, (I'll) wait for the next meeting to come." I know I have to take the information from the meeting and then say okay, how can I take this to the next level and how can I prepare? I look for something prior to the next meeting to get some talking points that are going to be something helpful and do some research in order to make sure that when we come to the next

meeting we have something sound. I'm able to give to the meeting and then really have something tangible. So, what most people are about to do, it's done. I did it.

Betty requires more of herself than she requires of others in her department and of her university. Her expectation of herself is similar to others as she expects to anticipate and fill the needs in ways her department and university have failed to do. Her perspective perpetuates a slave narrative that states Black women must be workers and caregivers to individuals and groups.

One of the strategies Chantel has instituted is to ask herself, “What are some of the things that are beyond my control? You know you have to pick and choose your battles.” Chantel stated an additional strategy in an objective and universal way. She stated,

> Clean your plate off and put what's only necessary for right now on it. You know, just be very present and aware of what the priorities are and just having clear focus, is necessary, professionally, you know, just in terms of survival.

Sherrie stated Black women student affairs administrators must also be strategic in their hiring. She stated, “We must even be strategic in hiring because blame will go to the Black woman if hiring is unsuccessful, so we must hire to address needs.”

Rachel notes that promotion requires a certain level of strategy. “You must be strategic and position yourself to get what you need in order to progress.” It would seem promotion would depend on a strategy more than hard work.

A strategy Parker mentioned was managing her supervisor. She stated, “I address what needs to be addressed in a way that is productive and makes my supervisors look

good. It allows them to be more hands off and not to manage me." This strategy is as much for productivity as it is for self-care.

Summary

One of the ways that Black women student affairs administrators described their experiences at predominantly White institutions was the existence of high expectations. As these women's stories show, some of the expectations may look self-imposed, but many of them listed are the result of working in a racist environment that lacks structures that alleviate some of the internalized oppression that marginalized identities have to navigate on a daily basis. Black women student affairs administrators must create and maintain environments that actively work to subjugate and oppress them. The hidden agenda of those spaces inform many aspects of the workday including workload, behavior, and approaches to work, communication, and collaboration.

Deficient Institutions

Participants in the study represented a variety of institutions. Although there was no single type of institution nor was there one institution that had more participants than another, the participants reported similar experiences that crossed institutions no matter their size, location, or Carnegie Classification. All participants shared a narrative that highlighted institutions' lack of support structures and programs. Black women student affairs administrators articulated the following challenges for their institutions: a lack of support structures and programs, a lack of representation of other Black women within student affairs, the absence of an official mentorship programs, or the dearth of a social or cultural construct.

Mentoring

One participant said,

> That's how I've been able to navigate and survive, knowing that if it gets to be too much, right, I know where I can go and who I can go to on campus for support. This leads into a very crucial thing for us in student affairs. We need support, all right. We are not doing this by ourselves in silos.

Participants reported wanting support programs such as a mentoring program or opportunities to have a mentor relationship with someone. Another participant stated,

> What I really like about my job at this point is that it really gives me autonomy to be able to help in the empowerment of future leaders. I think that in my journey as a leader I really had to empower myself, and I had to figure it out for myself. I had to go for outside mentorship for others in different areas that I needed to go to, to say well, what should I do which way should I handle the situation outside of the institution to what I needed someone to do for me, to empower me in a situation.

Another participant mentioned a desire for support within her institution. Chantel stated, “We need support, someone to step in when necessary, debrief with when necessary, and check in.” She also stated the need for the institution to be invested in the professional development of others.

Representation

A clear concern for almost all of the participants was the lack of diversity at their institution or in the field. Chantel stated, “There are too few people of color in the field. It is one of the biggest dislikes about my job.” She further stated, “The lack of diversity has

played a huge role in my experience." Bailey continued the conversation, although she was unaware. She stated, "With upper administration, because there are so few, you are the chosen one. You are the Black female golden child, and what's worse, there can only be one". Marcellous also shared, "I look at race and I look at it particularly in student affairs. You see White men at the top. I see that at my institution." Representation is an integral issue across the university and especially felt by Black women student affairs administrators.

There is research about the importance of representation for Black students (Fleming, 1984); however, the lack of representation can also impact the experiences of faculty and staff. A lack of representation can cause a chilly climate and ultimately lead a faculty or staff member to feel disconnected and abandoned.

Institutional infrastructure

The institutional infrastructure could be pointed to as one of the issues that cause strain on Black women student affairs administrators. The shortage of staffing and sizeable organizational structure partners well to burden and isolate Black women student affairs administrators. Natalie mentioned that the one thing she does not like about her job currently is that she is an office of one. By herself she supports over 40,000 students. She wrote, "It's just a lot of work."

One of the implied experiences of Black women student affairs administrators is the expectation to fill multiple roles and manage a heavy workload. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, institutions are communicating to Black women in student affairs that leadership is valued by the amount of work one manages. Denise shared that she currently holds three positions in student affairs and that she has done so in an effort to

meet the needs of the institution. She stated, “I know the school will be desperate if they lost me because of the number of positions I hold.” The message is communicated that due to the structure, there are also implicit benefits to fulfilling multiple roles at once. Linda spoke of her experience,

> I am just trying to keep us afloat as much as possible while still doing my own role because when I got made interim they said, “Oh by the way, you're still doing all these other responsibilities that are yours as well.” So, it's come down to being a situation of, you know, figuring out when is enough enough? While I love the University, when is it about me?

While holding multiple positions assists with visibility, based on the shared narrative, the burden brings additional work, but lacks recognition through promotion and advancement. Connections to race and gender are made as the participants note experiences they identify as specific to their identity group of Black women.

Summary

Participants in the study found that their institutions lacked in representation, resources, programs, and structures to encourage their persistence, growth, and development. Where these needs may have been filled at an individual level, participants recognized the challenges that existed due to the landscape and structure of the University. Participants named the institution as complicit in their experiences that connected with race and gender.

Intersectional Leadership

Participants in this study conducted a critical race analysis of the popular leadership model, Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1997). By setting the human

experiences of Black women at the center in order to understand their interpretation of the tenets of the model, the participants were able to deconstruct the model under the looking glass of racism, privilege, and hegemonic norms. As the participants confirmed, the model should not be completely disregarded, but the theme of intersectional leadership is offered in this section as a recognition of leadership theories that preserve White supremacy by coding theories as objective, implying open accessibility, and cherry-picking what portions of the theories get interrogated.

Double Oppression

CRT combined with the theory of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1995) allows us to recognize the marginalization of Black women as they have been excluded from scholarship and narratives through the assumption of race and gender neutrality. In that same vain, Black women have experienced a double oppression (Carter et al., 1996) as they are set on the periphery due to their race and gender. Linda provided an example when she stated,

> It's one of those things where I think a lot of people understand that they're imperfect. I think when it comes to women of color; however, we have to pay more attention to our imperfections because we're even scrutinized a little more harshly than others are in their imperfections.

At that intersection, Black women are expected to function, navigate, and even thrive as they occupy environments that have in no way considered them in their construction. Parker stated about her experiences, "Our experiences don't compare to White women, not as much, and White men – never." Participants perceived very few similarities in how they were valued, recognized, appreciated, supported, and retained. Intersectionality not

only exposes the true nature of those environments but advocates for change by advancing a socially just response in pursuit of change.

Change the Standard

The juxtaposition of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995) and Greenleaf's (1996) Servant Leadership Model provide an example of how to resituate leadership theories to include marginalized voices. A better understanding of the critical race analysis of the Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) model can be gained by considering an overall interpretation of tenets. There was no tenet that the participants unanimously found as universally applicable to all leaders regardless of race, gender, or other characteristics. There was high agreement that many of the tenets could be enacted by Black women student affairs administrators, but modeling the tenet would not be recognized as a beneficial leadership strategy. A more descriptive example was the way all participants responded to the tenet of withdrawal. The tenet states, "Servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation." Participants described environments and climates that made little to no allowance for the endeavors self-preservation requires. The collaborative nature of the work, the lack of personnel, and the burden to represent their identity group was at philosophical odds with a tenet that offered retreat as a logical leadership response.

Although every participant was familiar with the model, every participant indicated at least one tenet of the model that not only lacked universality but had the potential for adverse effects for a Black women student affairs administrator seeking to use the tenets. Participants identified significant challenges that were connected to the

race and gender of the person seeking to employ the tenets of the model. For example, participants agreed with the good use of language as a necessary leadership strategy, but recognized that the model failed to interrogate the brevity of what the tenet casually suggests. The second tenet presumptuously assumes that the only language barrier is the experience of the follower. The tenet states, "Servant leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower." Participants manifested other factors to consider beyond connecting to the experience of the follower. Cultural context, power structures, and historical implications of social identity complicate this tenet for Black women in ways that are unique to that affinity group.

While there was no single exact problem that every participant agreed on, participants agreed that the model is not practical in its entirety for Black women. Multiple tenets were identified as problematic or potentially harmful if used by a Black woman student affairs administrator. One particular tenet was heavily critiqued by the participants. Greenleaf (1996) asserts that servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. His approach positions withdrawal as an appropriate use of resources and self-preservation. It was a consensus that the concept of withdrawal could not be executed the way this popular leadership model positioned the concept.

Harding (1997) argued against the idea of there being only one valid standpoint. When acknowledging that the history of the United States has crowned White men as the single owners of knowledge, it is no wonder that the Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) model is written and offered from a viewpoint skewed by the privileges that accompany race and gender in the United States social hierarchies. The history and

experiences of power, privilege, violence, isolation, and misunderstanding have not been equally experienced. By making the foundation of racial and gender oppression invisible, those systems of oppression are perpetuated. Participants shared some of the following experiences that conflict with Servant Leadership. The left column is the snapshot of the leadership experiences of Black women student affairs administrators. The right column lists attributes and tenets. Table 2 is included to align some of the major concerns as it relates to leadership.

Table 2

Critical Analysis of Servant Leadership

Issues for African-American Women	Servant Leader Attributes
Expectation to fill multiple positions and to work more than their White and male counterparts	Role of servant required
Denied access to advancement and programs	Follower is the first consideration
Positive relationships between education and income and occupation not guaranteed; rendered invisible	Leader silences own voice for sake of followers
Disparity in results of their education and skills seen in their treatment and advancement	Leader connects verbal communication to the experience of the follower
Follow informal rules that assimilation and conforming	Withdrawal used as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy
Address and negate stereotypes	Acceptance and empathy as they accept others expecting imperfection
Productivity is mandated at all times, even when information has not been shared	Anticipate and articulate the unknown

Decisions are required without the benefit of information	Predict the future
Must manage self and how other perceive her for safety	High level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others
Seen as disingenuous	Persuasion and the ability to influence is a virtue
Must accept the vision may come from someone else	Ability to conceptualize
Called and expected to be a healer, may never get to healing self	Heal others before self

Given the results of this study, some considerations should be given to change the standards and definitions of leadership. The goal is not to discard a theory or model of leadership, but rather to identity a process that considers more than one paradigm or standpoint in the creation of concepts we offer under the lies of blind offerings – lies such as objectivity, meritocracy, and effort being the sole predictors of effective leadership. Without an attempt to change, an acceptance of racial hierarchy and White supremacy is no longer hidden and was never hidden very well to begin with.

Intersectional leadership

The findings of this study grounds a proposed new perspective on leadership, one that considers how Black women experience leadership models, theories, philosophies and ideologies in a way that maintains oppression, bias, and discrimination. By conducting a critical analysis of leadership practices, one can access the essence of the

intention of leadership development and the potential for successful usage of the model by diverse groups.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The findings of this study highlighted the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators. The study also revealed how they reflect on and execute leadership models in their work. Finally, the study provided a critical perspective of Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1995). By using active interviewing and the critical race narrative, the small sample size of this group does not negate the findings. The participants' narratives are powerful sources of knowledge that can move the reader towards social justice pursuits. These narratives can assist leadership faculty and practitioners, and those who seek to strengthen the experiences of Black women in resisting systemic structures that are actively working against their access and social change.

CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 15 narratives in Chapter 4 and the themes identified in Chapter 5 describe the shared lived experiences of Black women student affairs administrators at PWIs. A critical race narrative methodology was utilized through the use of active listening techniques in an effort to illuminate the influence of race and gender on Black women student affairs administrators' views and understanding of leadership strategies and models. I utilized a qualitative approach to capture the narratives that are often disregarded or discounted by traditional scientific methods. The primary method for data collection was video conferenced interviews. The videos were recorded and transcribed, and I listened to them several times to identify themes.

A more extensive thematic analysis lead to the themes offered in chapter 5. The first section of this chapter discusses my interpretations of the data and its implications, and the second section offers recommendations for future research and university response.

In this study, I hoped to provide space for the participants to surface their experiences in their most genuine state. Efforts were taken to create comfort and a sense of security recognizing that their participation could have personal and professional

repercussions. Participants in the study expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to share their story as they recognized the opportunity is uncommon.

Addressing the Research Questions

The questions at the center of this research project were:

1. What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender?
2. How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators?
3. How do the experiences of African American women within student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?

The participants' experiences answer the research questions in pointed ways.

Race and Gender

The first research question was, "What are the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions in higher education as they relate to race and gender?" All of the participants articulated a lens that incorporated both their race and gender as they navigated the field of student affairs administration in higher education. By interviewing a diverse group based on positionality, years in the field, type of institution, and region, the participants exposed that race and gender have a direct impact on their interactions, leadership styles, perceptions, and performance.

There were several instances where the participants defined or described their experiences by juxtaposing it against the experiences, or perceived experiences, of their White/female/male counterparts. Participants not only described the challenges they faced, but also made note that those challenges were not, and would not, be experienced by White men. They discussed the struggle of kinship and comradery with White women by noting a sense of competition, and unequal treatment. The relationship between their experiences and the challenges they expressed seemed to have a co-dependent relationship where participants were compelled to collude in their own oppression. Motivated by career advancement opportunities, stability, and the need to remain employed, participants recognized the taxation of being a member of a marginalized group at a PWI, yet they continued to work in a fashion that sustained the issues that they named.

The implications of race and gender were seen through their feelings of isolation and lack of support. Participants did not find institutional solidarity within any other social identity group. The participants felt a disconnect with White women and all men as they named feelings of frustration with those in leadership positions, high expectations for productivity, and the charge to maintain environments that were not structured for their success. The intersection of their identity was evident as they were unable to extrapolate their identities in order to fill their professional needs of mentorship and a sense of belonging (Taliaferro Baszile, 2006) with either Black men or White women. The participants were more inclined to reach outside of their institution to find interactions with other Black women because those relationships were not accessible on the periphery of their identities.

The identified themes of high expectations and deficient institutions captured the overarching themes of a self-imposed workload, coded communication, and high-level strategy. They also detailed their universities as lacking representation, a lack of support programs and a deficient infrastructure. The experiences of Black women student affairs administrators can be further unpacked as comprehensively influenced by external factors. Intrinsic values were not referenced as heavily as the impact of the university's inability to support their experiences. The university's understanding of and investment in a population that is clearly needed in higher education (Fleming, 1984) is questioned as resources are not allocated to impact their experience and excuses are abundant.

I felt the questions that were answered without being asked were "why remain at your university or in higher education?" The questions of why remain at your institution or why remain in the field of higher education seemed to always be present and were addressed. Black women student affairs administrators named "supporting students" as their most pressing motivation (Jackson, 2003; Steward et al., 1990). While they were adamantly against any resemblance of the "mammy" persona, they accepted an internalized expectation to be present for students. They remained at institutions and in positions that were not conducive for their promotion or health, but did so to support students in tangible ways.

Leadership

The second research question was "How do participants describe reflecting on, considering, or implementing leadership models in their work as student affairs administrators?" The Black women student affairs administrators shared several stories about their understanding and employment of leadership styles. They spoke of being

savvy and strategic as they navigated having to challenge yet not isolate others. An intersectional perspective of leadership would address systems of power, privilege, and oppression naturally embedded within models that we adopt, market, and regurgitate as if they are applicable across standalone identities.

Intersected identities make the execution of canned theories even more problematic. Images of leadership are held as models without recognizing the function of White supremacy that is embedded in assumptions of equality, equity, meritocracy, and egalitarianism. Furthermore, a subordinated status is further imposed on members of underrepresented populations when what is considered normative is never interrogated.

The third research question was, "How do the experiences of African American women within student affairs at predominantly White institutions reflect or problematize the Servant Leadership model?" The Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) model provided one example of leadership styles and theories that cannot be considered universal. This study provided an example of how similar conversations may be held regarding other canned leadership theories, understanding that most of them were created by White men (Thomas Wren, 1995). The participants recognized the relevancy of the tenets and the expectations associated with them. Some of the participants even acknowledged that they had met or exceeded the expectations identified in the tenets and did so fully aware of the hidden danger that existed. Black women student affairs administrators did not share the assumption of access, availability, and acceptance that the model denotes. Universities who publicize, market, and center these theories without this consideration could be inadvertently causing psychological harm.

Recommendations

Research and Scholarship

Due to the lack of research regarding the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators, there are several opportunities for further study. A comparison study should be conducted comparing the experiences of Black women faculty and student affairs administrators. Influences of tenure and non-tenure could also be considered as part of that study. This would further inform the university about the campus climate and assist university in exacting change.

Harley's (2008) study used metaphoric historical roles of African-American women to describe the experiences of African-American female faculty at predominantly White institutions. She noted that one of the concerns is racial battle fatigue. A similar study would be beneficial for Black women student affairs administrators at predominantly White institutions to address the possible presence of fatigue and the impact it is having on the administrator and the institution. In addition, the study of resilience and self-care techniques for African-American female administrators would be a valuable addition to the field of research.

Future research should take into consideration the social structures of race and privilege and allow for some assumptions that may be difficult at first to accept but should be seen critical to the study. The acknowledgment of systems of oppression shifts what is considered as foundational and normative and assists in alleviating the additional burden and harm placed on marginalized bodies (Daniel Tatum, 1997; Kawewe, 1997; Tinto, 1993; Young, 1995).

University Recommendations

One of the issues a university may find as a constant is limited resources. Infrastructure and finances are understandably connected and often, the university is doing what it deems it is capable of doing given limited resources. Yet, the field of higher education will grow more homogenous as individuals with underrepresented identities recognize that they can secure employment in other sectors that are better prepared for their membership, particularly given the contradiction between the mission of higher education and the actual experiences of minoritized populations (Carter et al., 1996). The desire to support students may not be substantial enough to recruit and retain Black women student affairs administrators when the field is fraught with hardship and challenges. With this in mind, I recommend that universities create support systems that directly address the challenges identified in this study. Mentor programs, affinity group creation and support by the university, and recognition programs would also address similar concerns shared by Black women faculty (Barnard, 2015; Bass & Faircloth, 2011; Gregory, 2001; Mertz, 2011; Weems, Jr., 2003).

Infrastructure should also be considered. Issues of work capacity and work load may be addressed by adding additional positions, but the university can also restructure departments who must respond to current day practical needs. Offices directly impacted by the social context and current social issues must be situated to respond at an institutional level, not rely on an individual response.

University leadership must also have an invested stance as it relates to the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators. An invested posture would address the problematic, overly burdensome, hidden agenda that plagues the work

environment for Black women student affairs administrators. University leadership must conduct a critical analysis of the work culture, infrastructure, and support programs for Black women in their areas of student affairs. Administration should pursue understanding the experiences of minoritized people from their perspective and accept those experiences without hesitation. It is incumbent upon senior administration to assist student affairs administrators in identifying what work is required and what work is beyond what the institution can currently provide. From a mission and vision perspective, Black women student affairs administrators would be better supported with clearer communication about what is essential and what is not, and the university should be careful not to take advantage of those who are clearly advancing the university in ways that are not mutually beneficial.

Campus leaders such as the president, provost, and vice presidents should seek to understand the experiences of Black women student affairs administrators because the success of this group is directly connected to the success of the students (Chavous, 2002; Fleming, 1984). Chavous (2002) and Fleming (1984) show the relationship between the success of Black students and their ability to see a reflection of themselves at their university. While there is a slight differential between genders, the relationship still exists. Senior level administration should seek to have an understanding of the experience of Black women student affairs professionals and should do so by creating relationships with that population and committing to impact their work environment. Ultimately, the student experience is greatly impaired if this population is ignored. Possible institutional responses should include mentoring programs (Blackwood & Brown-Welty, 2011; Homes et al., 2007; Gaëtane Jean-Marie & Brooks, 2011; Padilla, 1994), tactics for

recruitment (Guenter-Schlesinger & Ojikutu, 2009; L. Jones, 2001), and a process for Black women to address concerns in a way that keeps their identity confidential. This will be exceptionally difficult depending on the size and demographics of the school.

Conclusion

Although some challenges may exist, I believe this study provides a voice to a population that historically has not been given one to the extent of their counterparts. The study provides a counternarrative to those in the field who have experienced privilege on several levels. The role of a sense of belonging and intersectionality provides a foundation on which to begin conversations to support Black female administrators at private, predominantly white universities.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval

EXEMPT B-2; Approved 7/24/2017

RESEARCHER: Daria Graham

PROJECT TITLE: "Perceptions of leadership by African American Women Student Affairs Administrators at Predominantly White Private Universities"

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed the subject proposal and has found this research protocol is exempt from continuing IRB oversight as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).* Therefore, you have approval to proceed with the study.

REMINDERS TO RESEARCHERS:

- As long as there are no changes to your methods, and you do not encounter any adverse events during data collection, you need not apply for continuing approval for this study.
- The IRB must approve all changes to the protocol prior to their implementation, unless such a delay would place your participants at an increased risk of harm. In such situations, the IRB is to be informed of the changes as soon as possible.
- The IRB is also to be informed immediately of any ethical issues that arise in your study.
- You must maintain all study records, including consent documents, for three years after the study closes. These records should always be stored securely on campus.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Office for Research
University of Dayton
Dayton, OH 45469

Email: IRB@udayton.edu
http://www.udayton.edu/research/compliance/irb/

**Exempt under 45CFR46.101(b)(2): Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.*

APPENDIX B

Participation Invitation Email

My name is Daria Graham and in order to complete my dissertation in higher education, I am conducting research to present a narrative of the experiences of African American women student affairs administrators in higher education at predominantly White institutions. As a member of ACPA's Commission for Graduate and Professional Student Affairs/ACPA's Coalition for Women's Identities, you are an ideal participant.

It is my hope to interview 12-15 participants. I hope to specifically capture your perceptions of leadership theory or models. Each initial interview will be conducted through web conference and will last approximately 1 hour, with a 30 minute follow up interview. Your responses will be kept confidential. Each participant will be assigned a number to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and reporting of findings.

There is no compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to research and findings that could lead to a deeper consideration of leadership models.

If you are willing to participate please email me at dgraham1@udayton.edu so that we might schedule a day and time that suits you and I'll do my best to be available. If you are unable to participate, please feel free to email me with a name of a possible participant. I hope to conduct my initial interviews during the month of _____. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you.

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

The following questions were asked as introductory questions in efforts to create an atmosphere of trust:

(1) Tell me about yourself.

(2) Tell me about your role at work.

(3) Please describe a typical day at work.

(4) What do you like about your job?

(5) What do you dislike about your job?

The following questions were asked during the interview:

(1) Where did you learn your definition of leadership from?

(2) How have you seen what you learned reflected in higher education?

(3) How does your definition of leadership guide your work?

(4) How have race and gender influenced your perception of leadership?

(5) How has race and gender manifested in how you navigate your work in student affairs?

(6) What strategies have you instituted for thriving, self-care, and fatigue?

Participants were then provided with an information sheet that listed the tenets of Servant Leadership, and asked to speak to the fitness of the model for Black women student affairs administrators.

The researcher coded interviews to increase the researcher's understanding of the responses. Once themes were ascertained, the data was sent back to the participants to confirm their thoughts were captured correctly.

APPENDIX D

Servant Leadership Information Sheet

Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) proposes that one can be both servant and leader.

Attributes include:

- Servant leaders listen not only to understand but to own issues or problems that surface. They seek to own the experience even when it may silence their own voice.
- Servant leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower.
- Servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation.
- Acceptance and empathy also characterize servant leaders. Servant leaders understand imperfection is a fact of life and they accept those who they lead without reservation.
- Servant leadership requires the ability to see the unseen and to anticipate the unknown. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make decisions without the privilege of information.
- Similarly, but not the same, a servant leader must also be able to use the past to predict the future.
- Servant leaders must have a high level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others.
- Persuasion is also an essential quality for servant leaders. The ability to influence with sincerity and gentleness is a worthy virtue.
- Greenleaf (1977) presents the ability to conceptualize as a principal leadership talent. The ability to combine an understanding of the current condition with a vision of a potential beneficial outcome is a true gift.

- Another strength of servant leaders is to use their capacity to heal. Motivated by their own pursuit of wholeness, servant leaders see their role in the healing of others. This ability is ideally connected to a servant leaders' ability to build community.

APPENDIX E

Servant Leadership Classifications Table A

	Servant leaders listen not only to understand but to own issues or problems that surface. They seek to own the experience even when it may silence their own voice.	Servant leaders are mindful of their language and the need to connect verbal communication to the experience of the follower	Servant leaders use withdrawal as a tactical defense or prioritization strategy. This approach is connected to the appropriate use of resources and self-preservation.	Acceptance and empathy also characterize servant leaders. Servant leaders understand imperfection is a fact of life and they accept those who they lead without reservation.	Servant leadership requires the ability to see the unseen and to anticipate the unknown. This is particularly crucial as leaders may have to make decisions without the privilege of information.
Bailey	d	u	c	d	r
Parker	d	r	d	d	r
Chantel	u	u	d	u	u
Betty	r	r	d	r	r
Kelly	u	u	d	u	u
Shay	r	r	d	d	d
Sherrie	d	r	d	d	r
Marcellous	r	r	d	c	r
Natalie	r	r	d	r	r
Lani	d	u	d	d	u
Samantha	d	r	c	r	r
Tina	r	r	c	u	u
Linda	r	r	d	c	r
Denise	d	u	d	u	d
Rachel	u	u	c	d	r

u – universal

c - Black women can't
d - differently interpreted
r - required by Black women

APPENDIX F

Servant Leadership Classifications Table B

	Similarly, but not the same, a servant leader must also be able to use the past to predict the future.	Servant leaders must have a high level of self-awareness and the perceptions of others (Greenleaf, 1977).	Persuasion is also an essential quality for servant leaders. The ability to influence with sincerity and gentleness is a worthy virtue.	Greenleaf (1977) presents the ability to conceptualize as a principal leadership talent. The ability to combine an understanding of the current condition with a vision of a potential beneficial outcome is a true gift.	Another strength of servant leaders is to use their capacity to heal. Motivated by their own pursuit of wholeness, servant leaders see their role in the healing of others. This ability is ideally connected to a servant leaders' ability to build community.
Bailey	r	u	u	r	u
Parker	r	r	d	r	d
Chantel	d	u	u	u	d
Betty	r	r	r	r	r
Kelly	u	u	d	u	u
Shay	r	r	u	r	r
Sherrie	r	r	d	r	d
Marcellous	u	r	d	u	d
Natalie	r	r	u	u	d
Lani	u	u	d	u	d
Samantha	r	r	d	r	r
Tina	d	r	d	d	d
Linda	d	u	u	u	r
Denise	u	r	d	u	d
Rachel	r	u	u	u	u

u – universal
c - Black women can't
d - differently interpreted
r - required by Black women

APPENDIX G

Peer Debriefing Sessions

Below are notes from of the interactions between the researcher and peer debriefer. The peer debriefer (PD) asked to remain anonymous.

Session 1

The participant provided loose reflection on the tenets I am frustrated that she would volunteer, to participate yet seem disconnected. It is also hard to interview due to the delay being caused by shoddy internet at home.

PD cautioned me not to put my definitions on the participant, which is very similar what I am trying to battle in my study. Assumptions are connection or disconnection is coded for behaving in a certain way, which is often informed by heteronormativity and a White standard of what engagement "should" look like.

I have decided to use eye contact and to challenge myself not to make judgements based on what I see.

We decided to have debriefing meetings at the beginning, interview 6, and the end.

Session 2

Perspectives of leadership seem to be almost consistently connected to the presence of others. Participants seem to understand some of the complexities of leadership, yet there is little to almost no reference to leadership that is doesn't require validation through the presence of an other. Leadership inadvertently has become codependent on how one is perceived, viewed, experienced, modeled, and judged. I am somewhat frustrated with this because the very frame perpetuates what I am trying to dismantle, that is considerations of leadership that restrict us to external definitions that never keep minoritized identities in mind. What would it be like if we completely redefined leadership from a brown or black, or poor, or impaired ability framework?

Participant offered resource - White women Christ black women Jesus by Jacqueline Grant. She offered it as very good frame of reference for black women in the collegiate space.

I am struggling with how many pillars participants see as universal for Black women, and not just in student affairs, but anywhere. As I consider CRT, it means race is always a present influence. I am being careful not to lead the participants to name them all as lacking universality. I am fighting against that frustration by remaining consistent in offering the named categories created gradually by the participants.

I am overwhelmed with appreciation for and with admiration of the resiliency of Black women in student affairs.

Age seems not to be a factor for the trend of feeling overworked.

The PD urged me to focus on the research questions in an effort to be mindful of my biases. The distraction of my own experiences could lead me away from the purpose of the study and more towards creating support systems for the participants. The PD also reminded me to look for absences in the interviews. The PD asked if there are spaces in the data that I wish were filled.

Session 3

I have thoroughly enjoyed the interviews and follow up interviews. There is a spirit of strength that has accumulated throughout the interview process that I wish could have been shared through a focus group or reception.

I have noticed that participants have not mentioned pushing back against their experiences. It may be because the consequences of the burden of raced and gendered leadership theories is not the focus of the study and is not surfacing on its own.

The term “servant” is never interrogated. I believe if I were one being interviewed, I would have identified that as part of the issue with the model. Naming that seems too leading.

The PD believes I have enough data to end data collection. There is repetition in the narratives and there is representation from a variety of institutions.