CONSTANTLY BATTLING WHITENESS:

A CRITICAL CASE STUDY OF BLACK STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AT A

PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTION

Dissertation

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By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the campus racial climate and the experiences of Black students at a Predominately White Institution (PWI). Using the Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) as a theoretical framework and Critical Race Theory as an analytical tool, this research interrogated the ways in which race and racism shape the experiences of Black students at a uniquely structured PWI focused on social justice. Guided by a critical epistemological foundation, this critical case study addressed the following question: What is the campus racial climate for Black students at a social justice striving PWI? Additionally, several sub-questions, influenced by the five dimensions of the MMDLE, guiding the study were: (a) What historical aspects of the institution informed contemporary climate for Black students?; (b) How did the institutions' policies and practices influence Black students' experiences with the racial climate?; (c) How did the racial composition of the university inform the campus racial climate?; (d) What did the cross-racial interactions look like for Black students and their peers?; and (e) How did Black students perceive the institution in terms of race?

In the study, 24 students, 6 faculty, and 17 administrators with different races, ethnicities, ages, and experiences provided insights into the racial climate for Black students. Four different data collection methods were used in the study. Through focus groups, one-on-one interviews, observations, and artifact analysis, data were collected to better understand how Black students navigate a social justice striving PWI. Despite the institution seemingly making strides towards social justice, the findings illustrated the lack of intentional efforts around social and racial justice as Black students described difficult relationships with cross-racial peers, the institutional environment, and its leadership. Ultimately, the aim of the study was to showcase the experiences of Black students at a PWI to inform future research, policy, and practice.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Black collegians throughout the country. Your stories, experiences,

and persistence inspire me. Keep fighting.

Acknowledgments

When I first began this program, I was told time and time again that a Ph.D journey is a not a sprint, but a marathon. As with any long run, there is a need for coaches, trainers, support groups, teammates, mentors, and role models. I would not have been able to complete this marathon without incredible support of friends, family, and colleagues. I am honored to acknowledge the individuals and communities who got me through this journey.

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Fields of Study

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In December 2018, a Lehigh University Black college student, Juwan Royal, found himself vomiting, shaking, and on the verge of passing out (Allen, 2018). Royal's roommate, Yukai Yang, turned out to be poisoning him with a chemical found in rat poison. This was not too long after being charged with ethnic intimidation for writing racist graffiti on their residence hall room door earlier that year (Fearnow, 2018). Similarly, Chennel, a Black college student, was poisoned by her roommate Brianna Brouchu at the University of Hartford (Bromwich, 2017). Brouchu rubbed used tampons on Rowe's backpack and put her toothbrush in "places where the sun doesn't shine" (Bromwich, 2017, p.1). After returning from the hospital, Rowe moved out. Brouchu cheered as she could "finally say goodbye to Jamaican Barbie" (Bromwich, 2017, p.1). These two incidents demonstrate some of the challenges and racism Black students face at predominately white institutions (PWIs).

Although all Black students attending PWIs may not be poisoned, there are constant threats to their existence. Better understanding the threats and everyday occurrences of racism that Black students face at PWIs is at the heart of this study. The campus racial climate, explained more in depth later in this chapter, is the racial environment of an institution (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano, 2009). This campus racial climate, more than what many institutions claim, is a comprehensive overview of the experiences of minority racial groups. The University of Wisconsin-Madison serves as an example of a PWI less aware of the racial climate than they realized.

In October 2019, the University of Wisconsin-Madison posted a video touting the diversity of the institution (Campus Racial Incidents, 2019). Based on the University of Wisconsin-Madison's website, this PWI has a strong commitment to diversity (Creating

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Community, 2019). The website details the importance of different identities and culture, displaying the care and interest put into supporting their diverse students. Despite the institutional mission towards diversity, this 90-second video was criticized by alumni and students for the lack of students of color. The video touting diversity lacked diversity. The video showed mostly white students. More so, the video was disliked by so many, it was eventually pulled from the campus website and social media. The university responded with a commitment of change and efforts to ensure every student felt connected and important (Campus Racial Incidents, 2019). This PWI, despite their videos exclaiming a passion towards diversity and an institutional statement on diversity, found itself failing their students of color. The university failed at its diversity mission. Regardless of these diversity mission statements, time and time again, universities struggle with microaggressions and racial inequalities.

It seems like every couple of weeks, another racial incident takes place at a PWI. It rarely matters the type of institution. Some PWIs emphasize research, others teaching. Some institutions have countless resources while some struggle to stay afloat; however, many PWIs struggle with their students of color and, in the case of this study, their Black students. As PWIs are so different, Black students experience the campuses differently. What if an institution did more than simply post a diversity statement and attempted to strive for a more socially justice campus experience in order to facilitate a positive campus racial climate? How would this influence the experiences of Black students? In what ways would the campus be more welcoming, and students feel a sense of belonging and connection with more of an effort than a diversity post? This study looked to address these questions. Throughout this study, an examination of a social justice striving university was interrogated as I took a deeper look into

the lives of Black students at a social justice striving PWI. Explained further in this chapter, is an institution appearing to make efforts towards social justice through institutional leadership.

This study aimed to address gaps related to the campus racial climate and provide insight on Black students' racial experiences at PWIs. This chapter discusses the following areas: (a) background of the study; (b) the review of the theoretical framework; (c) the purpose of the study and research questions; (d) definition of key terms; (e) the scope of the study including the research design; (f) the potential significance and contributions to the higher education literature; and (g) a summary of the study.

Background of Study

Since the founding of American higher education, institutions have supported white male students (Thelin & Gasman, 2010). Institutions assisted these white males so they could become professors, merchants, ministers, and government officials (Thelin, 2011). Simultaneously, Blacks were barred from academic opportunities (Thelin, 2011; Thelin & Gasman, 2010). This white inclusion and exclusion of Blacks and other racial minorities helped facilitate a culture of whiteness within the academy. This culture of whiteness still persists (Gusa, 2010).

These colleges and universities are referred to as PWIs (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). "Predominately" is often understood as majority or main. It is important to note that regardless of population size, PWIs are more than simply white students taking up 50% of the population; rather, PWIs refer to a culture of whiteness (Gusa, 2010). For example, Harvard University has more than 50% representation of racial minorities (Harvard Admitted Student Profile, 2018); however, very few would suggest this institution is not a PWI.

Reflecting larger U.S. society, PWIs have embodied systems of racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). As such, racism is reflected in PWIs' culture and climate. Regardless if an

institution has portrayed itself as welcoming and inclusive, within the fabric of the institution, racism is pervasive. From the beginning of higher education, PWIs did not consider the needs of Black students and to this day, students feel the ripple effects of PWIs' white origins (Harper, 2009; Harper & Hurtado, 2007). These ripple effects become increasingly apparent when considering the adversity Blacks must overcome while attending college at PWIs, including chilly interactions with peers (Harper & Hurtado 2007; Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008), faculty disengaged in their experiences (Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008), racist incidents (Garcia, Johnston, Garibay, Herrera, & Giraldo, 2011), and a lack of belonging (Strayhorn & Terrell, 2010). In addition, Black students worry about their security and safety while on campus, even from their roommates, as depicted in the incidents above.

In addition to the cocurricular challenges Black students encounter, Black students have also been reported to face academic barriers and racist environments their white peers do not (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). In addition, Black students face mixed messages regarding who is valued and who is important at the institution. One moment, a PWI's leadership will parade their love of diversity through their website's materials, creating the idea of a supportive climate for Black students (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014), and then remain silent after a racial incident. Time and time again, Black students have encountered adversity and racism on their college campuses (Harper, 2007; Harper, 2009; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Strayhorn, 2012). This adversity and racism led to increased mental and physical fatigue (Collins-Sibley, 2015), academic disengagement (Cokley & Moore, 2007; Harper, 2006), and persistence and graduation rates seeing little improvement (Nichols, Eberle-Sudre, & Welch, 2016). This study aims to address the ways PWIs could be failing their Black students by exploring the campus racial climate.

Framing Campus Racial Climate

Throughout the study, the Multi-Contextual Model of Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012) will be utilized to frame the research. The MMDLE links "campus climate for diversity to educational practices and learning outcomes to the 21st century and is a tool that can guide researchers and practitioners who are engaging institutions in transformational change" (Hurtado & Guillermo-Wann, 2013, p.iii). The MMDLE has systems surrounding the college student. In the next section, I will discuss the MMDLE's external contexts further.

While Black students navigate the ivory tower, they may find themselves influenced by unseen forces. Hurtado et al. (2012) described these external forces as macrosystems. Drawing on components of Bronfenbrenner's (1976, 1993) ecological systems, Hurtado et al. (2012) detailed how students are surrounded by multiple contexts. These surrounding contexts have been described as sociohistorical, policy, and community and external commitment. Each of these contexts within the MMDLE influence the student experience. These macrosystems such as the sociohistorical and policy contexts "exert an equally powerful influence over all" (Hurtado et al., 2012, p. 48). This study centers the institutional climate dimensions (e.g., historical legacy, compositional, structural, behavioral, psychological) of the MMDLE, which I describe more fully in Chapter 2 but briefly discuss here before describing the macro contexts.

The institutional contexts focus on five main dimensions. Each draws on an important aspect of the college student's experience. The first dimension is the historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion. This dimension was used to determine the ways Black students have come to understand institutional inclusivity or exclusivity throughout time (Hurtado et al., 2012). The structural dimension looks at the day-to-day operations of the institution such as common

institutional policies and practices that influence the experiences of Black students (Hurtado et al., 2012). The compositional dimension assesses how numerically represented Black students are on campus (Hurtado et al., 1998). The behavioral dimension interrogates cross racial experiences of Black students. An example of this is how friendships with non-Black students tend to take place. Finally, the psychological dimension discusses Black students' perceptions of the institution. The psychological dimension examines the emotional wellness or sense of belonging (Hurtado et al., 2012). An important note is that all of these different dimensions exist across curricular and cocurricular contexts. Whether in the classroom or at a student organization meeting, these dimensions touch on the full student experience. Next, a brief outline of the external contexts of the MMDLE to provide further background for the proposed study.

Sociohistorical Context

The sociohistorical context involves the most relevant historical domestic or international events into the college student experience. More recently, the election of America's first Black President, Barack Obama and the election of Donald Trump have created significant ramifications towards race relations in the United States. The election of President Obama led to a belief that the country was in a post racial era. Many in the Black community had high hopes for systematic change. On college campuses, Black students found themselves inspired and invigorated by the representation (Kezar & Maxey, 2014; Strayhorn, 2012). Though excited, many in the Black community found themselves challenged with the policies and politics he employed, distinguishing himself very little from past white presidents. Critiques from progressive and Black scholars, such as Cornel West (2015, p. 1), described President Obama as the "first Niggerized President." West (2015) made the argument that President Obama was allowing whiteness to dictate his action. West discussed how Obama's rhetoric and actions were

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not reflective of a Black man but instead someone who was serving whiteness. President Obama was seen as a person who would advance the causes for Black people progression; however, little changed in terms of social or racial justice.

The first Black president made many whites panic (Coates, 2017). Many called for a change, since they believed our first Black president was destroying the country, clearly indicating racist ideologies (Coates, 2017). Throughout his eight years, President Obama faced an onslaught of racist comments and challenges regarding his competence. In retaliation to the election of a Black president, the country experienced a "white lash," where whites voted for one of the most overtly racist, sexist, and xenophobic presidents in recent history (Kellner, 2017).

In 2016, Trump was elected president touting an ideology that received the backing of the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist groups (Osnos, 2017). During his election campaign, Trump used coded language like, "Make America Great Again" to speak to his white constituents about his belief that Blacks, Mexicans, Muslims, and other groups have ruined America. Across the country, whites began to feel emboldened to display their racist beliefs. These beliefs and actions further disconnected Black students from their peers, as the community around them began to overtly display hate towards them. As Trump unveiled his policies, it became clear his goal was to reverse the work of President Obama and erase the legacy of the first Black president (Coates, 2017).

Communities have been wrought with racist incidents since Trump's election. An example of this white lash is the 2017 Charlottesville attack where white supremacist and neo-Nazis came together to protest the current state of our country (Kalvapalle, 2017). Charlottesville was filled with protests by the white supremacists and protestors of racism and social injustice. This day concluded with white supremacists and neo-Nazis attacking protestors, leaving 28

injured and one killed after being hit by a supremacist's car. In reaction, Trump stated, "I think there is blame on both sides" (Watson, 2017, p. 1) defending the actions of the supremacists. Moments like these contributed to the idea that Trump is one of the most racist presidents in recent history. As racial violence continues to spread, it can also be seen with those who are meant to protect and serve through police brutality.

In 2013, in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman for taking the life of Black teenager, Trayvon Martin, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement began (White, 2016). The founders, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi created the organization to dismantle racial injustice and systemic racism towards Black people (White, 2016). On college campuses, it was not uncommon to see BLM protests and rallies; for example, students from the College of William and Mary protested the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, VA (Bauer-Wolf, 2017). In response to BLM, many whites began using the phrase "All Lives Matter" or "Blue Lives Matter" as a way to dismiss and criticize the glaring inequity of treatment of Black bodies opposed to their white counterparts (Gin et al., 2017). Considering the sociohistorical contexts surrounding college students, these examples scratch the surface of the contexts Black students face while attending college today. While students face external sociohistorical challenges, there are also federal, state, and local policies influencing their time in college (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Policy Context

Policies at the local, state, and federal levels have created significant implications for college students across the country (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2012). Hurtado and colleagues (2012) stated "institutions operate within the policies and practices of the states in which they are situated, as well as those at the federal level, which impacts the actions that institutions can take to support student success" (p. 93). These policies influencing student success span from

financial aid to college access. Examples of policies influencing college access and financial aid are the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Middle-Income Student Assistance Act of 1978 (MIAA) (Hurtado et al., 2012). The Higher Education Act was a piece of legislation that provided more resources to institutions and helped provide financial aid for students interested in higher education (Hurtado et al., 2012; Spring, 2018). It is one of the marquee policies created to influence federal funding for college students, which in turn substantially increased student enrollment in higher education (Hurtado et al., 2012; Spring, 2018).

In direct conflict with the Higher Education Act, the MIAA acted to limit student access and federal funding. MIAA moved federal aid money away from grants and instead turned them to loans (Spring, 2018). As loans were required to be paid back, low-income students became limited in their educational opportunity (Spring, 2018). Often these low-income students were students of color, hindering their ability to obtain college access (Spring, 2018). Policies such as these directly influence the financial opportunity and academic access for Black students on college campuses, whether they recognize the reach of the Higher Education Act or the MIAA. Finally, one of the last contexts surrounding a college student outside of their institution's context is the community context and external commitments (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Community Context and External Commitment

The community context and external commitment of the MMDLE focuses on the local community and the constituents interacting with the institution (Hurtado et al., 2011). Hurtado et al. (2012) consider these communities to be "linkages that institutions and individuals have with local communities, disciplinary networks, alumni networks, parents, religious affiliations, etc." (p. 88). While institutions continue to develop relationships and maintain partnerships with the community, students have their own commitments to sustain. Some commitments students face

are finances, employment, and family responsibility (Hurtado et al., 2012). Similarly, the climate of the institution is constantly impacted by its surroundings and its subcommunities.

Throughout history, land-grant institutions had the mission to connect with their local community and be a provider of education for the state (Thelin, 2011). This is why it is common to see outreach programs or partnerships with the local community. Additionally, the campus community has an influence on the campus community, as they are seen as important stakeholders of the institution (Hurtado et al., 1998a). These local communities influence the institution and student experience, creating external commitments for both the institution and the student. Throughout this study, there are links and connections to the sociohistorical and policy context, as well as the community context and external commitments. Black students may not recognize the contexts but inevitably these systems have a substantial impact on their lives. This study worked to address Black students' experiences and the racial climate at PWIs while also recognizing important contexts Black students are forced to navigate. Within the sociohistorical and policy contexts exists the institutional context with which students find themselves directly interacting every day. The MMDLE will serve as a guide for this case study research by helping understand the way Black students experience the campus racial climate.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the campus racial climate and the experiences of Black students at a PWI using a critical case study analysis examining a four-year, research 1 PWI. As stated previously, PWIs have served as a space for racism and racial discrimination for Black students (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). By investigating a PWI that has made strides towards social justice for Black students, I analyzed the history, practices and policies, composition, social interactions, and emotional and mental responses of Black students at a particular PWI.

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Throughout the study, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as a lens or framework to better understand how race and racism shaped our current understanding of the world (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT is an analytic framework to critique and dismantle racial oppression (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). A CRT lens, which is discussed further in this chapter, helped answer the main research question for this study. Simply, a CRT lens identifies racism in ordinary occurrences. This is important as Harper (2012) discussed how often higher education research, including campus racial climate studies, stray away from naming racism. Since CRT recognizes the embeddedness of race and racism in the country (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), CRT was an important consideration while conducting the study.

The main research question that guided this study is as follows: What is the campus racial climate for Black students at a social justice striving PWI? Additionally, several sub-questions, influenced by the five dimensions of the MMDLE, guiding the study were: (a) What historical aspects of the institution informed contemporary climate for Black students?; (b) How did the institutions' policies and practices influence Black students' experiences with the racial climate?; (c) How did the racial composition of the university inform the campus racial climate?; (d) What did the cross-racial interactions look like for Black students and their peers?; and (e) How did Black students perceive the institution in terms of race?

This study dives into what history has been passed down to current Black students and the influence this history had on their racial experiences. Additionally, this study investigated how the institution approached creating a racially just environment for their Black students through structures such as campus practices and policies. For example, limited research discusses how campus spaces are racialized or how policies, such as crime alerts, have influenced the campus racial climate for Black students. Another gap of literature this study addressed was

responses to racial incidents. Research rarely discusses how students, staff, and faculty at PWIs respond to racial incidents and the influence these responses have on Black students' understanding of the campus racial climate. There is little research on racial friendships in higher education (Park, 2012), and even less for Black students specifically in the past decade as much of the research focuses broadly on students of color (Bowman & Park, 2015; Park, 2012). This study aimed to answer questions regarding Black students and their interpersonal friendships while in college and how it influenced Black students' experiences at PWIs.

Overview of Study

In order to answer the research questions and "investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p. 14), I utilized a case study methodology. A case study provides the opportunity for a comprehensive description and interrogation of a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). A single-case design allows this researcher to dive deeply into a singular PWI and learn more about the experiences of Black students. Pairing a case study with CRT creates the opportunity to explore the campus racial climate with a consideration for racism. While the MMDLE helped provide a framing for both the literature and the way to understand how to study climate, CRT provided a means to analyze the data.

CRT is a framework used to expose issues in the United States related to race and racism (Brown & Jackson, 2013). Borne out of legal studies in the 1970s, education scholars adopted the framework and applied it to the many racial disparities in higher education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In this study, CRT was used as an analytical and methodological theory meant to explore the interconnected of race and racism within American norms and beliefs (McCoy &

Rodricks, 2015). While interrogating the PWI in question, the utilization of CRT and its tenets guided my analysis, challenging white privilege toward advancing social and racial justice.

The Case of Social Justice Striving University

The site I used for the study, Social Justice Striving University (SJSU), is a large public, research intensive PWI. This institution awards degrees to undergraduate, master's, professional, and doctoral students. One of the most exciting aspects of SJSU was how the institution appeared to be moving towards becoming a social justice minded PWI. I designated this "social justice striving" PWI as such for its efforts towards creating an institutional leadership team appearing supportive of racial diversity and social justice. Unique to PWIs, this institution has a large representation of Black administrative leaders (BAL). SJSU actually made efforts to reflect the student body through their leadership. In addition to the BAL at SJSU, this institution had other connections that have appeared interested in supporting and progressing the experiences of Black students. historic ties to the Underground Railroad. Throughout the campus there were signs marking the Underground Railroad having had stops located throughout the campus. Another unique structure to this university being chosen as the site was the number of courses available for students, staff, and faculty to address bias and cultural competency. Moreso, faculty were offered bonuses for completing teaching courses dedicated to teaching to students of color and addressing cultural competency needs. Finally, SJSU had both a Black Cultural Center (BCC) and a Multicultural Affairs Office (MAO) . Often institutions have only one on campus, if any at all. SJSU had the capacity for both to support the wide needs of Black students and address racial and social justice issues. As I spoke to students, faculty, and administrators, I gathered more insight into what the campus racial climate was for Black students considering this aim for racial social justice.

Data Collection

Within this bounded unit, I spoke with several important stakeholders within the institution including 24 Black students, 6 faculty, and 17 administrators. Black students participated in focus groups, whereas faculty and administrators participated in one-on-one interviews to explain how they perceive the campus racial climate for Black students. I also utilized observations and artifact data collection of important events and documents related to the Black student experience. This meant looking through newspapers and attending student organization meetings to gain deeper insight on Black students' experiences. Throughout this study, the focus remained on the Black students. As a hybrid of an intrinsic and instrumental (Jones & Abes, 2003) descriptive case study (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014), I described the ways Black students experience the campus racial climate within the bounded system.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection process began, I engaged in the analysis process. Aligned with case study methodology, the data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously (Merriam, 1998). I looked at the data in two ways. First, independently of each form of information and then, I aggregated the data and developed themes from what was learned from the interviews. Using an observation guide, I paired what was learned from observations and archival records to analyze the campus racial climate at SJSU. Through these forms of triangulation, I was better able to complete a trustworthy study.

Trustworthiness

In order to achieve a trustworthy study, I utilized triangulation, peer examinations, and rich, thick description. As described earlier, by utilizing multiple data collection techniques, this study was less likely to be influenced by personal bias and was corroborated by other forms of

data (Stake, 1995). I used two uninterested parties to act as a peer examiner (Merriam, 1998). These individuals differed from me in several social identities and ensured what I was researching was not being too heavily influenced by my own point of view. Finally, I used thick rich description throughout this study (Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). The experiences of the participants heavily influenced the findings and discussion in this study. These rich, thick descriptions acted as an additional trustworthiness tool ensuring this study was valid and reliable (Jones et al., 2014).

Definitions of Key Terms

In order to make sure they are properly understood, the following terms are defined to provide readers with an understanding of the meaning in the text of this study. Throughout the study, these terms will be used to describe the ways in which Black students experience the campus. Some of these terms needed definitions because in relation to diversity and inclusion work, they take on different meaning. This provides the opportunity for the reader to have a deeper understanding of how these words will be used specifically in this study. The terms and their definitions are as follows:

Campus Climate: Campus climate has been viewed as a relatively vague term (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008) throughout the literature but Peterson and Spencer (1990) describe it as "common member perception of attitudes toward and feelings about organizational life" (p. 7).

Campus Racial Climate: Campus Racial Climate is understood as the racial environment of an institution. A campus racial climate has the potential to foster successful academic experiences and high graduation rates, contribute to a sense of belonginess, and connection to the university (Yosso et al., 2009). Too often the campus racial climate has contributed to poor academics, a lack of belonginess, and leaving the institution (Yosso et al., 2009). Campus racial climate

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emphasizes the racial environment and perceptions of students of color, in this study, Black students.

Classroom Racial Climate: As classroom climate acts as a subset to the campus climate (Seward, 2014), classroom racial climate has been shown to contribute to a Black student's ability to engage in course material, academic self-confidence, GPA, and overall persistence and retention (Bonner, 2010; Hurtado et al., 2012; Seward, 2014). Examples of a classroom climate are interactions between faculty members and students, curricula reflecting historical and contemporary experiences (Hurtado et al., 2012; Yosso et al., 2009), inclusive pedagogy (Quaye, Griffin, & Museus, 2015), and student centeredness (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Hegemony: Hegemony is described as a form of leadership or dominance, often puts a country, community, or a social group over others (Daldal, 2014). Gramsci (as cited in Edwards, 2008) described hegemony had two distinct components. The first component is coercion, operationalized by political entitles like the police, military, and courts, to gain power. The second component is consent. Consent is necessary to maintain power over a long stretch of time. Gramsci described hegemony as predominance by consent.

Predominately White Institution (PWI): A PWI is described as an institution originally created for or dominated by the white population. The history and infrastructure of this institution has been built to advance opportunities for whites and disenfranchise Blacks and other racial minorities (Smith et al., 2007).

Racial Bias Incidents: Racial bias incidents are defined as the use of racial slurs, actions or symbols that negatively impact specific groups, harassment, and acts of violence (Hurtado, 1992).

Racial Discrimination: Racial discrimination of Blacks and African Americans was described by Feagin, Vera, and Imani (1996) as the practices in society that deny opportunities, positions, rewards towards social, economic, and political progress. Often these rewards and benefits are given to whites in their stead.

Racism: Racism is described as an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of society (Bell, 1992). Further, racism is viewed as "a system of dominance, power, and privilege that is rooted in the historical oppression of subordinated groups that the dominant group views as inferior, deviant, or undesirable" (Bell, 1992, p. 85).

Racial Justice: Racial justice can be understood as the efforts to correct the history of racial inequality and economic injustice in the United States. Racial justice seeks equity through decolonizing of education, upending brutality and criminality against racial minorities, disrupting racial prejudice and discrimination, and dissolving racial hierarchy (ACLU, n.d.).

Social Justice: Social Justice is both a goal and a process (Bell, 1997). Bell (1997, p.3) stated the goal of social justice is the "full and equal participation of all groups in society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs." This process and goal for social justice should be "democratic and participatory, inclusive and affirming of human agency and human capacities for working collaboratively to create change" (Bell, 1997, p.4).

Social Justice Striving PWI: A PWI appearing to make efforts towards social justice through their institutional leadership. In this case, there was a sizable number of Black administrative leaders in high-level decision-making roles.

Stereotype Threat: The risk of confirming a negative stereotype of one's group. Known as a self-evaluative threat, stereotype threat has been shown to cause 'inferiority anxiety', a state in

which individuals lose confidence in their knowledge, performance, or skillsets because they believe they are inferior to those surrounding them (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Whiteness: Not to be seen as synonymous with white people, whiteness is a collection or gathering of people or things, a perspective "supported by material practices and institution" (Leonardo, 2002, p.32). Whiteness exists as a socioracial ideology built on power, privilege, oppression, and falsehoods (Leonard, 2002; Lynch, 2018). Whiteness should be viewed as not just a social identity, but as a structure of power protected through the history of the United States (e.g. slavery, Jim Crow Laws, police brutality) (Lynch, 2018).

Note: I used "Black" and "African American" interchangeably throughout this study. There are two reasons why I choose to capitalize "Black" throughout the study but not "white." The first was a political decision. Blackness in this study will be an important mark of culture and overcoming adversity. Therefore, this capitalization serves as a form of power and empowerment for Black students, something white people have been granted from birth. The second reason was inspired by the works of Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991). I capitalized "Black" because Blacks, like other racial minorities, are considered a cultural group and were viewed as a proper noun. In addition, I did not capitalize "white," which is not seen as a proper noun, since whites do not constitute a specific cultural group (Crenshaw, 1991).

Significance of Study

As will be discussed further in Chapter Two, interest in Black student success has become something of a phenomenon in education today. In higher education, closing the achievement gaps often examines the academic performance of Black students and how to better engage their learning experiences. The graduation rates for Black students nationally tend to fall behind their white peers by up to 20% (Nichols et al., 2016). Institutions spend a large amount of

money, time, and energy devoted to understanding what is causing issues with Black student success, often placing blame on Black students. Instead this study works to identify what is going wrong with the institution and its environment to address some of these gaps in achievement.

Currently, PWIs send very public messages locally and nationally regarding their vested interest and strides related to diversity and inclusion (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014); however, Black students still face a lack of belonging, discrimination, and racial incidents within the academy (Sanchez & Awad, 2016). These contradicting messages leave Black students to question whether the institution is unsure of the needs of Black students or lack interest. This research study identifies areas of improvement and recommendations for institutions on how best to support their Black student population.

This study should be particularly important to university officials and employees working at PWIs, including administrators, faculty, and staff. When thinking about employing change at the institution, each stakeholder has a role in progressing an institution. University officials have the more frequent touchpoints with the Black student body and the most potential to influence the experiences of Black students. For example, part of the campus racial climate are influenced by the classroom experience. With this being said, faculty will be a particularly important stakeholder to initiate changes within the classroom. Through this study, faculty may reflect on their classrooms to best accommodate all students. By bringing in the faculty, staff, and administrators, there is a greater ability to influence change on a university-wide level.

This study is influential and important for Black students attending PWIs. Black student voices are centered in the study. As this study looked to address aspects from the composition to the institution, policies and procedures of the university, and cross racial friendships to name a

few, Black students will benefit from seeing how institutions can support their experiences in a more beneficial way. In addition, as aforementioned, the institution will be held responsible for the treatment and environment for Black students rather than taking the deficit approach of placing the blame on Black students in a potentially hostile environment (Harper, 2007).

In the beginning of the chapter, I took time to discuss how the recent election of the 45th President has emboldened white nationalists within the country. The study will be important in considering the influence of how emboldened racists have influenced the racial climate and the Black student experience. This study has significance as it addresses how these sociohistorical experiences have influenced the campus racial climate and how institutions have addressed these issues in the eyes of Black students considering the election of the Trump.

Finally, this study has importance for those in leadership at PWIs. As PWIs work to achieve social and racial justice, SJSU is in a unique position to lead the way to understanding how the leadership of a campus may influence the campus racial climate. With this institution as an exemplar, considering the rarity of having the number of Black Administrative Leaders (BALs) in the Midwest and throughout the country, SJSU is in a unique position to inform other PWIs their success with the campus racial climate for Black students.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of the proposed research study. Throughout the chapter, I described the purpose of the study, the intended methodology, important key words and definitions, and the potential significance the study could have within higher education. As evidenced by examples early in the chapter, Black students are challenged with racism that can literally be life-threatening. With this said, it is important to understand how the campus racial climate influences the Black student experience. By focusing on Black

students' experiences, this research illuminates racial injustices and acts to dismantle elements of racism within the academy.

This study covers the following six chapters, including appendices and references. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the problem, the research questions, the purpose and significance of the study, the theoretical framework, a brief overview of the methodology and design, and organization of the study. Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to Black students' experiences at PWIs, the MMDLE, and the outcomes of the environment of PWIs. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth explanation of the methodology used within the study, including the research questions, epistemological views, analytical framework, research design, participants, data collection, data analysis, and positionality statement. Chapter 4 is organized by the dimensions of the MMDLE and highlights basic assumptions of CRT to describe the experiences of the participants. Chapter 5 takes the dimensions and makes meanings of the case by blending the different dimensions of the MMDLE. Chapter 6 provides a discussion connecting the findings of the framework and previous research and literature, implications, recommendations for future research, practice, policy, and students, as well as concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature pertaining to this campus racial climate study. By reviewing the literature, I aim to better understand the experiences of Black college students at predominately white institutions (PWI). I set out to organize and articulate past literature concerning Black college students and utilized The Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) and its five dimensions as both a theoretical framework and organizational mechanism (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). Throughout the chapter, I describe the individual dimensions of the MMDLE and explain how the literature has been discussed within the specific dimensions. The five dimensions of the MMDLE framing the literature review are as follows: (a) Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion; (b) Organizational/Structural; (c) Compositional Diversity; (d) Behavioral; and (e) Psychological (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998; Hurtado et al., 2012). Through this literature review and the use of the MMDLE, I obtain greater content and context for the study. Additionally, this literature helps better situate what was learned from the study. After discussing the MMDLE and relevant literature within its dimensions, I discuss existent scholarship on campus racial climate. Finally, I close with outcomes often associated with campus racial climates.

The Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments

The MMDLE was constructed with multiple dimensions as well as overarching contexts within its model. The MMDLE placed diverse students and their multiple social identities at the forefront of the framework. Specifically, students of color were selected as the diverse student population. This model was updated from Hurtado and colleagues' (1998) campus racial climate model. Prior to the creation of the campus racial climate model, it was uncommon to

see structural theoretical frameworks designed to challenge institutional racial inequalities and address the experiences of people of color (Patton, Renn, Guido-DiBrito, & Quaye, 2016). The campus racial climate model (Hurtado et al., 1998; 1999) had been updated for multiple reasons to keep with the evolving nature of understanding the experiences of students of color. In 2005, the structural dimension was recommended as an addition (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). In the campus racial climate model, the structural dimensions described what is now understood as the racial composition of students, faculty, and staff of color (Hurtado et al., 1998). Essentially, the numeric racial representation of the university shifted from the name structural to compositional. The structural dimension was added, discussed further later in this chapter, as the ordinary and day-to-day operations of the institution. Additionally, the MMDLE added more systems to the original campus racial climate model. Increased attention was brought to multiple contexts surrounding the five dimensions of the MMDLE. This allowed the model to evolve by considering how outside forces influenced the climate. Another addition to the original campus racial climate model was the consideration of multiple social identities that a student or groups of students may hold.

The MMDLE's five dimensions fell within the climate for diversity section of the model; however, as with many ecological models, there were important contexts surrounding the dimensions. The multiple contexts surrounding the climate for diversity and its five dimensions and the MMDLE are the socio-historical, policy, institutional, and community context and external commitments discussed briefly in Chapter 1 (Hurtado et al., 2012). The model placed an emphasis on examining the stakeholders of the institution. Hurtado et al. (2012) said, "often our models and assessments focus on students and their involvements, neglecting a critical examination of institutional actors and practices" (p. 49). An important inclusion of the

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MMDLE was the curricular and cocurricular processes taking place within the student's experience.

The curricular process focused on the instructors' pedagogy, curriculum, and the social identities of the instructor (Hurtado et al., 2012). The cocurricular process interrogated the experiences outside of the classroom such as residence life, student activities, and friendships. The attention on both the curricular and cocurricular experiences provided the opportunity for the MMDLE to focus on these institutional actors and practices while simultaneously considering students and their involvements. While aspects of the MMDLE were considered in its entirety, in this study, the majority of the focus lied on the five dimensions previously discussed.

Historical Dimension

The MMDLE's historical dimension focused on the legacy of inclusion and exclusion of racial minorities on college campuses (Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 2012). This dimension detailed how within an institution's history, policy, and culture; race has an effect within every aspect. When thinking about environments of inclusion and exclusion historically, Black students at PWIs have found themselves on the outskirts. This dimension placed its attention on how historically institutions have created a welcoming or unwelcoming environment for Black students (Hurtado et al., 2012). Further, if there were legal barriers from college admission or academic access, this would also be relevant within the historical dimension of the MMDLE. Hurtado and colleagues (1998) stated, "a college's historical legacy of exclusion can determine the prevailing climate and the influence of current practices" (p. 283). Indicators of the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion by the institution were the philosophy of education for students of color, how committed the institution was to affirmative action or

ensuring a racially diverse student body, programs and initiatives supportive of Black students, their mission statements, and the intergroup relationships on campus (Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 2012; Mingle et al., 1978). An important aspect of this dimension was how history led to the current structures of colleges and universities.

Within the history of United States higher education, institutions were created for mainly one population. The original Colonial Colleges were created with religious ties and served to benefit the academic needs of wealthy, white men (Brubacher & Ruby, 1997; Brubacher, 2017). At the time, white men were viewed as the most deserving for college access (Thelin, 2011; Thelin & Gasman, 2010). Racism and racial subjugation limited Blacks from academic opportunities (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997; Finelman, 2009; Thelin, 2011). White philosophers and leaders in the 1700s spoke on their perception of the intellectual ability of Black people. In the mid-1700, European philosopher and academic leader Hume (1987) said that Negroes were naturally inferior to their white counterparts. Hume believed only whites could be a part of a civilized nation and thus deserved academic opportunities. In 1785, Founding Father and founder of University of Virginia (UVA), Thomas Jefferson (1984) once wrote, "Blacks whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the Whites in the endowments of both body and mind" (p. 150). Thomas Jefferson was as an American and university president and shared these beliefs about Black people and their intelligence.

Nearly 200 years after the creation of Harvard, the first Black student graduated from college (Slater, 1994). Graduating from Middlebury College in 1823, Alexander Twilight came from a multiracial family. His mother was said to be white or fair-skinned and his father was multiracial (Slater, 1994). Based on photos of Twilight, it would not be surprising to learn he passed for white. Even though 1823 marked the first time a Black student graduated, it would

still be a decade until an institution provided access to Blacks (Brooks & Starks, 2011) and over 50 years later until the government provided funding and support for access to higher education (Gasman & Tudico, 2008).

The Morrill Acts

The Land-Grant College Act of 1862 or Morrill Act was a highly influential legislative policy affecting access in higher education (Redd, 1998). The Morrill Act was created to provide funding for colleges dedicated towards the agriculture and mechanical arts. This legislation was designed exclusively for white students (Redd, 1998). If you were designated a land-grant institution, the government provided financial assistance to continue on with the mission of agricultural and mechanical sciences. Throughout time, these grants were known for providing access and affordability, and therefore land-grant institutions were created for access and affordability. This policy was created to benefit the workforce of mostly white students. At the time, America was in the midst of the Civil War where Blacks in the South were slaves and Blacks in the North were still considered second class citizens and experienced overt and covert racism regularly (Gasman & Tudico, 2008). It was not until 1890 that some degree of college access began to take place (Redd, 1998; Gasman & Tudico, 2008; Albritto, 2012), although inclusion at PWIs were still a rarity.

The Second Morrill Act led to the rise of HBCUs and academic access for Black students at their own institutions (Albritto, 2012; Redd, 1998). This act focused on supporting states of the former confederacy. The second Morrill Act resulted in federal funding supportive of Black students at HBCUs (Redd, 1998). The piece of legislation stated, "a just and equitable division of the fund to be received under this act between one college for white students and one institution for colored students...institution for colored students shall be entitled to the benefits to this act"

(Second Morrill Act, 1890, p. 6). Within the Second Morrill Act, there was an acknowledgement that the previous act did not include the Black community, and this was a way to provide some options for Black students (Second Morrill Act, 1890). This act provided Blacks the opportunity for higher education. The second Morrill Act, the first opportunity for Black academic learning on a public scale, took place just nine years prior to the Plessy v. Ferguson 'separate but equal' ruling leading to half a century of segregation and further academic limitations for Blacks (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1895).

Jim Crow and Segregation

The Plessy v. Ferguson (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1895) Supreme Court case led to a nearly 60-year era of racial segregation creating a massive void of resources and opportunities for Blacks in America. Although segregation existed prior to this case, this Supreme Court ruling reinforced and legalized segregation. The case began when Homer Plessy declined to sit in a car created for Blacks in 1892 (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1895; Hillstrom, 2014). Plessy argued his constitutional rights were violated by the 14th Amendment, yet the courts ruled as long as there were accommodations for both racial groups, there was no need to be concerned with the quality of each (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1895). This ruling furthered an unbalanced and inequitable system of segregation where Blacks were required to use poorer facilities and services (Knott, 2016). For example, Blacks were forced to have their own libraries, hospitals, prisons, burials, restaurants, and schools (Knott, 2016; Packard, 2002). Through the concept of" separate but equal", whites took the best quality services and facilities and left the run down and poorly conditioned buildings for Blacks (Hillstrom, 2014). Through this legal system, whites found legal loopholes to maintaining their dominance in America despite the passage of the 14th Amendment, guaranteeing protections and full citizenship of all people born in the US, including

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former slaves (Alexander, 2012; DuVernay, Averick, & Barish, 2016). Segregation and Jim Crow laws widened the divide and continued exclusionary academic opportunities for Blacks (Hillstrom, 2014; Packard, 2002).

During the Jim Crow era, whites actively created policies to ensure Black subjugation and academic inferiority (Packard, 2002). Whites received more government funding, resources, and better trained teachers. Due to limited job opportunities for Black families, Black children were pulled out of school in order to generate revenue for the family (Brooker, n.d.). This practice kept Black children from the classroom as they needed to help support their family. Even if there was no need for Black children to be on the farm, at times, children were pulled from school because the white owner of the farm believed education was inappropriate for Black students (Brooker, n.d.). Whites actively made efforts to keep Blacks in subjugation and away from college through manipulation.

Throughout this time period, Black schools were in horrendous shape. According to a 1917 study, schools had leaking roofs, no glass within their windows, and dirty facilities (Brooker, n.d,). More so, these schools were overcrowded with students and limitations were placed on what could be taught to Black students (Packard, 2002). Policies in the Jim Crow South avoided topics such as equality and freedom in order to ensure Black children were unaware, docile, and weak. According to Historian Russell Booker (n.d.), "Carter Woodson told how some Black children in Southern schools were not allowed to use books that included the Declaration of Independence...reading them would confirm for African Americans that they were being denied the rights due to all citizens." These exclusionary practices reinforced the notion that whites wanted to keep Blacks from school. With over 75% of the Black population in the Jim Crow South (Brooker, n.d.), a large majority of Blacks suffered from this system. As Blacks

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within primary and secondary school struggled to succeed due to systemic oppression, it became nearly impossible to matriculate Black students to the collegiate level.

Throughout the country, protesting the unfair treatment of Blacks in education and holistically was internationally televised. Globally, the United States became a nation of ridicule because of segregation and Jim Crow laws. Other countries failed to understand how the United States was prompted and celebrated as the land of free but kept all populations of color in a subordinate class (Alexander, 2012). These contradictions pressured the government and Supreme Court to reconsider segregation and the idea of separate but equal (Alexander, 2012). Desegregation at PWIs began taking shape during landmark court ruling of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka in 1954 (Patterson, 2001; Stewart, 2008). This case declared segregated as unconstitutional, acknowledging separate was not equal (Patterson, 2001). Despite this landmark victory, change was slow. Many whites believed Brown v. Board was not a serious court case since there was no timeline created by the courts (Daugherity & Bolton, 2008; Olgetree, 2004). Although this court case required schools to desegregate, it took a second court case, Brown v. Board of Education II in 1955 or Brown II, to pressure schools to integrate (Daugherity & Bolton, 2008).

Through Brown II, the Supreme Court decided the rules of desegregation, the duration of integration, and the consequences if schools did not desegregate (Daugherity & Bolton, 2008; Olgetree, 2004). The courts ruled schools needed to desegregate but declined the NAACP's demand to desegregate immediately. Courts ruled in favor of a slower plan of desegregating empowering institutions to begin segregation when they choose (Ogletree, 2004). This meant schools could push off integrating as long as there were plans to integrate. Many institutions only began desegregating once the government threatened to cut financial

support (Daugherity & Bolton, 2008). This further explained why colleges and secondary schools alike, took more than a decade after the Brown v. Board ruling to desegregate.

The South were not the only perpetrators of exclusion in the academy; many Northern elite institutions were supportive of racial segregation and believers of Black inferiority (Harris, 2015). Colleges and universities supported racial domination aside from segregation. It has been reported institutions have previous ties to the slave trade (Harris, 2015). Institutions such as Harvard, Princeton, Brown, among others have been shown to have ties to slavery (Harris, 2015). In the past, professors developed curriculum and scholarship by these Northern institutions in favor of slavery as an economic opportunity in the country. Faculty, staff, and students brought their slaves on college campuses (Harris, 2015). It was only through the courts and global pressure that Americans began to make an effort towards inclusion.

As demonstrated throughout this previous section there was a detailed history of inclusion and exclusion concerning Blacks in higher education. Blacks throughout history were barred from the university for centuries. After obtaining access to higher education, only a handful of northern schools admitted limited Black students, whereas the South completely banned Blacks. In response, Blacks created institutions of their own, separated from PWIs. This led to major educational reforms throughout the 1950s and 1960s to provide help for Blacks in higher education. Next, I will discuss how the structural/organizational dimension of higher education contributes to the campus racial climate at PWIs.

Structural Dimension

The structural dimension seeks to explain systems involved with the institutional climate (Milem, Dey, & White, 2004; Milem et al., 2005). This dimension is described as the ordinary agenda of the institution (Milem et al., 2005). When discussing the structural

dimension, Milem et al. (2005) said it was "reflected in the curriculum; in campus decision-making practices related to budget allocations, reward structures, hiring practices, admissions practices, and tenure decisions; and in other important structures and processes that guide the day-to-day 'business' of our campuses" (p.18). This dimension focuses on the ordinary aspects of college life; so ordinary in fact, they are at times forgotten about as integral to the campus climate.

Despite its importance, institutions do not often consider how the structure of the institution has influenced the racial climate. When considering the campus spaces, few question the layout and culture. Policies like the Clery Act have been known to create massive implications; however, are rarely discussed in relation to the racial climate. Hiring decisions greatly influence the institution but are inconsequential when considering the racial climate (Milem, 2005; Hurtado et al., 2012). The structural dimension has often gone unnoticed while most of the attention of the university goes to the racial composition of the institution or the psychological or behavioral experiences of students (Milem, 2005; Hurtado et al., 2012). Within this section, I discuss how the use of spaces, university communication, crime alerts, and hiring influences campus racial climate at PWIs.

Space

The aesthetics of a space have been shown to affect students (Strange & Banning, 2001; 2015). Mitchell, Wood, and Witherspoon (2010) categorized spaces as the location, architecture, and geography; however, through human interventions and culture, space begin to take on new meaning. Critical geography foundation was built on human patterns in social interactions and how these interactions and patterns influence our view of the environment (Thomas & Cross, 2007). Therefore, spaces have been shown to hold a history and

culture (Tissen & Deprez, 2008). This culture and history led to spaces having traits of social construction and human-made connections, meaning there is power and oppression with a space (Thomas & Cross, 2010). With space linked to power, the very essence and existence of a location is engrained in social dominance (Mitchell et al., 2010). Further, drawing barriers or lines of ownership over spaces has never been a neutral act but a conscious decision of who or what is included or excluded and who has permission to join (Tissen & Deperz, 2008).

Within the field of critical geography, it is believed physical space has deeper meaning than simply being a place (Helfenbein, 2006). The culture of the space interconnected with identity, power, and place develops signals for individuals, especially those from various cultural groups. (Helfenbein, 2006). It was not until recently that researchers began studying cultural space in connection to race (Price, 2010). With identity, power, and space all creating meaning with race, space can create racial and cultural meaning for college students. Similarly, the makeup of a space has created meaning for students on college campuses.

The campus environment has not been simply confined to structures, but has included, "buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, natural and designed landscapes-but also...people-made objects and artifacts of material culture that adorn the campus and interact with students, faculty, staff, and visitors alike" (Strange & Banning, 2015, p.12). The collegiate experience has been influenced by the race and culture of space. For example, the graffiti on a residence hall building could perhaps be as important as the student union. Whether intentional or not, artifacts such as art, furnishing, landscape, and graffiti send nonverbal signals about the values and beliefs of the university (Strange & Banning, 2015). For example, racist messages such as cotton balls being dropped at the University of Missouri's Black cultural center (Mathis-Lilley, 2015) sent a message to Black students they were unwelcomed to the university (Harper, 2015). On the other

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hand, when Black students have seen art, murals, or buildings positively representing Black experiences, they were more likely to feel engaged, important, and included (Strange & Banning, 2012). As a result, Black students have gravitated toward campus Black Cultural Centers.

The campus Black cultural center has often been a place of resistance and survival for Black students (Patton, 2010). Black culture centers helped Black students deal with the challenges of being Black on campus. These centers helped build resiliency, contributed to a sense of belonging, aided in student transitions, acted as a home away from home, and positively shaped identity formation (Patton, 2010; Quaye, Griffin, & Museus, 2015). Cultural centers have served as safe spaces where Black students can come together and bond throughout their experiences while at attending a PWI (Yosso & Lopez, 2010), yet the question of why cultural centers exist should be addressed.

Yosso and Lopez (2010) made the argument that cultural centers were created as a form of resistance from the hostility of campus. These centers lessened the culture shock, marginality, and pain experiences by the wider community campus (Patton, 2010; Quaye, Griffin, & Museus, 2015). Black students called for a secluded space away from the racism and oppression they faced in order to make their collegiate experiences tolerable. Nevertheless, once built, institutions left students in that space and did little else to address larger issues of climate that would make students feel more welcome within the larger university setting (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Similar to when universities created a chief diversity officer or a position for all the issues surrounding diversity and inclusion (Harper, 2015), once a cultural center was built, the institutional leadership assumed all was fixed. Further, cultural centers were not created to advance racial justice but instead to temper students' ill feelings and act as a safeguard for Black students (Patton, 2010).

In the 1960s and 1970s, protestors gathered in response to the racist environment of PWIs (Patton, 2010) and today, these same conversations persist, despite cultural centers being more common. Universities felt a sense of pride once they established a cultural center used this to get media attention and be seen as an institution interested in diversity, equity, and social justice. However, Patton (2006) found that institutions do not provide appropriate finances for upkeep and allow Black students to have shoddy, minimal conditions. These ribbon cuttings were simply for show. It was common to even see these cultural centers at the edge of the campus, isolated or poorly located (Harper, 2015). Patton (2010) believed that if an institution cared, they would make a priority to support the maintenance and upkeep of the facility. These cultural centers have had the benefit of reflecting the ethos and heritage of Black students within the space, creating comfort and connectedness to Blackness (Patton, 2010) and yet, institutions rarely put attention on them once the cameras have stopped rolling.

Campus Alerts/Clery Act

Recent college students have received a text message or email indicating a campus message, commonly referred to as campus alerts, public safety notices, or in instances of illegal activity, crime alerts. These campus alerts begun popping up throughout college campuses in the 1990s with the advent of both technology and the Clery Act. Most students, since the creation of the Clery Act (Gow, McGee, Townsend, Anderson, & Varnhagen, 2009), have been notified of warnings or important messages from the university.

In the early in 1990s, after a particularly violent crime to a female victim named Jeanne Clery, the ideology around campus safety shifted. Jeanne Clery was a 19-year-old student at Leigh University who was murdered in her residence hall by a classmate (Gregory & Janosik, 2002; Janosik & Gregory, 2003). After the murder, her parents lobbied to create a law that would

provide students with the appropriate data on crime and safety. Her parents argued if they knew

of the potential danger her daughter would be put in, they never would have allowed her to stay

at her institution. The act was named the Jeanne Clery Act or Clery Act (Gregory & Janosik,

2002; Janosik & Gregory, 2003).

The Clery Act required institutions to report crimes on their campus in an effort to

improve the security and awareness for all students (Gow et al., 2009). The information

regarding crimes was then made available to the public through the annual reports or other online

sources (Gow et al., 2009). All institutions who received federal funding were required to report

under the Clery Act and provide a public message concerning safety. An alert has looked similar

to the following example:

Male student reports being robbed on North Street. between 5th and South

Drive, between midnight and 1am. Victim stated he was attacked from behind,

struck several times and the suspects took property from his pockets. Suspects

described as 3 males, 2 wearing black t-shirts, one wearing a "hoodie", all had

blue jeans.

Crime alerts were seen as a written form related to the everyday functions of the

institution. Since the alerts were a part of the everyday practices and policies of the institution,

they were structural to the institution.

Hiring Racially Diverse Faculty and Administrators

Faculty members have held on to one of the most influential aspects to

determine engagement, sense of belonging, and academic success for Black students. Faculty

choose the curriculum, the pedagogy, and the ways they wish to engage with the class. Often, the

classroom has been seen as a racist and hostile environment where Black students have been left

feeling unimportant (Ukpokodu, 2010). The lack of faculty of color in academic spaces and

classrooms and feelings of isolation have been noted as reasons Black students have perceived

the campus climate as racist, unengaging and unwelcoming (McGee & Martin, 2011). Literature

has detailed the benefits of racially diverse administrators and faculty (Reddick, 2011; Umbach,

2011). For example, students who interacted with diverse administrators and faculty, were more

likely to be proficient in racial understanding, culturally awareness and appreciation, engaged

with socio-political issues, open to diversity and challenges and less likely to display racial

stereotyping (Milem, 2003).

White faculty have been reported to tokenize students (Harper, 2013; McCabe, 2009),

unintentionally insult (McCabe, 2009; Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, & Rivera, 2009),

discriminate (Cress, 2008), and underestimate the intelligence of Black students while in class

(Harper, 2009; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004), and thus, have left Black students feeling isolated,

alienated, and threatened (McCabe, 2009). Although those who have most benefited have been

primarily white, racial diversity has importance to Black students. In particular, Black

students also found significant opportunities with a diverse staff and administration (Stanley,

2006; Reddick, 2011; Umbach, 2011).

Black students have been shown to directly benefit from the presence of Black

administrators and faculty on their campus (Reddick, 2011). Regardless of

the limited representation of Black faculty and administrators, Black students

have sought out these racially diverse administrators and faculty. Black faculty were more likely

to create academic or professional opportunities, mentorship experiences, and forms of racial

connection for Black students than white faculty (Reddick, 2011; Umbach, 2011). Perhaps

unsurprisingly, Black faculty have been shown to have a greater interest in promoting diversity

and inclusive spaces for Black students (Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009; Quaye et al., 2015). Despite this, a significant gap has existed in hiring of racially diverse faculty and staff (Stanley, 2006). Literature suggested institutions need to begin hiring more diverse staff and faculty due to the importance of their presence on college campuses (Garrison-Wade, Diggs, Estrada, & Galindo, 2012; Kezar & Maxey, 2014); however, rarely has this been accomplished. Institutions blamed the pipeline from undergrad to graduate school stating there were not enough Black students who continue on with their education to hire for faculty roles, although Gasman (2016) believes Black faculty were not hired because institution do not want Black faculty. Nonetheless, Black students rejected this notion of unavailable Black faculty by demanding for an increase in representation on their college campuses.

Often when Black students protest, they call for an increased presence of Black faculty and staff (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). In the 1970s and 1980s, these calls for racially diverse faculty and staff were made clear, yet nothing changed (Ferguson, 2017). Often when protests were escalated to national media, institutions hire Chief Diversity Officers (CDOs) to singlehandedly contend with the racial challenges of the institution (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2012). Recently, at institutions like Ithaca College and University of Missouri, more CDOs were hired after protests on college campuses to combat the negative attention (Morrison, 2015). These types of hiring were out of fear of a damaged reputation (Willams & Wade-Golden, 2012) as opposed to dedicated to racial and social justice.

Compositional Dimension

The compositional dimension of the MMDLE focuses on the institution's racial representation (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). It has been described as the "the numerical and proportional representation of various racial and ethnic groups on a campus" (Milem, Chang,

& Antonio, 2005, p. 15). Literature has shown Black students, faculty, and administrators felt the challenges of not seeing themselves in the institution (Dade, Tartakov, Hargrave, & Leigh, 2015; Harper, 2015). The racial composition plays a significant role in the racial climate for Black students. For example, studies have shown that Black students were more likely to engage, persist, and feel they belong when they see themselves represented (Allen, 1988; Strayhorn, 2012). Literature suggested Black students were more likely to establish a sense of belonging if individuals find spaces with a greater racial representation (Strayhorn, 2012).

Compositional diversity has a direct influence on a student's sense of belonging and counters effects of tokenism and alienation (Kanter, 1977). The more students of color in a space, the more positive the climate (Hurtado et al, 2012). Unsurprisingly, this was the dimension institutions have paid the most attention to when working through climate issues (Hurtado et al., 1998; 1999). Within this section, I detailed the experiences of students, staff, and administrators as tokens within higher education as well as discussed literature describing the influence of sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012) in relation to compositional diversity and how affirmative action has played a role in the campus racial climate as well.

Tokenism

Institutions have regularly found themselves bragging about how diverse their student body is on their college campus, often unaware of how unsatisfied Black students were about the racial diversity (Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 2012). Black students have described feeling dissatisfied as a result of a lack of representation of those who look like themselves (Harper, 2015). This lack of representation is referred to as tokenism (Kanter, 1997). Tokenism or token, described as a racial individual or very small group of racially diverse students who were forced to represent the entire racial community (Harper, 2015; Watkins, LaBarrie, & Appio,

2010). Other social identities have been tokenized before (Kanter, 1977), but for this paper, the focus was on Black students. In cases like these, the individual or small group were no longer seen as individuals but represent a symbol of the larger community (Kanter, 1977; Mallet, 2013).

Often, Black students were tokenized in the classroom (Harper, 2015; Mallet, 2013). This limited representation has left Black students feeling as if they are representing their entire Black community. There was increased pressure to perform well to invalidate opinions on the lack of intelligence or other stereotypes Black students are perceived to possess (Alter, Aronson, Darley, Rodriguez, & Rubie, 2010). Further, Black students have been asked to speak on their entire population almost as if they are a spokesperson for their entire race (Harper, 2015). These forms of tokenism created stress and anxiety for Black students, interrupting their abilities inside and outside the classroom.

While prevalent in the classroom, tokenism occurs all throughout the university setting. Institutions used their few Black students as a way to display the institutions' strides for racial inclusion (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014). Institutions loved situating Black students in their marketing and admission viewbooks, acting as if there are always groups of friends with multiple races hanging out at the quad or the union despite frequently reporting limited racial representation. Rather than making efforts to increase their racial representation, institutions have done little to help their students and, instead, have plastered these Black students on their promotional campaigns and websites to display, and often lie about, their racial diversity (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014). Due to the lack of representation on college campuses, Blacks have described feeling dissatisfied with their experiences and subsequently perceive a worse campus climate (Griffin, Cunningham, & George Mwangi, 2015), disengage academically, and

have feelings of loneliness (Museus & Maramba, 2011; Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008).

Although students have felt tokenized, faculty have been shown to experience similar

phenomenon at PWIs.

Faculty have experienced tokenism as well (Dade et al., 2015). Dade et al. (2015)

completed a collective case study of Black women faculty and found they felt isolated and

tokenized within their faculty roles. Similarly, Black women and other minorities within faculty

roles found the institution supported and fostered the needs of the white male faculty opposed to

them (Gregory, 2001). Tenure and promotion became more challenging for Black faculty due to

the higher demands placed on them compared to their white counterparts (Edwards, Beverly, &

Alexander-Snow, 2011). With Black students requesting Black faculty for mentorship and

support in concurrence with the institution requesting them for diversity initiatives and other

forms of service leaves less time for Black faculty to spend on scholarship (Gregory, 2001). The

lack of Black faculty representation left a strain as they output more energy and stamina than

their white peers. This type of treatment and isolation placed Black faculty in an uncomfortable

situation.

As the research reflects, white faculty have long occupied a large majority of professor

positions, and regularly achieve tenure at higher rates than Black faculty. Quaye et al. (2015)

found the rate of obtaining tenure for faculty of color is 64% compared to their white

counterparts of 75%. Alarmingly, only 43% of Black men and 34% of Black women receive

tenure at the respective universities (Harvey & Anderson, 2005). In 1975, only 4% of faculty

were Black and in the past forty years, these numbers have barely changed as Black faculty now

occupying only 7% of tenured faculty positions (Griffin, Bennet, & Harris, 2013). The lack of

representation and promotion has directly influenced the classroom racial climate. Without

greater representation and a strong network of support, Black students have often found themselves in classes with little protection from hostile and tokenizing experiences (Modica & Mamiseishvili, 2010). Perhaps the best defense for Black students are those who look like themselves, yet are rarely see in the position.

Affirmative Action

Created as an anti-discrimination policy, affirmative action was designed as a vehicle of educational opportunity and access for racial minorities and women (Anderson, 2004; Rubio, 2001). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Blacks began demanding changes within the country (Finkelman, 2009). These demands were for "'open admissions', higher Black enrollment, the hiring of more Black professors, and more Black studies courses and departments" (Rubio, 2001, p. 139). President Johnson wanted affirmative action to protect those who would be discriminated against. These protections were meant to offer equal opportunity and protection for racial minorities and women (Anderson, 2004). Affirmative action was meant to provide access to work and school for people of color and women in ways never seen before. Although the program was well intentioned, since the inception of affirmative action, there have been substantial changes that make the policy less able to increase Black student enrollment. This anti-discrimination policy morphed in unforeseen ways.

Through protesting and legal actions, affirmative action became more difficult to provide access for Black students. As stated previously, Johnson created the policy for protected classes such as race and color; however, the policy is limited in scope. The first instance of this decrease of power was Regents of the University of California v. Bakke. This case decided race cannot be a major factor in the application phase of the college admission process (Ball, 2000; Rubio, 2001). In another Supreme Court case, Grutter v. Bollinger decided race can be used in decision

process as long as it was not a main factor, but instead a contributing factor (Anderson, 2004). It was also emphasized during this case, the application process cannot harm non-minorities and their ability to receive acceptance (Anderson, 2004). During the same year as Grutter v. Bollinger, Gratz v. Bollinger decided while race can be a factor, it cannot provide an edge or advantage over white students (Ball, 2000). Through these court cases, inclusivity and exclusivity shifted back and forth throughout the years with the court trying to determine a "fair" system. However, in terms of equality, affirmative action had been shown to benefit whites more than others (Angyal, 2016; Massie, 2016).

Affirmative action's original purpose was to create opportunity for women and people of color; however, white women appear to be the primary benefactor (Angyal, 2016). During the Civil Rights movement, Blacks came together to fight their oppressive forces and affirmative action was meant to be one of the solutions. This action was meant to increase the opportunities for Black Americans. In a time where Blacks were demanding reparations and equal opportunities, affirmative action included other minority populations. However, Blacks did not benefit academically or in the labor force compared to their white peers (Massie, 2016). Instead, under affirmative action, white women have been provided the most opportunity (Angyal, 2016). Considering affirmative action was created as a way to become more inclusive for both the economic opportunity and academics for Black students, it was important to note what groups have benefited the most, and here, it is still the white population. While white women benefit from affirmative action, there are still recent court cases from white women, challenging affirmative action and its existence.

In a more recent court case, Fisher v. University of Texas, Abigail Fisher was not accepted to the University of Texas (UT) and sued the institution citing race conscious decision

making influenced her denial from UT (Kahlenberg, Lumina Foundation, & Century Foundation, 2014). Important to note, there were over 150 Black and brown students who were denied with better overall scores than her, yet she still claimed race played an overt role in her ultimate denial (Barnes, Chemerinsky, & Onwuachi-Willig, 2015; Hannah-Jones, 2016). Further, it was found Fisher was not next in line as there were over 30 white students who were denied with better qualifications than her as well (Hannah-Jones, 2016). The court issued in favor of affirmative action in both Fisher I and Fisher II, as she had her case tried again.

Instances like these further corroborated the notion that whites believed Blacks were racially inferior and white students were more deserving. One Supreme Court Justice vocalized a similar belief and sentiment around white superiority, Justice Scalia (2015) said, "it does not benefit African Americans to get them into the University of Texas where they do not do well, as opposed to having them go to a less advanced school, a slower-track school where they do well". It has been apparent that, throughout history, whites believed affirmative action benefitted only people of color and since people of color are incapable of intelligence, the policy should be abolished from existence.

Behavioral Dimension

The next dimension of the MMDLE focused on the cross racial or interracial interactions at the institution, or as Hurtado et al. (2012) named it, the behavioral dimension. Hurtado el al. (1998) described this as "actual reports of general social interaction, interaction between and among individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, and then nature of relations between and among groups on campus" (p.37). This dimension places interracial relationships at the forefront. The behavioral dimension has focused on campus programming, student organizations, diversity activities, and diversity courses (Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008).

For decades now, researchers focused on the importance and impact of interracial friendships while in college (Bowman & Park, 2015). Interracial friendships have been discussed to have positive effects for those in those relationships such as leadership (Antonio, 2001), cognitive development (Bowman, 2010), lower rates of discrimination and prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and self-reported growth (Bowen & Park, 2015), to name a few. Although white students tend to reap more benefits than other populations, there has been research that demonstrates the importance and influence of strong interracial interactions (Park, 2012).

White students have been found to have the least number of interracial friendships while entering college (Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Often due to systemic discrimination of housing and educational discrimination (Johnson & Thomas, 2003; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004), white students are easily able to avoid Black students and other racial minorities prior to college. As white students begun creating more friendships in their first year, it is sometimes the first time they have interacted with Black students or other racial minorities, therefore they have far less racial minority friendships (Stearns, et al., 2009). Stearns et al. (2009) found Black students' interracial friendships decrease the longer they are in college. Black students have felt a need to pull away from interracial friendships. Black students self-segregate as a survival mechanism in face of discrimination, prejudice, and racist forces. Black students have found supportive spaces to nurture their racial identity and seek healthy and positive relationshiops with peers (Strayhorn, 2011).

Student Involvement

When a new student embarked on their journey into higher education, they were often encouraged and led to engage in various forms of campus involvement. Black students suggested that they were more likely to persist due to such campus engagement (Flowers,

2014). Guiffrida (2003) found that Black students involved in minority student organizations develop professional connections and performed more outreach and service, whereas other scholars asserted that Black students discover a sense of comfort and increase exposure to Black culture and ethnic pride when connected to culturally relevant activities (Museus, 2008; Strayhorn, 2011). As Black students navigate the challenges of college and aimed to establish what Tinto (1987) described as social integration, student organizations have been proven to enrich the Black student experience. For example, Strayhorn (2011) found Black students who participated in a campus-based gospel choir were likely to develop greater levels of resilience and establish a stronger sense of belonging, which serves students well as they matriculate through the college environment.

The research and literature consistently found that connecting with same-race organizations had positive effects for Black students (Guffriada, 2003; Museus, 2008; Strayhorn, 2011). For example, Harper and Quaye's (2007) work focusing on Black student organizations found that Black identity development, ethnic pride, and the capacity to advocate for social justice increased from student involvement. The team's research revealed that Black students were more likely to advocate for the needs of oppressed individuals by their involvement, thus connecting positive outcomes to the engagement in same-race student involvement (Harper & Quaye, 2007). In their findings, such forms of involvement also highlighted how increased cross-cultural communication improved the ability of Black students to communicate across religion, gender, and sexuality groups positively affects the student experience (Harper & Quaye, 2007).

There were distinct benefits expressed in Black students joining and engaging in student organizations, as involvement also served as an opportunity to create solid foundations leading to sense of belonging, cultural connection, and for professional opportunity (Museus,

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2008). However, in their hostility towards Black bodies, white peers have forced Black students

to be ready to combat negative thoughts and perceptions. The campus racial climate and

challenges within the environment have caused students to regularly feel the need to prove

themselves and constantly fight stereotypes. For example, students have joined student

organizations as a means to create counter narratives to what Harper (2009, p. 679) described as

"niggering." Harper (2009) reported Black students often sought solace through engaging with

cultural organizations in an attempt to reject conceptualizations of how white students perceive

them. For instance, Harper (2009) shared insights from students that framed engagement is a

valuable resiliency strategy. A participant said, "he felt Black men were all viewed as Niggers on

his campus, but he refused to be treated as such. Thus, he immediately became involved in the

Student Government Association and the Residence Hall Council" (Harper, 2009, p.706). The

climate and perception of Black students were so negative, it led some to join these

majority white organizations as a means of confronting and overcoming stereotypes on the

campus.

Most research on student organizations and Black students focused on the identity

development and the establishment of counter spaces, a sign the environment may not be

welcoming and inclusive. Park (2014) found Black students tended to stay with same-race peers

where similarly, white students were likely to occupy majority white organizations. Research

suggested that Black student involvement in campus organizations is limited outside of same-

race organizations due to the exclusive racist nature and ignorance of, and lack of interest in,

Black students' needs (Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001).

Cross Racial Interactions

If one looked at a college admissions website or brochure, students would be led to

believe they will have at least one friend from each race (Saichaie, Hevel, & Morphew,

2012); however, in practice, this has not been the case. Harper and Hurtado (2007) found

universities claim racial diversity without providing support or encouragement of interracial

group interactions (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). There has been limited literature discussing cross

racial friendships while in college (Park, 2012; Park & Kim, 2013; Martin, Tobin & Spenner,

2014); however, the institution played little to no role in creating interracial friendships. For

example, Martin and colleagues (2014) found more than 60% of the participants were only

friends with students of the same race, regardless of the racial group. While white students

benefitted from cross racial friendships, they still were found to be less willing to engage with

their Black peers (Fischer, 2008). When white students enter the university, they continued with

same-race or intraracial interaction with ease and comfort unlike their Black peers since they

often made up less than 10% of the population and were tokenized. White students tended to

stick to their racial group (Fischer, 2008), while Black students created friendships with same

race peers as a means to avoid discrimination and racist attitudes (Case & Hunter, 2012).

A racist social environment made it more difficult for Black students to want to engage

with white peers while in college. Stearns, Buchmann, and Bonneau (2009) found Black students

actually decrease their numbers of interracial friendships while in college. Similar to students

who have struggled to join majority white organizations due to perceptions of racist attitudes and

behaviors from the majority group (Case & Hunter, 2012), the establishment of friendships

represented a similar challenge. These curricular and co-curricular challenges left Black students

facing challenging outcomes at PWIs, and such hostile and racist environments have been shown

to make it harder for Black student retention, wellness, and graduation (Horn, 2006; Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). While distinct, both the behavioral and psychological dimensions have influences on one another. The characteristics of the behavioral dimension informed the perceptions and attitudes of Black students and in turn, impact the campus racial climate.

Psychological Dimension

The final dimension, the psychological dimension, of the MMDLE examined racial group perceptions, how the institution responded to racial issues, the frequency of racial discrimination, and interracial attitudes (Hurtado et al.,1998; 1999). In the midst of the Trump administration, there have been institutions reporting higher levels of bias and forms of discrimination (Konrad, 2018). This would be an example of how the psychological dimension of the MMDLE would be relevant to a Black student's experience.

Throughout the country, interracial attitudes have been challenging and filled with racial conflict for Black students. Whether through racially themed parties, racist speech, or microaggressions, Black students have been forced into these racist encounters (Patton, 2008; Hurtado & Ruiz-Alvarado, 2012). Although there has been literature detailing Black and brown students and their activism largely in part due to this current administration (Logan, Lightfoot, & Contreras, 2017) the interracial attitudes and racial group interactions have not changed throughout higher education and what existed prior to 2016. In this section, I discussed how Black students perceive discrimination and racism at their institution and how these experiences influenced the campus racial climate.

Impact of Racist Encounters

Throughout history, there have been negative stereotypes and beliefs about Black people. Some of these beliefs were that Black people were lazy and stupid. German Philosopher Hegel

once stated, "it must be said in general that in the Interior of Africa, the consciousness of the inhabitants has not yet reached an awareness of any substantial and objective existence" (Hegel 1828, p.177). This form of hegemony and racist ideology persisted throughout history and shaped characteristics of white culture and the beliefs of superiority. Gusa (2010) described this as white ascendency and said it was "thinking and behavior that arise from White mainstream authority and advantage, which in turn are generated from Whiteness's historical position of power and dominance" (p. 472). Simply put, whites have believed they were superior to racial minorities. The historical section provided the legacy of inclusion/exclusion of PWIs and a deeper understanding of how aspects of white culture have been created and persists even after integration. As a result of the legacy of racism and white supremacist culture, whites developed a sense of superiority and entitlement (Gusa, 2010).

There were numerous examples of white ascendancy, those being microaggressions, racial mockery, and other forms of racialized speech. Microaggressions and racial mockery, regardless of their intent, have created tension for Black students causing stress, anxiety, and exhaustion (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) described microaggressions as "subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual) directed toward people of color, often automatically or unconsciously" (p.60). One form of a microaggression was when whites question the intelligence of a student of color. For example, a white student asking or assuming a Black student was an athlete and not attending the institution for their academic ability. Smith et al. (2011) explained Black people have to constantly prove to others that they belong in higher education settings despite being admitted on the same academic admission criterion as everyone else" (p.77). White students questioning

Black students' belonging influenced Black students' ability to connect to the institution. It also sent a message of what white people believe are Black students' academic capabilities.

Racial mockery creates moments of tension for people of color, treating them as if their culture is for white amusement (Pickering, 2017). Examples of racial mockery are racially themed parties and blackface (Pickering, 2017). Garcia, Johnston, Garibay, Herrera, & Giraldo, (2011) described racially themed parties as "any social event where guests are invited to show up dressed representing racial stereotypes or to mock any racial or ethnic group" (p.6). Garcia et al. (2011) explained how these parties were directed toward communities of color, often taking caricatures of real Black students and other racial minority groups and depicting them as a joke. Examples of racially themed parties are "Compton Cookout", "Cowboys and Indians", and "South of the Border" (Garcia et al., 2011).

Another form of racial mockery was the use of blackface. Blackface is when individuals, often white people, paint their faces black paint and act like stereotypes of Black people (Johnson, 2012).. Blackface originated in the theatre during the 1800s (Johnson, 2012). The Black community was not given access to the arts, including plays and musicals (Johnson, 2012). At the time, whites were the only group allowed on the stage. Many of the shows and acts centered on white performers representing a caricature of a Black person. These performances consisted of white men with painted Black faces happy on a plantation (Johnson, 2012). Blackface was created to humiliate and stereotype the Black community. Today in America, while uncommon in the theatre, college campuses are overrun with blackface incidents and other forms of racism. Many colleges attempted to condemn these events due to their offensive nature, but they persist each year (Smith, et al., 2011). These forms of racial mockery continue with

characteristics of white supremacy on college campuses that dismisses the experiences and pride of Black students.

Finally, college campuses have been afflicted by blatant hate speech and overt racism on their college campuses. These forms of overt racist hate speech have varied from swastikas painted on Black students' doors, nooses, and graffiti depicting racist messages (Patton, 2008; Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2012). These forms of hate speech have told Black students they were unwelcomed. In response to racial incidents like these, the universities often spoke on how the institution appreciates diversity and how their values do not align with the racial incident. These announcements served to placate those upset by the racist messages by delivering a meaningless, vague message to the university (Cole & Harper, 2016).

Cole and Harper (2016) found that institutions' responses to racial incidents tend to be poorly handled. For example, when institutions were faced with a racial incident, the institution failed to take appropriate action or acknowledge the racial challenges. Cole and Harper (2016) found that after a racist event took place, often university presidents will make no mention or a broad mention of the racist event. This vague response left the student, staff, and faculty population unaware of what happened on their campus, effectively hiding and silencing any racial matters. This type of silencing hurt Black students' feelings of connectedness.

Sense of Belonging

Scholars have discussed the power that connection has on us. Especially considering how a lack of representation has influenced Black students, these connections are integral to student success. This type of connection was described as a students' sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012; Tinto, 1987). Sense of belonging, defined as one's psychological sense they are valued in the community (Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007), has been well documented (Allen,

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1992; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Strayhorn, 2008, 2012). The inability to achieve a sense of belonging to the university has had negative consequences for Black students (Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007). Students without belongingness performed worse academically (Strayhorn, 2012) and decreased their likelihood to persist (Tinto, 1987).

Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) found the experiences of Black students differed from white students in numerous ways. Black students' sense of belonging heavily depended on the racial campus climate. The study found that African American students experienced racial microaggressions within classrooms and social settings on campus. These negative social and academic microaggressions created a chilly campus climate for Black students (Solórzano et al., 2000). In addition to microaggressions, a sense of belonging has connections with how represented a student feels at the institution (Strayhorn, 2012). A student racially isolated and tokenized from the rest of the classroom makes the space challenging and tiring for them. When looking for mentorship or guidance, a lack of faculty and staff who look like them also directly hurt their experience and lead to a more challenging campus racial climate.

Stereotype Threat

Racial Identity

Theorist Erik Erikson conceptualized the Stages of Psychosocial Development (Erikson as cited in Kroger, 2004) launching scholars to examine the influence of social and psychological elements of identity. The Stages of Psychological Development focused on identity crisis and the ways individuals developed through a sequence of life stages (Erikson as cited in Kroger, 2004). Identity crisis can be understood as the navigational process individuals undergo due to dissonance, prompting them to question their sense of self (Erikson as cited in Kroger, 2004).

Spanning the entire life cycle, Erikson's fifth stage of the eight-stage model, "identity versus role confusion" guided most college student development work (Jones and Abes, 2013). This stage, which occurred during traditional college years (18-24), asked the big question to college students, "Who am I?".

Researchers began noticing the lack of diverse perspectives taken through the empirical research process. The lack of women and people of color considered within foundational theorists' work limited academic scholarship. Marginalized identities can experience hostile campus climates influencing their developmental experiences (Harper, 2012), meaning many earlier models do not align with those groups lived experiences. The lack of diverse perspectives led researchers to develop theories and models representing the unheard voices (Jones and Abes, 2013). William Cross Jr. (1995) and Bailey Jackson III (2012) are some who described and extended identity theories to racial identity development. Similar to Erikson who sought out to understand how college students made meaning of their identity, Cross and Jackson examined how Black people made meaning of their racial identity.

The racial identity of a person, in this case a Black individual, is the process of learning about what their race means to them and how it influences not only their sense of self but their relationships with others (Cross, 1995). An important aspect of a person's identity is the salience of their race. Racial salience has been described as the centrality or importance of a person's race to their everyday experiences (Hurtado, Alvarado, & Guillermo-Wann, 2005). Salience has an influence on the ways in which Black students experience a college campus. The more salient the racial identity, the more Black students perceive bias and discrimination on campus as they are more aware of their Black identity (Hurtado et al., 2005). In addition, the more salient the racial identity, the more positive relationship one tends to have with same-race peers as shared values

tend to be developed through this positive racial relationship (Cross, 1995). Most important to

this study, the racial identity and the perception around bias and discrimination has an influence

on the ways in which Black students experience the campus climate.

Campus Climate

Extensive research exists dedicated to topics related to retention, persistence, graduation,

and access for Black students (Baker & Robnett, 2012; Palmer, Wood, Dancy, & Strayhorn,

2014). These issues were connected to forms of prejudice, discrimination, negative interracial

interactions, and, what researchers call, a chilly campus environment (Gusa, 2010; Harper, 2015;

Solorzano et al., 2000). A chilly campus climate has been described as "racialized spaces that

devalue, marginalize, and hinder their [Black students] full participation" (Gusa, 2010, p. 466).

Harper and Hurtado (2007) created nine themes in racial climate research for racial minorities.

Three of the most relevant were the cross-race consensus regarding institutional negligence and

pervasiveness of whiteness in space, race as a four-letter word and an avoidable topic and gaps in

social satisfaction by race (Harper & Hurtado, 2007).

Race as an avoidable topic detailed how race in the classrooms were never

discussed because it was taboo (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Within Harper and Hurtado's (2007)

work, they expressed how students, staff, and faculty have avoided the topic altogether. Often

this avoidance of the topic of race came from a colorblind, neoliberal ideology (Delgado

& Stefancic, 2012). Many white people convinced themselves everyone has similar experiences;

therefore, race is no longer a concern (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Through this mechanism,

whites were able to avoid discussing race and continue believing there is equality for all. On the

other hand, Black students wanted to discuss race because they were aware of the racial

inequities. Black students tended to view the institution more negatively than their white peers

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and want avenues to discuss the disparities. This said, white students believed Black

peers were more satisfied with the climate than Black students actually do. The avoidance of race

as a topic on college campuses left whites unaware from understanding the campus climate and

challenges Black students face (Harper & Hurtado, 2007).

White students do not believe their interactions with Black students to be hostile or

problematic although Black students have reported differently (Hurtado & Harper, 2007; Sue et

al., 2007; Tynes & Markoe, 2010). For example, when white students engage in forms of racial

mockery, often they do not see an issue (Tynes & Markoe, 2010). Further, multiple assessments

have delineated that Black students felt more disconnected and more challenged by the climate at

an institution than their peers (Gusa, 2010; Harper 2012; Harper, 2015). Black students perceived

and experienced greater prejudice, discrimination, and negative behaviors from white students

and faculty than white students (Gusa, 2010). These types of negative interactions have a direct

influence on the behavior and interracial friendships Black and white students have on college

campuses (Gusa, 2010; Harper & Hurtado, 2012).

Outcomes

All five of the dimensions and literature thus discussed related to the MMDLE all lead to

a challenging and racist campus climate for Black students. Then the question must be

asked, what are some of the outcomes of this challenging climate? While colleges continue to

parade their campuses as a place for all students, we continue to see Black students jump through

hurdles their white peers do not. Black students appear to struggle with their faculty and their

academic confidence (Harper, 2009), are exhausted from the negative climate, and struggle to

persist and graduate from college. This next section illustrated the danger of a negative campus

racial climate and further details the importance of changes needed within the academy.

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Engagement and Confidence

It was perhaps no surprise that a student's academic self-confidence—or the amount a student has believed in their intellectual aptitude and ability—has influenced their performance inside and outside the classroom (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004). This understanding of academic confidence aligned with what Astin (1977) described as intellectual self-esteem. In his research, (1977, 1991) he found that the level of involvement with collegians' academic environment increases their academic self-confidence, and additional researchers have documented the importance of a strong academic identity towards a positive self-esteem for college students and their ability to persist in school (Sander & Sanders, 2006). Negative curricular interactions further explained why Black students have been seen with some of the lowest graduation and persistence rates; while researchers has begun to tease out and understand what influences students' academic confidence, as well as the factors that influence persistence, college graduation rates still show less than half of students finish, with many populations graduating at dramatically lower rates when compared to their white peers (Horn, 2006).

Poor interactions with faculty, such as low expectations and discrimination, have left Black students feeling disengaged. In response, Black students doubt themselves and question if they are intelligent enough to persist in academic spaces (Harper, 2009; Harper & Quaye, 2007). For example, if a professor was pedagogically approaching a course in a way created to engage and center on his/her white students, this may limit the possibilities of Black student academic success and engagement. Students who stopped caring about their academic performance may not attend classes, engage with faculty, and may lose motivation to succeed (Cokley & Moore, 2007). Even when Black students were engaged with work, they have been seen as "acting White" and begin to shift their academic attention elsewhere to maintain a sense of Blackness

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(Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Harper, 2006). This concept weaponized White students as academic beings and Blacks as intellectually inferior (Harper, 2006). The burden of "Acting White" as well as the lack of belief in their academic prowess has led to students experiencing mental and emotional hardships that white students have not had to face. (Collins-Sibley, 2015).

Mental, Emotional, and Physical Wellness

The challenges stated in the previous sections detailed how challenging it can be being Black on college campuses. Regardless of setting, Black students have found themselves racially challenged and burdened emotionally and mentally. A repercussion of a hostile campus climate has been an increase of reporting of racial battle fatigue (Collins-Sibley, 2015). Racial battle fatigue has been described as a way to examine "social-psychological stress response (e.g., frustration; anger; exhaustion; physical avoidance; physiological or emotional withdrawal; escapism; acceptance of racist attributions; resistance; verbally, non-verbally, or physically fighting back; and coping strategies)" (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007, p. 552). A cause of racial battle fatigue were microaggressions. Alone, these comments may sting but people of color "do not occasionally experience microaggressions. Rather they are a constant, continuing, and cumulative experience" (Sue et al., 2008, p. 278), which over time, results in negative outcomes and triggering interactions for the student group.

Racial battle fatigue relates to racial microaggressions in both curricular and cocurricular settings (Smith et al., 2007; Collins-Sibley, 2015). After racially charged incidents have occurred, ranging from a seemingly irrelevant microaggression to a public hate crime, Black students took on feelings of numbness, shock, and disbelief. Some common emotional and mental reactions result in a loss of confidence, silencing, and difficulty thinking and processing information (Smith et al., 2007). Alienation and disengagement are also common (Amos,

2015). While racial battle fatigue was most known for mental and emotional aspects, physical and physiological reactions have been noted, as well (Smith et al., 2007). It would be difficult to show up fully prepared and engage in coursework when you are mentally and emotionally defending your right to occupy a space. Additionally, Black students questioned their academic confidence due to derogatory comments and verbal cues. Examples of physical reactions have included headaches, fatigue, loss of appetite, and trouble sleeping (Smith et al., 2007), all of which have a negative effect on students, including their engagement in the learning environment.

Black students have also experienced stereotype threat as a consequence of microaggressions and racial mockery (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Alter et al., 2010). This phenomenon caused individuals to feel pressure, stress, anxiety, and sickness when faced with the possibility of representing your race while test taking, ordering food, or any ordinary activity a college student does (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Alter et al., 2010). Stereotype threat develops from the fear that one may negatively represent their race in everyday situations or confirm the stereotype about their racial group.

Suffering Graduation Rates

Over the past several decades, institutions have committed to improve the retention and graduation rates of Black students on college campuses. The graduation rate for Black students over a six-year span was near 40%, compared to that of their white peers who have graduation rates of 60% (Nichols et al., 2016). Perhaps one of the most noticeable consequences of a poor campus climate lied in the retention and graduation rates of Black students (Museus, Nichols, & Lamert, 2008). All of these various issues, whether it be Black students' wellness, their academic confidence, or sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012) led to lower persistence and

graduation rates. Tinto (1987) discussed the importance of sense of belonging, academic connection and performance, faculty-student interaction, extracurricular, and peer group interactions as key factors to retention. Components of the campus racial climate left Black students searching for support and mentorship and often finding very little; instead, they may simply stay afloat rather than succeeding in the ways through which they are capable. A poor racial climate led to long list of issues for Black students, but perhaps most important to many PWIs, Black students cannot succeed or graduate when the environment tells them they cannot.

Conclusion

As demonstrated through this review of literature, the MMDLE provided a framework to understand how research and current events have informed elements of campus racial climate. Through this chapter, the reader has been able to see the way the historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion, structural, compositional, behavioral, and psychological dimensions have made up many of the experiences of a Black students. Further, the repercussions of these climates were discussed and seen when talking about the outcomes of the racial climate. Next, I outline the methodology for this research study, providing the reader with more context on how I will accomplish the purpose of the study and answer the research question.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the methodology utilized to examine the campus racial climate for Black undergraduate students at PWIs. This critical case study focused on the experiences of Black undergraduate students at PWIs. Specifically, this study was informed by the following guiding research question: What is the campus racial climate for Black students at a social justice striving PWI? Additionally, several sub-questions, informed the study: (a) What historical aspects of the institution informed contemporary climate for Black students?; (b) How did the institutions' policies and practices influence Black students' experiences with the racial climate?; (c) How did the racial composition of the university inform the campus racial climate?; (d) What did the cross-racial interactions look like for Black students and their peers?; and (e) How did Black students perceive the institution in terms of race?

Throughout this chapter, I outlined my epistemological views detailing their connection with the study's theoretical framework and used case study methodology for this campus racial climate study. I also outlined the setting, participants, and strategies employed during the study. Finally, I discuss analyzing the data, reflect on my positionality as a researcher, and describe how personal biases likely influenced viewpoints of the research. To begin this chapter, I explain how my use of a critical epistemology not only functions as an emancipatory tool, but also informs this case study approach.

Critical Epistemology

In this study, I employed a critical epistemology. A critical epistemological describes reality as formed by various values over time, including political, social, and economic (Jones et al., 2014). A critical epistemology recognizes and works to dismantle existing social structures, such as race, and determines how power, privilege, and oppression can be countered in order to

create a more socially just environment (Jones et al., 2014). As a critical researcher, I aimed to illuminate and emancipate racist systems. A critical epistemology allowed me to work towards challenging forms of racial oppression (Denzin, 2017). The critical epistemology left me with a number of goals in mind when considering the importance of emancipative practices.

A critical qualitative inquiry came with a set of goals I was able to use within the study (Denzin, 2017) and were as follows: (a) placing those who have been oppressed, in this context Black college students facing racism, at the center of the inquiry; (b) creating potential change and activism for places and spaces at the institution; and (c) using this inquiry to not only help people through activism but also to change social policy through critiquing those in positions of power. A critical qualitative approach provided the tools to illuminate discriminatory and racist systems at SJSU.

Critical epistemologies encourage the researcher to move away from neutrality and objective positioning (Erickson, 2005). As stated previously, an objective of this study was to create change. This being said, a closeness to the data was imperative to understanding the racial climate for Black students. This viewpoint influenced the style of observation, interview, positioning, data analysis, as well as the theoretical frameworks, as I try to best understand the inequalities and injustices at SJSU for Black students. This critical epistemology connected with the study's theoretical framework, Critical Race Theory (CRT), for a number of reasons. CRT focuses on the dismantling of oppressive systems and unearthing our racialized history (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Hurtado et al., 2008). Within this study, CRT was utilized as an analytical lens, explained next.

Critical Race Theory

Throughout the 1970s (and after the honeymoon phase of the civil rights era), it became clear that legislation authored during the 1960s was far less effective than originally thought (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Zamudio et al., 2011). Many of the landmark cases and civil rights advances such as *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968), were being repealed, ignored, or decreasing in power (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In response to the lack of racial advancement, critical legal scholars and activists such as Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, and Richard Delgado decided actions needed to be taken (Brown & Jackson, 2013). As legal scholars, they saw discrimination, bias, and racism frequently within the law. The apparent discrimination made the legal system the perfect place to begin dismantling racial inequalities. In the late 1980s, the tenets and concepts of CRT were formed, though it was not until the mid-1990s that CRT was used as an emancipatory framework in education (Zamudio et al., 2011).

Critical Race Theory in Education

During the 1990s, Gloria Ladson-Billings, frustrated with the simplicity of analysis and understanding of race in education, called for a change in education related to race and racism (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Thus, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) began adapting CRT to education and realized CRT and its tenets could be used as an "analytic tool for understanding school inequality" (p. 48). CRT, seen as an exploratory and analytical theory, meant to investigate educational challenges and explore the interconnectedness of race with American norms, policies, traditions, and beliefs (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). With the emergence of CRT, scholars had new tools to challenge white privilege and create works dedicated to ending racial

disparities in social, economic, political, and education contexts (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015;

Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Given its evolution and grounding, CRT is used with an analytic lens to examine racial

inequity at PWIs (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). This included having a deep grasp and

understanding of the CRT tenets. I then used CRT for analysis, exploring the narratives of the

participants, as well as the other forms of data collected. Next, I will describe the tenets of CRT

and how they were utilized in the study.

Tenets of Critical Race Theory

CRT in education was built on several tenets or thematic tools often applied in CRT

scholarship. While various scholars assert different tenets or naming practices, within this paper,

I focused on the following common tenets of CRT: (a) the pervasiveness of racism; (b) challenge

to dominant ideologies; (c) counter-stories and experiential knowledge; (d) commitment towards

social justice; (e) interest convergence; (f) whiteness as property; and (g) revisionist history

(Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Pervasiveness of Racism. The first tenet has been centered on the idea that racism is

pervasive within our society, noting the ordinariness of racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Throughout American history and connected to the enslavement of Africans, racial disparities

have existed, and the pervasiveness of race and racism have become the norm. Due to the ties of

racism with the founding of the country, racism is embedded and normalized in America and

regularly leads to racist ideologies (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; McCoy &

Rodricks, 2015; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). For example, within the United States Constitution,

slavery and racial subjugation is apparent throughout the founding document. Article 1, Section

2, Clause 3 discussed how slaves, almost entirely Black people, were to be counted as only

3/5ths of a person, specifically for tax purposes, to benefit whites (Rothenberg, 1988). This form

of property served to display how Blacks in America were viewed as subhuman. This tenet

detailed the importance, centrality, and endemic nature of race and racism in America

(Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Delgado et al., 2017).

   Challenge to Dominant Ideologies. The second tenet of CRT challenges dominant

ideologies (or the master narrative), as concepts such as colorblindness, race-neutrality, and

meritocracy are interrogated (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). CRT asserts that white privilege has

allowed society to believe objectivity and racial neutrality exists. Challenging dominant

ideologies serves to expose how objectivity and colorblindness created further racial divides,

thereby benefitting whites while silencing people of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Further, this tenet serves to disprove the idea that a colorblind society exists. Delgado and

Stefancic (2013) said the way to remedy the current racist and neoliberal country was through

"aggressive, color-conscious efforts" (p. 22).

   Experiential Knowledge. The third tenet of CRT relies on the experiential knowledge of

Black individuals and places them at the center of narratives (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Yosso &

Solorzano, 2002). The centrality of experiential knowledge focuses on the idea that Black people

have valuable input and perspectives to challenge oppression (Yosso & Solorzano, 2002). This

expertise is often shared in the form of counter-stories or counter-narratives. These forms of

storytelling have taken multiple forms such as family histories, narratives, and biographies

(McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). CRT works to decolonize the stories of people of color (Solorzano

& Yosso, 2002). Stories regarding Black people have often been told through the lens of the

colonizer or oppressor; CRT allows this form of colonization to be challenged and dismantled.

Throughout the study, the Black students' counternarratives were used to describe aspects of the

campus racial climate. Through focus groups, Black students had the opportunity to be heard and validated, as their stories were important and necessary in understanding the campus racial climate. Since Black students regularly experienced the campus in a close and intimate way, with almost every facet of their collegiate lives engulfed in this PWI, their voices were privileged due to the closeness to the college campus.

Explained next, in alignment with a critical epistemology and CRT, I used my own experiential knowledge as a means to understand the racial climate at SJSU. As stated previously in Chapter 2, hegemony is acquired through coercion and consent (Edwards, 2008). Similar to hegemony, racism and whiteness have been ingrained into the fabric of this country, further leaving Black students susceptible to believing colorblind or deficit ideologies about Black experiences (Harris, 1993; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Hegemony, racism, and whiteness could have led Black students to believe they may live in a post racial environment or that their institution may not have problematic issues. This said, this study centered the researchers' personal and experiential knowledge as a Black scholar-practitioner who was educated at PWIs. The experiential knowledge from a PWI perspective will be discussed later during the positionality section. As a researcher, I reviewed racial incidents and created narratives based on my own experiential knowledge and perspectives aligned with the participants stories.

Commitment Towards Social Justice. The fourth tenet of CRT is a commitment towards social justice (Brown & Jackson, 2013). CRT advocates for emancipation or freedom from white supremacy and domination (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). By recognizing the existence of hegemony, privilege, and oppression in society, this tenet embraces praxis toward dismantling such systems, thereby creating a more equitable environment for Black students. Additionally,

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the fourth tenet aligns with my critical epistemology, relying on emancipation and liberation for racial equality (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Interest Convergence. The fifth tenet of CRT focuses on the convergence of interest between Blacks and whites. Interest convergence has been described as Blacks receiving racial benefits or advancements only if their interests aligns with whites (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Bell (1980) used this argument to better understand the decision behind *Brown v. Board of Education* and the desegregation of schools. For Blacks to attain racial advancements including education, it would be nearly impossible to achieve on their own due to segregation laws in the country. Blacks were attending schools with no money and resources but could not initiate change alone. Bell (1998) discussed that whites in policymaking positions saw the advantages of economic and political advancements domestically and abroad helped white people get on board. Alexander (2010) said the United States was embarrassed by its global recognition as the land of the free but had these types of laws and policies in existence that directly conflict of the country's values. Only until white politicians and policymakers saw the advantages of desegregated schools did racial advancements come. Within the study, I assessed racial advancement and examined times where progress came only because it also benefitted the majority.

Whiteness as Property. The sixth tenet introduced the concept of whiteness as property. This tenet displays the value whiteness holds in American society (Harris, 1993). Through our history of race and racism, whiteness has taken on characteristics of property. Harris (1993) described four characteristics of whiteness as property. These are as follows: (a) rights of disposition; (b) right to use and enjoy; (c) reputation and status property; and (d) the absolute right to exclude. Within this study, I discussed instances in which race and whiteness have taken

on forms of property. Through this tenet, I was able to understand what was considered property, what property was owned, who owned it, and the role race played. Within higher education, I examined policies, practices, and structures that used property rights to further white supremacy, dominance, and exclusion.

Revisionist History. The seventh tenet of CRT focuses on a revisionist history (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). This tenet entails scrutinizing historical events through a racial lens (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Throughout history, majority groups have been able to create and script the narrative in which they envision history as more comforting than what history really occurred (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Instead, through revisionist history, history can be reviewed through a new racial lens and reform the story. Within the study, I dove into SJSU's history to gain a deeper insight towards the racial history and heritage. By reviewing documents, archives, and policies, I gained a deeper understanding of how an institution's history was retold to maintain dominance. These tenets of CRT will influence the methodological approach utilized within the case study methodology as case studies are heavily influenced by the theoretical frameworks within a study (Jones et al., 2014). Another lens that has ties with CRT is intersectionality. Intersectionality also had an analytic influence in the study, particularly when studying the experiences of students holding multiple marginalized identities (Crenshaw, 1989; 1995).

Similar to CRT, intersectionality has its roots in critical legal studies. Coined by Crenshaw (1989; 1991), intersectionality describes the marginalization faced by Black women and other women of color. Crenshaw (1991) said that the "intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (p. 1244). This meant that those who had

multiple marginalized identities experienced the world differently, particularly Black women in

the case of this study, and those experiences need to be acknowledged and understood. Delgado

and Stefancic (2017) saw intersectionality as an interrogation of race, class, sex, national

original, and sexual orientation and the ways these different identities appeared in different

spaces.

Case Study

To understand the experiences of Black undergraduate students at PWIs, I employed a

case study methodological approach. Case study has been described as a thorough,

comprehensive description and interrogation of a single instance or phenomenon (Merriam,

1998). A defining characteristic of case study is the topic of study or "the case" (Merriam, 1998).

The case confines the researcher and sets the boundaries of the study. The case provided the

object of study; in this case, SJSU. Within case study research, if the case is not restricted within

a bounded system then it would not be considered a case (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). In other

words, a case was viewed as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context"

(Miles & Huberman, 1994 as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 27).

This study's bounded system or case was a single PWI, described later in this section.

This PWI was the phenomenon being investigated. This case was also a hybrid of an intrinsic

and instrumental case study (Stake, 1995). Inspired by the works of Jones and Abes (2003), this

study used aspects of both an intrinsic and an instrumental case study. An intrinsic case study is

used when the researcher wants to understand the particulars of the case in itself. The uniqueness

of SJSU and their leadership structure has made the case of particular interest in itself; however,

a goal of this research was also to create connections across this PWI and others. Normally these

types of connections were made with an instrumental case study.

Instrumental case studies look to accomplish something other than understanding the specifics of a particular situation or issue (Stake, 1995). The phenomenon of interest is all PWIs. This instrumental case allows the opportunity to specifically choose a PWI to better understand the larger context of Black students' experiences at PWIs. The ability to transfer information was one of the strengths of choosing an instrumental case study for PWIs. Often instrumental case studies take an in-depth investigation, where the contexts surrounding the case are met with a deep level of scrutiny, and regular or ordinary activities are detailed because it helps the researcher understand the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In particular, the theoretical frameworks guiding this study heavily relied on instrumental case study characteristics such as scrutinizing contexts surrounding the case (Yin, 2018). With both the intrinsic and instrumental case having particular advantages, the case having a uniqueness, and the goal of the research to be far reaching, a hybrid form was used.

Characteristics of Case Study

There were several case study characteristics that shaped the methodology. Key components of this case study were the descriptive nature (Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 2009), establishment within context (Merriam, 1998; 2009), heuristic qualities (Merriam, 2009), and the importance of pairing case studies with a theoretical perspective (Jones et al., 2014). This case contained rich and thick description of the phenomenon of study (Merriam, 1998). In alignment with works by Jones et al. (2014), I built this study with "detail, richness, completeness, and depth" (p. 93). Descriptive texts provided the study a level of validity as they are placing, rich and thick descriptions into the findings (Merriam, 1998).

The second characteristic of the case study was the importance of context and environment (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998). Creswell (2013) stated an in-depth understanding

of the case is imperative because of how much can be gained from understanding the context. Context included understanding as much as possible about the environment, history, and circumstances related to the case. In addition, because cases were centered within a bounded system, it was imperative to understand as much as possible about the environment within the system in order to appropriately grasp the phenomenon (Jones et al., 2014). The Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE), discussed in the previous chapter, was utilized to frame the study. The role of context was integral for the study, as the MMDLE called for an in-depth understanding of the institutional contexts (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012).

The third characteristic of case study research was its heuristic nature (Merriam, 1998). Heuristic case studies "illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study. Case studies can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience or confirm what is known" (Merriam, 1998, p. 30). As a researcher utilizing a critical epistemological approach and Critical Race Theory (CRT), my research goals were to both challenge dominant ideologies and transform and emancipate people from inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Through this investigation, the hope was to extend the reader's experience with a discovery of new meaning or confirm what is known. These goals aligned with the heuristic characteristic in the study. The heuristic characteristic allowed those reviewing the research to understand and potentially challenge real world insights and question the phenomenon under investigation (McCoy & Rodrick, 2015).

CRT acted as the theoretical perspective in this critical case study. The connection with a critical viewpoint and CRT added "philosophical richness and depth" (Jones et al., 2014, p. 94) and assisted with the analysis. In this case, the theoretical perspective, as mentioned previously,

helped shed light on power, hegemony, and racism spotted in the study. Within this critical case study, Black students' perspectives were emphasized over other populations. CRT with considerations to its tenets, such as counternarratives, provided the opportunity to privilege Black student voices, commonly ignored and silenced. This case study, focused on Black students' experiences, was strengthened with the addition of the theoretical perspective, CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In this case study, I employed a number of methods and data but chose to focus on the narratives and archival records due to CRT. CRT provided a lens to capture participants' voices, challenge historicity with revisionist history, and make a stronger connection between the Black student experience and the phenomenon of racial climate. CRT strengthened the study the ability to truly honor the voices and experiences and Black students themselves. Institutions believe they know what Black students need or believe a false narrative about Black students' experiences of PWIs. This study privileged their voices as a means to provide an accurate picture of how Black students understand and experience the campus racial climate, therefore privileging their voices and the focus group data was helpful and imperative.

Bounded System

One of the most important characteristics of this case study was the bounded system (Creswell, 2013; Hamel, Dufour, & Fortin, 1993; Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 1998; 2009; Yin, 2018). Merriam (2009) defined a bounded system as "a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (p. 40). The bounded system of SJSU helped create limits to ensure there were finite variables. Merriam (2009) discussed a relatively easy way to determine if a case has a bounded system by the number of participants in the study. If there were potentially an infinite number of participants available, this is not a case study. Bounding a case helped limit the data collection process by setting up parameters and guidelines (Yin, 2018). Throughout this research,

I studied the experiences of Black students at a PWI and used the institution as the bounded system. As stated by Jones et al. (2014, p.93) "the bounded system which can be an individual, a specific program, a process, an institution, or a relationship" In this case, the bounded system is the campus of Social Justice Striving University (SJSU). SJSU was bounded due to the geographic limiters of the campus. The study focused on those naturally part of the institution's community.

The Case and Sampling

Deciding on the institution as the case was the first step in sampling. I built the case study around one large public, Research 1 institution, SJSU. SJSU supports the academic endeavors of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. SJSU is characterized as a PWI and was founded as a land grant institution, created on the premise that all students within the state would be provided access to this institution (Thelin, 2004).

This PWI was unique for its number of Black administrative leaders (BAL), high-ranking university officials. This uniqueness created a rare opportunity regarding this PWI due to how uncommon it was to see more than two Black university officials in leadership positions at PWIs. Unique among PWIs today, for the past couple years, BAL have been highly represented at SJSU. This was one of the main reasons why this institution was chosen. It is common to hear leadership is indicative of the climate, and this setting provides an excellent test to understand the campus racial climate in relation to leadership. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in addition to the BAL, the university had ties to the Underground Railroad, indicating a history of supporting Black students. Additionality the spaces dedicated to Black students, such as the BCC and the MAO as well as the courses offered to address bias made a compelling reason to choose this institution and see the strides being made toward social justice.

SJSU comprises a total minority enrollment of a less than 20%. According to their 2017 main campus enrollment data, less than 10% of the institution is African American, nearly 8% identify as Asian American, less than 7% are Hispanic, 5% identify as multiracial, and less than 1% identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander combined.

The Racial History of the Case

Through the data collection process, pertinent information related to the case at hand were identified as informative to the study. These points were as follows: (a) The 1960s Expulsions; (b) The 1970s protests; (c) The formation and evolution of the Black Cultural Center (BCC); and (d) the vandalization of the BCC. Throughout this section, a deeper understanding of the case was contextualized to better situate the study. From the archival data, I created a narrative that helped situate the participants' experience with SJSU.

The 1960s expulsions. In the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement and protests for racial equality were at an all-time high. What happened at the national level was also taking place at the institutional level. SJSU was experiencing Black students' unrest. Members of the BSU staged a protest inside the President's office in response to the inequity of Black students' academic opportunities, police misconduct, and overall lack of belonging.

Prior to the protest, Black students were reeling from the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Two Black women were getting on the campus bus discussing their collective pain. As the two were talking, they were interrupted by the bus driver and told to cease conversations related the Martin Luther King Jr. After the women denied the demand, the campus police were called, and they were removed from the bus. Two other Black women were sitting behind the pair. All four were removed from the bus by police. BSU already had a pre-planned meeting with

the administration that following day to discuss SJSU's discriminatory practices. This bus incident was shared with BSU adding fuel to the fire.

More than 50 BSU members came out to speak with the administration in the central administration building. During the conversations, white anti-Vietnam war protesters had flooded the first floor in support of the Black students' cause, occupying the building, and a six-hour protest ensued. After the protest, Black protesters were named the SJSU30. This name was given to over 30 Black demonstrators on whom the university brought criminal charges. Eight protesters were expelled.

BSU planned this protest because they felt as if the university had not advocated for their needs. Whether it was housing, off-campus discriminatory behavior from nearby campus dining facilities, or a lack of a presence of Black students, faculty, and staff; SJSU students were unhappy. When they voiced their frustrations, they were ignored, expelled, or arrested.

As a result of these protests, the university created a committee on Afro-Studies, which eventually led to the creation of the African American Studies degree and the Office of Diversity Affairs. Black students were also promised increased financial assistance and a Black Cultural Center (BCC). Finally, the university implemented a group disruption policy for the institution. Those who were found in violation of disruption on campus were dismissed. Black students fought for a cause but paid a steep price, a theme that reoccurred a couple years later.

The 1970s protests. During the early 1970s, the aforementioned group's disruption policy became a fixture for protest. When two Black students were charged with violating the policy, other Black students began protesting to drop the charges, igniting racial tensions. A series of protests around campus followed. As these different groups protested their respective issues, it was decided to create a united front to create change at SJSU. Weeks prior, Black

students gave a list of 19 demands. Some of those demands were for more Black staff representation, more space allocated for their academic endeavors, and funds to support the Diversity Affairs Office.

The Vice President of Student Affairs said enough accommodations had been made for Black students and women in response to these demands. The demands were indicative of how Black students were feeling at the time, yet the Vice President of Student Affairs, Mr. Floor (a pseudonym), felt confident they were provided enough. Black students felt as if their money was not being used to support them and their plights. Black students in the 1970s felt underrepresented by Black faculty and staff. Protesters demanded an increase of Black student enrollment, similar to the 1960s protests.

Protesters planned a campus-wide boycott. On the planned rally day, over 2000 people met at the campus green. For reasons unknown, the exit to the university was blocked. This resulted in panic with students and cops beginning to fight. The police entered in riot gear and tear gassed students. Over 300 people were arrested and more than 70 hospitalized, with seven reporting to have gunshot wounds. The following day, students went to the Administrative building to talk and were greeted by the state National Guard.

In the aftermath of the riot, Mr. Floor announced they were hiring a Black faculty member to assist in recruiting historically underrepresented groups. On the same day, the Vice President for Academic Affairs promised $170,000 to establish the Black Studies program. Despite these promises from the university, protests continued, leading the president to cancel class for two weeks. Months following the protests, the Office of Diversity Affairs was created. While Black students were finally given a Black Studies program and a commitment to better representation, it did not come easy.

The formation and evolution of the Jerome Black Cultural Center. The Black

Cultural Center (BCC) was created after protests during the late '60s and early '70s. Upon the

completion of the building, SJSU named the Black Cultural Center after a Black administrator

and faculty who was a fixture in the SJSU community. The process was not easy to receive a

BCC or have it named after a Black person. Dr. Jerome was unlike other people with namesakes.

He was not a financial donor; instead, he helped create an inviting environment for many Black

students. Dr. Jerome is credited for helping increase Black undergraduate enrollment as well as

recruit Black doctoral students at a record rate. When they decided to name the building after

him, SJSU did not do so wholeheartedly. Instead, they added Dr. Jerome's name to the already

existing title of the building, the Jerome Center at Moore Commons.

Two years later, the building was not what was promised to students. In addition to the

namesake not fully reflecting Dr. Jerome, the facility was not fully open to Black students. It was

a shared space with half the building unavailable. Once again, Black students were made a

promise and lied to. Black students rallied and demanded access to their space, holding the

president of the university to his word, despite his intentions to not to listen to the protesters. The

next day, the building's name was changed, and Black students were given full access to the

BCC. Black students held the university accountable and ensured the Jerome BCC was what they

were promised. Students used their collective voice to ensure ownership of the entire space.

The vandalization of the BCC. In March and April 2012, conversations around racism

swept and shocked the nation. The trial of George Zimmerman for the murder of Black child,

Trayvon Martin, was beginning. At SJSU, conversations about racial inequality were taking

place, as well. On April 4, Black and Muslim students came together and hosted a protest called,

"Hoodies and Headscarves." The hoodies challenged the notion of Black men as violent and

criminals, what Trayvon Martin was wearing upon his death. The headscarves were to highlight the violence against Muslims in the nation, specifically the murder of Shaima Alawadi, who wore a Hijab. The event was hosted on the campus green where a man was arrested for flashing an empty gun holster at protestors. These fear tactics were just the start.

The follow day, the words, "Long Live Zimmerman" were found spray painted on the BCC. Zimmerman was known as a racist for committing a violent act against a Black boy. Coincidently, BSU already had a meeting planned that day titled, "Civil unrest: the reemergence of hate crimes?" The idea of this program was to facilitate dialogues related to Trayvon Martin, Shaima Alawadi, and Tyler Clementi for the various hate crimes affecting the nation. While this meeting still took place, a collaboration between SJSU's NAACP student organization, faculty, staff, administrators, the Black graduate student caucus, and BSU met to discuss the racist vandalism. The group left the BCC with demands to present with the SJSU Board of Trustees.

On April 6th, a group of over 200 protesters, marched from the BCC to the Board of Trustees for a silent protest. The group demanded SJSU, "create a hate crime alert, increase the school's diversity at the student and faculty level, and instill a campus atmosphere of 'inclusion not just for tolerance' for people of all backgrounds." At noon that day, students, faculty, and administrators gathered at the campus union for a sit-in refusing to leave until their demands were met. Around 5pm, the university released its first "Hate Crime Alert." Later that day, the Vice President of Student Affairs introduced the task force to combat bias and discrimination.

This section was offered to help contextualize this study's case. Understanding the history of the institution facilitates an understanding of the existent structures at SJSU. Now that the setting and college has been aptly discussed, I now describe participant sampling process.

Student Participant Sampling/Selection

There were sampling criteria and protocols I utilized throughout the study to identify appropriate participants for the study. The sampling criteria determined who I looked for within the case (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). I used the following criteria to determine the study's student participants.

1. Participants must have been enrolled at SJSU as a full-time student (12 credit hours).

2. Participants must have been a traditional-aged college student (no older than 24 years old).

3. Participants must have attended SJSU for a minimum of 1 year (2 terms).

4. Participants must have identified as Black and/or African American.

5. Participants must have been born and raised in the United States.

6. Participants must have been involved in at least two co-curricular involvement activities at the institution.

Next, I will explain the rationale for each of the criteria listed above and the importance of each when considering the research questions.

Participants enrolled full time were more likely to be on campus and able to engage with faculty, staff, and other students, as well as the campus at large more than a part-time student. Students who attended part time may only be on campus for 3 hours a week, not nearly sufficient to get an adequate idea of their racialized experience as it connects with the campus climate. While part-time students do have racialized experiences on campus, it would have been more difficult to connect the campus racial climate to their experiences due to the limited amount of time and engagement they have with the university. With a student enrolled on campus full time,

there was a greater likelihood they were able to draw on contexts and examples regarding their feelings with the institution.

The second and third criteria hold similar reasons to the first. The level of institutional engagement was an important factor to answering the research questions. Students who identified as older than 24 may have a different relationship with the university than those who were traditional aged. Similar to enrollment status, it was important the student found themselves near or on campus. According to Wyatt (2011), non-traditional aged students had a tendency to be less involved in organizations and service opportunities. Students who were engaged with the university had better access and knowledge to the campus structures.

Similar to the first criteria, it was important for participants to describe their experiences at SJSU. Students who spent more time on campus were able to speak on their experiences at length rather than those have not. Since climate is not simply a snapshot of a student's short time on campus but instead, created over long periods of time, the concern was first years would not have created opinions and perceptions of the institution compared to more tenured students. They also may have been less aware of the institution's climate during their first year as they explore the multifaceted nature of college.

The fourth criteria was important to the study as I sought to learn about the experiences of Black students. Since many Black students also identify as African American, it was important to have this inclusion. The fifth criteria was included because of the differences in experiences of United States born Black students opposed to Black people born outside of the United States. I wanted consistency amongst students' nation of origin to see the ways in which upbringing in the United States may have influenced Black students' perceptions to the campus racial climate.

Finally, student involvement was important when determining Black students peer-interactions and engagement on campus. The more time participants spent on campus with the institution including faculty, staff, students, and the climate, the better able participants were to speak on the climate. A student involved in multiple organizations would be more likely to speak on the cross racial friendships and interactions than those who do not. This criterion provided an idea of what their cross-racial interactions are on campus.

Administrator/Faculty Participants

The Black student experience was the grounding feature of understanding the campus racial climate within the study; however, having multiple perspectives on the student experience provided the study greater depth. At times, a student perspective was limited due to the inability to fully grasp system-level inequities and disparities. Students' racial identity and experiences remained the study's main focus; however, faculty and administrators were crucial figures and vital to discussing and describing the campus racial climate. Administrators and faculty took part in one-on-one interviews and fit the following sampling criteria:

1. Participants must have been employed at SJSU as either faculty or an administrator full-time (100% FTE).

2. Participants must have been employed at SJSU for a minimum of two years.

3. Participants must have had some type of direct engagement or work with Black students. These individuals were either recommended by participants or a part of their work is dedicated to Black students.

I will now explain the rationale for this sampling criteria.

Similar to Black student participant criteria, the amount of time spent on campus was an essential factor to understanding the racial climate. The first two components of the criteria were

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to ensure faculty, staff, and administrators were spending considerable time at MU. Faculty must have spent at least two terms (Autumn & Spring) on campus while administrators must have worked on SJSU's campus for a full year. Multiple years of exposure to SJSU yielded a better understanding of the history and the racial climate for Black students.

In order for the faculty or administrators to speak on the experiences of Black undergraduate students, it was imperative for these university employees to interact with Black students. The more work or touchpoints with students, the more informed the participants' input. Faculty who taught only graduate-level courses and did not engage with undergraduates were not considered. However, if they were an advisor to a student group or engaged in another way, they were included. Similarly, if the administrators had no interactions, they were considered ineligible. Finally, it was not necessary for university employees to be Black to participate.

Access

Several administrators at SJSU agreed to provide access to the site for this study. These were key informants and advisors of organization who allowed observation and interviews to take place. Some of these administrators granted me access to the site as well as their space to speak to Black students about their experiences. Many of the events that were observed were public events so no specific access was needed.

Participant Sampling

In order to recruit Black students as well as the appropriate faculty and administrators under the previously stated sampling design, I employed several sampling techniques to optimize the research pool. The goal was to identify participants who were knowledgeable in the experience being studied (Yin, 2018). I used purposive and snowball sampling (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998, Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). Purposive sampling is when the researcher searches for

participants through targeted efforts (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Purposive sampling was appropriate due to the nature of my sampling criteria. Participants cannot be acquired randomly as intentional effort was needed in order to guarantee appropriate participants.

I also used snowball sampling after beginning the initial stages of my purposive sampling (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; 2009; Stake, 1995). Creswell (2013) described snowball sampling as "identifying cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information rich" (p. 158). At the conclusion of each interview, I asked participants if they had recommendation for other people to interview who fit the sampling criteria.

There were several ways I reached out to find participants for this study. I created several forms of recruitment material in order to maximize opportunity. I created recruitment messages to reach out to students, administrators, and faculty (Appendix A). I created flyers to post around campus, so students and administrators were able to learn more about the study (Appendix B). I also reached out to student leaders around SJSU through organizations dedicated to Black students, as well as key informers. I used purposive sampling to seek out groups interested in Black students' experiences, for example Black Student Unions/Associations or National Pan Hellenic Council (NPHC). Equally important, I reached out to Black students involved in organizations outside of Black cultural groups. Organizations like these would consist of student government associations, service-learning clubs, or residence hall advisory councils. I reached out to administrators and faculty who supervised, taught, or advised Black students (Appendix A). I reached out to those who worked in, but were not limited to, residence life, office of diversity and inclusion, athletics, and enrollment services.

In addition to purposive sampling, I utilized a maximum variation sampling (Jones et al., 2014). Maximum variation sampling is described as casting a wide net on the phenomenon in

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order to understand the experience fully. It was important participants have various upbringings, identities, and majors in order to learn about the Black student experience. Another consideration was avoiding treating Black students as monoliths and ensure not generalizing the Black student experience. Therefore, I cast a wide net that incorporated as many Black student experiences as possible. This also helped to confine the number of participants in the study. If there were several participants from the same region, socioeconomic status, major, sexual orientation to name a few, I chose participants who varied in order to create a maximum variation of data and experiences.

Prior to meeting with any of the participants, I asked them to fill out a participant interest form that acted as a screening tool (appendix D). I asked for information such as their race, ethnicity, age, gender, academic year, class, and campus involvement. If participants felt uncomfortable filling out a particular section, they were not precluded from the study as long as they fit the sampling criteria. I continued process until I established a point of redundancy (Patton, 2002). Some participants were excluded as I sought out maximum variation. This means if there were multiple participants with the same age, ethnicity, gender, rank, campus involvement, and major, they were excluded from the study. This maximum variation allowed for new perspectives from the participants. This variation assisted in understanding the complex and dynamic experiences of Black students at SJSU.

The student participant recruitment took place over a three-week period. During this time, the aforementioned flyers and emails were dispersed throughout the university. The interest form received 49 respondents for the study. From these 49 respondents, the study resulted in 24 Black student participants.

Data Collection

Data collection within case study methodologies requires the researcher to gather data from multiple sources (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). It is common to see qualitative researchers use one or two forms of data collection such as observation, interviews, or mining data from documents; however, case study researchers benefit from including all three forms of data collection (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Understanding the case in its totality, as well as the intensive, holistic description and analysis characteristic of a case study, mandates both breadth and depth of data collection" (p. 134). It was my responsibility as the researcher to ensure this study came with a comprehensive deep dive into the data collection in order to gain a more holistic understanding of the case while also establishing breadth.

Stake (1995) recommended using observation, interviews, and document reviews as powerful data collection tools. Stake (1995) wrote, "knowing what leads to significant understanding, recognizing good sources of data, and consciously and unconsciously testing out the veracity of their eyes and robustness of their interpretations. It regards sensitivity and skepticism" (p. 50). Unlike other forms of qualitative research data collection, there is much greater responsibility to keep multiple forms of data collection in case study; as Creswell (2013) stated, "data collection in case study is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials" (p. 100). In alignment with Creswell (2013) and aspects of Yin (2018), this next section discusses the data collection used within the study. For this study, I used focus groups, interviews, observations, and archival records. I briefly discuss the ways these different forms of data collection were employed.

Focus Groups

I used focus groups with Black students (Jones et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). As discussed by Kitzinger (1995) focus groups served as a way to obtain data and information from multiple participants. Focus groups allowed for students to build their narratives on top of each other. Kitzinger (1995) stated, "instead of the researcher asking each person to respond to a question in turn, people are encouraged to talk to one another: asking questions, exchanging anecdotes and commenting on each others' experiences and points of view" (p. 311). This approach provided the opportunity for the participants to co-construct their narratives and allow those stories to be pushed to the forefront of the study. At times during the study, participants told stories and would have others who have either shared that same experience or were a part of that same experience. Focus groups allowed participants to build their narratives as a group when relevant to show overlapping experiences.

A focus group was an appropriate type of data collection due to my desire to locate a range of opinions, feelings, ideas, and perceptions of the racial climate at PWIs (Kreuger, 2014). Morgan (1997) suggests having between 3-5 groups with a range of 6-10 participants. Each of the focus groups were semi-structured to allow the conversation to flow outside of the predetermined questions (Appendix G).

Table 3.1

Participants: Students (*n*=24)

Pseudonym	Year	Race	Ethnicity	Age	Gender
Alex	Fourth	Black	African American	22	Woman
Anthony	Third	Black	African American	21	Man
Asa	Third	Black	African American	20	Man
Asron	Second	Black	Eritrean	20	Man
Dale	Third	Black	Trinidadian	20	Man
DeMario	Fifth	Black	African American	23	Man
Donovan	Third	Black	African American	20	Man
Fay	Second	Black	Somali	18	Woman
Halima	Fifth	Black	Somali	22	Woman
Jalen	Second	Black/Native American	N/A	20	Man
James	Second	Black	African American	20	Man
Jason	Fourth	Black	Nigerian-American	22	Man
Jimmy	Third	Black	African American	21	Man
Josh	Third	Black	N/A	21	Man
Kayla	Third	Black	Hispanic	20	Woman
Kerry Washington	Third	Black	African American	20	Woman
Malaika	Third	Black	African American	21	Woman
Michelle	Fourth	Black	African American	22	Woman
Steven	Fifth	Black	African American	24	Man
Syd	Third	Black	African American	21	Woman
Taylor	Fourth	Black	African American	21	Woman
Vaylani	Second	Black	African American	19	Woman
Virginie	Second	Black	Haitian American	19	Woman
Zay	Third	Black	African American	21	Man

Participant Information Self-Disclosed on Demographic Form

The first focus group was an open and broad discussion of the campus racial climate spanning various topics related to the study. The five dimensions of the MMDLE were covered throughout this first focus group. After gaining insights from the first focus group, I then took a more iterative approach by placing my attention on topics that engaged the participants. This shaped the following focus groups. The purpose was to leave flexibility with the focus groups so I could adapt to the most pressing or important topics to Black students, toward better understanding the multi-faceted nature of the climate. For example, I introduced crime alerts in three of the focus groups but did not discuss them in all of the focus groups. As mentioned previously, the iterative approach allowed for flexibility in the line of questioning during focus groups. This meant there were slight adjustments in terms of the questions asked within each of focus group. For example, in one study, the crime alerts were less pressing but for the other three they were more relevant, therefore the crime alerts were included.

In regard to the crime alerts, two different alerts were passed out amongst the group. One crime alert (Appendix K) specifically talked about a Black suspect. The second crime alert (Appendix L), focused on an unidentifiable suspect. The groups were able to briefly read the two alerts and discuss their opinions and feelings on two alerts as well as their overall thoughts on crime alerts at SJSU. These two crime alerts were selected due to the overt nature of race in Appendix K and the racially ambiguous nature of Appendix L. This provided the participants the opportunities to take time and compare the descriptions of the differing crime alerts.

I allowed the previous group's narratives as well as the categorical aggregation to shape future studies (Yin, 2009). In the end, I completed four focus groups with 24 student participants, as seen in the above table (Table 3.1). Each focus group had between 5 and 7 participants. Participants were involved with one focus group each spanning for approximately 90 minutes.

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Aligning with the maximum variation, these participants were chosen over others for the opportunity to have diverse and variant focus groups. These student participants spanned different ethnicities, rank/academic year, and gender leading to a robust discussion on their collegiate experiences. Similar to Kruger (2014), I chose maximum variation to ensure I did not, "identify race or ethnicity as the dominate issue and for other factors to become subordinate" (p.196). Instead, I chose participants on their various identities to have a more complex and nuanced understanding of Black student experiences (Krueger, 2014).

Last, these focus groups seemed to benefit from a researcher who racially identified the same as the participants. As Mizock and Harkins (2012) hypothesized, there was a shared language and comfort with participants discussing the study with a Black research. More so, participants not only reported a sense of comfort and ease speaking with each other but seemed open to talk about their racial experiences with someone they believed were more likely to appreciate and understand their experiences. Dusker (2000) spoke on shared frame that the researcher may share with same race participants. In this study; participants seemed to feel their identities were validated from the role of the researcher. After two of the focus groups, participants stayed later to continue talking casually with the researcher because of the stories and narratives they wanted to express that the focus group's timeframe did not necessarily allow.

Interviews

An essential source of information common in a case study methodology is the in-depth interview (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). I used an in-depth interview protocol as part of the data collection process. Specifically, I conducted these one-on-one interviews with university full-time employees (faculty and administrators). Through in-depth interviews, I created a person-to-person interaction where I made efforts to bring out relevant information from the participant

about Black students' experiences (Merriam, 1998). Here, I sought out from the participants' their experiences and feelings related to the racial climate at their PWI (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Through these in-depth interviews, I learned how employees at SJSU viewed the racial climate for Black students and how they related, connected, or disconnected with Black student narratives. These interviews served as a form of triangulation (Jones et al., 2014) to further contextualize, challenge, and/or confirm how Black students experience the campus racial climate. This study, utilizing a systems-level approach, looked at forces that participants may not have considered. University employees viewed the institution differently than students due to their position and tenure.

Participants engaged in semi-structured interviews (Appendix H). Jones et al. (2014) described characteristics of semi-structured interviews as flexible, broad with pre-established questions, no particular order or phrasing when asking questions, the allowance of clarification, and participants given the opportunity to clarify answers. These semi-structured interviews took approximately 60 minutes. Semi-structured interviews provided the opportunity to "resemble guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2018, p. 118). These interviews with full-time employees complemented the student focus group. There were 6 faculty (Table 3.2) and 17 administrators (Table 3.3) interviewed during the study, respectively. All interviews took place on SJSU's campus.

Table 3.2
Participants: Faculty
(n=6)

Pseudonym	Discipline	Race (Self-Defined)	Gender (Self-Defined
Chris	Engineering	White	Woman
Dr. Smith	Women Studies	Black	Woman
Jacquelyn	Social Work	Black	Woman
Dr. P	Engineering	White	Man
Dr. V	Business	Black	Man
Karen	Literature	Black	Woman

Faculty Participant Information

Table 3.3
Participants:
Administrator (n=17)

Pseudonym	Position	Race (Self-Defined)	Gender (Self-Defined
Tanisha	Coordinator	Black	Woman
Dave Miller	Coordinator	Black	Man
Eugene	Coordinator	Black	Man
Cynthia	Coordinator	Black	Woman
Michael	Coordinator	White	Man
Jasmine	Coordinator	Black	Woman
Robinson	Coordinator	Black	Man
Casey	Coordinator	Black	Woman
Imani	Coordinator	Black	Woman
Xavier	Coordinator	Black	Man
Ron	Coordinator	White/Arabic	Man
Debbie	Director	White	Woman
Larry	Director	Black	Man
Derrick	Director	Black	Man
Blue	Director	Black	Man
Earl	Director	Black	Man
Hannah	Director	Black	Woman

Administrator Participant Information

Archival Records

Documents and archival records were used in the data collection process (Appendix J). Yin (2009) stated these forms of documents and records serve to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p.103). Although the student voice remains an integral component of the study, this form of data acted as a device to provide further insights or context. The data was also used to confirm or refute participants' claims. Simply, these documents were used to confirm information and provide a deeper historical understanding of the institution (Merriam, 2009).

One of the key components of the MMDLE was analyzing the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion of the institution and learning about the case itself. Archival data helped accomplish this task (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Yin, 2018). Hancock and Algozzine (2006) described four major types of archival documents, "the internet, private and public records, physical evidence, and instruments created by the researcher" (p. 51). I used online sources, private and public records, and physical evidence to better conceptualize of the campus racial climate.

In alignment with case study research (Merriam, 1998), I took advantage of the following forms of documents and public records for this study. Some, but not all, examples of private and public records and physical evidence I used were the university mission statement, values, and vision. I reviewed aspects of the strategic plan, courses offered, and university messages and announcements, to name a few. I restricted archival records from 2012 to present as a way to limit the data unless specifically mentioned by a participant. This year was important due to the death of Trayvon Martin and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Interviews and focus groups guided most of the archival record searching. When participants would speak on incidents or stories, I would then look into the matter to search for more context and context. The university newspaper was one of the richest forms of archival data with keyword searches based on the participants' narratives leading the search process. In this case, the archival data was used as a form of triangulation, to better situate the claims of the participants. Other forms of archival data, such as the university mission statement, strategic plan, courses offered were used to understand the case and provide as much detail about what type of environment the institution created for Black students.

Observation

Last, I used observation as the final form of data collection. Observation serves as a common form of data collection in case studies (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). Observations were advantageous because of the ability to view interactions and exchanges others may not be aware of and learn about topics participants may not think to consider or feel comfortable discussing in an interview setting (Patton, 2002). Hancock and Algozzine (2006) outlined five practices to engage in observation: (a) identified what was observed in order to expose possible answers to the research question; (b) created an observation guide; (c) received access to the setting; (d) recognized personal bias and positionality; and (e) considered all legal and ethical considerations. I identified student organization meetings such as Black Student Union (BSU) meetings and events like the Family Picnic and created an observation guide to structure the study. I recorded items such as the date and time of the observation, location, participants involved, the purpose, the physical setting, activities, notable conversations, subtle factors, a summary of observations, and how I interacted or behaved in the environment (Appendix I) (Merriam, 2009). Observations also served as a

form of triangulation for the study (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2018). By attending these meetings and events, I learned more about what students are facing in real time and observed their words, actions, behaviors, and intentions. Similar to the archival data as a form of triangulation, the meetings I observed and the events I attended were ones mentioned by participants throughout the study, guiding the observation process.

Case Study Analysis

An important aspect of case study research was taking the data collected and pulling it apart (Stake, 1995). Case studies introduce a large sum of data. It was my responsibility to parse through all forms of data and discover meaning regarding the case (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995). The interviews, focus groups, and field notes were transcribed for the data analysis process. After these forms of data were transcribed, I converted and uploaded them into NVIVO 12 MAC software for both organization and analysis (Yin, 2009). I took the data and developed a codebook in NVIVO. Each code was labeled and provided a brief description or definition of the theme. The codebook had a total of 115 codes that were established through the coding process. A few examples of codes developed throughout this process were "disconnecting spaces", "lacking control", and "forming positive friendships." I used two approaches in the case study analysis, categorical aggregation and direct interpretation (Stake, 1995). Direct interpretation explored individual stories by analyzing their experience independently, without the influence of other's experiences with the study. Data analysis in case studies can be seen as "giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (Stake, 1995, p. 71). Through the usage of categorical aggregation and direct interpretations, I searched for patterns in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question. The ultimate goal of this process was to "understand behavior, issues, and context" (Stake, 1995, p.78).

Categorical aggregation has been described as collecting individuals' understandings and accounts from the data and putting this information together with other participants to make meaning as a group (Stake, 1995). Within this study, I reviewed the individual interviews as direct interpretations to gain a perspective of the participants on their own. As CRT emphasized the use of narratives as a form of learning and dismantling oppression, both the individual and group experience remained important (McCoy & Rodrick, 2015). Distinctly different from individual interviews, focus groups used a categorical aggregation approach rather than direct interpretation. In the study, I coded the four focus groups transcripts using a thematic coding form of analysis (Jones et al., 2014). Since there were multiple participants in the interview, I reviewed what participants said individually and looked to create meaning from their personal experiences. After, I used a thematic coding in order to understand the themes and connections made amongst each of the participants. This became particularly useful considering the ways different identities amongst Black participants differed. For example, Black women discussed their cocurricular experiences differently than Black men which was gleaned by looking at participants individually but also as an aggregate.

For the individual interviews, I used both the direct interpretation and categorical aggregation approach. I looked at each participant narrative individually, seeking meaning. Then I collected the various narratives and looked for themes and trends to better understand the phenomenon (Stake, 1995). For group interviews, I utilized categorical aggregation due to the number of participants within the interview space. As I mentioned previously, the advantage of focus groups was to gain information from a larger number of students at once with them working collaboratively through experiences. With the group dynamics and stories building upon one another, I was able to identify patterns (Stake 1995). At the conclusion of this data analysis,

a detailed account of the case emerged (Creswell, 2013). I was able to provide details of the case and create findings related to the experiences of Black students, such as "the history of the case, the chronology of events, or a day-by-day rending of activities of the case" (Creswell, 2013, p.101).

In particular to this study, I took the transcripts that were uploaded on NVIVO and began the thematic coding process (Jones et al., 2014). As I read through each transcript, with both the focus groups and individual interviews, I would identify themes, patterns, and cateragories to sort and organize the participants' experiences. Utilizing the direct interpretation form of analysis (Stake, 1995) I approached each transcript individually and created specific codes for the faculty and administrator participants. After completing the individual coding process, I used the categorical aggregation form of analysis (Stake, 1995) and reviewed the transcripts once more as an aggregate and developed themes that overlapped amongst the faculty and administrators.

Utilizing a CRT approach allowed me to analyze these forms of data and connect them to understand the experiences of Black students. A CRT lens provided the opportunity to spot the pervasiveness and continuity of racism at SJSU (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). CRT allowed for ordinary events to be analyzed as racialized (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). For example, an aspect of the MMDLE's structural dimension was looking at institutional policies and practices (Hurtado et al., 2012). Using a CRT approach allowed for, what some may consider, race-neutral practices like campus spaces, to be viewed as racial spaces. In addition, using observations, document and archival analysis provided this study more than simply student input. This way these other forms of data were analyzed through a contextual lens. This form of data analysis not

only served as a form of triangulation but also provided context for what is observed and learned

through the interview process (Jones et al., 2014).

Delimitations

Helpful for any research, delimitations describe the intentional boundaries that the

scholar places on their study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Throughout the research process,

scholars need to make decisions about what will be investigated, who will be investigated, and

what are the constraints. The delimitations explicitly provide answers for these questions (Jones,

2002). In this section, I explain the delimitations of the study including the case, the study's

population, and the theoretical perspective.

First, I purposely chose a PWI as the setting for the study. A PWI was ideal for this study

because of the relationship between Black students and whiteness in the country and specifically

within PWIs (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). This study was created fully aware of the challenges

Black students often experience (Harper & Hurtado, 2017) and seeing if the unique leadership

structure of the PWI affected the way Black students navigated college. In particular, the racial

composition of SJSU' leadership team was only one of the reasons why this setting was

appealing as the case. The land grant mission also influenced the decision to study Black

students at this particular institution as land grants were created to be inclusive and accepting of

all within the home institution's state (Thelin, 2004).

Second, I made the choice to study Black students as the population of interest. This

meant that there were conscientious thoughts behind studying Black students as a whole rather

than different sub-demographic populations of Black students (e.g. African students or Black

women). This allowed for the other identities of the participants to complicate the Black student

experience at SJSU. With Black students generally being the subject of the study, there was the

opportunity to see how other social and personal identities influenced their relationships and perceptions at SJSU.

Finally, one of the strengths of a case study was the ability to bring in a theoretical perspective to bolster the analysis of the study (Jones et al., 2014). CRT provided an excellent opportunity to analyze how racism and whiteness encapsulated SJSU (Brown & Jackson, 2013). Not only did CRT pair with a critical case study with their aligning epistemological viewpoints (Jones et al., 2014), but CRT's multiple tenets provided the versatility necessary to understand a multifaceted case like SJSU. As this study looked to dismantle systems of oppression, CRT's tenets guided ways to identify oppression and use participants' narratives to assist in challenging majoritarian narratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Trustworthiness

Critiques of qualitative methods would suggest this form of research as less legitimate or empirical due to the focus on exploring narratives of individuals rather than quantitative methods and its hard "factual" numbers (Creswell, 2013). Although proving trustworthiness is subjective to both quantitative and qualitative methods, it remains imperative to ensure my research is viewed as rigorous and valid, so questions of legitimacy are ruled out. Throughout this section, I explain the ways I ensured a trustworthy and ethical research study that outputs accurate data and findings. This section also explained the ways I ensured a valid and reliable study utilizing triangulation, peer examination, and reflecting on my positioning as a researcher within this study (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 1995).

Internal Validity

Within this study, I ensured validity by the use of peer examinations (Merriam, 1998; 2009). I engaged peers through my study, having them review data collected and offer feedback

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on my analysis of the study. I had two people serve as peer examiners who held different social identities as me such as race, gender, and class as a way to better differentiate Black students' experiences (Merriam, 1998). These people were able to provide perspectives that I had not yet considered due to my own positionality and bias.

I also used triangulation as a form of validity. Triangulation is described as a "means of confirming finding through several data collection methods" (Jones et al., 2014, p.38). Triangulation provided the opportunity to strengthen the analysis of data. Yin (2018) stated, "one analysis of case study methods found that those case studies using multiple sources of evidence were rated more highly in terms of their overall quality than those that relied on only single sources of information" (p.126). Within this study, I triangulated interviews, focus groups, observation, and artifact analysis. Through these forms of data collection, consistent messages were found rather than relying on one form of data collection.

Finally, I used rich, thick descriptions as a way to show the validity of the study as seen in next following chapter (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). Rich, thick description allowed for deeper insights on the psyche of the participants and learn directly from them about their experiences within the phenomenon. Paired with CRT's focus on narratives and counterstories (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013), these rich, thick descriptions were used to understand and share the experiences of Black students.

One type of validity measure I did not use was member-checking in the traditional sense (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al, 2014). I used the narratives of university employee participants to ensure data triangulation. Often, member-checking is the process of having participants review the data collected and weigh in (Jones et al., 2014). This form of member checking, with participants reviewing the data, did not occur. Although member-checking is historically a strong

way to ensure validity, within this critical case study, there were times where I, as the researcher, saw or understood topics differently than the participant in question. The critical and CRT approach allowed me to move away from the traditional method of member checking as participants may not have the systems-level view as the researcher.

Transferability

It is important to learn how transferable my research can be to other situations and studies. This can be difficult because the ways an individual or group experience a phenomenon will vary greatly based on their institutions, social identities, history, and context (Merriam, 1995). This said, it was still important that this case study research related to other environments and cases yet to be examined. This is where transferability became important. Transferability or external validity is "concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations. That is, how generalizable are the results of the research study?" (Merriam, 1995, p. 207).

Transferability is established by determining how generalizable the study's findings are, outside of the sample (Yin, 2009; 2018). A method to ensure transferability is through rich, thick descriptions (Yin, 2009). Throughout this study, multiple forms of data were collected in order to build these thick descriptions. The reader should be able to develop an understanding of the climate and setting of the institution through these descriptions. As such, through rich, thick descriptions, the reader can ultimately see the connections between this study and their own experiential knowledge around PWIs and spot the generalizable connections. With all this said, it is important to note that while the study does appear generalizable, this institution was a purposely unique case. This means that not every experience would be duplicated or generalizable as the contexts and histories of this institution would differ from others.

Reliability

Reliability has been described as the "extent to which research findings can be replicated… if the study is repeated will it yield the same results?" (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). Although research is never objective and research cannot be repeated perfectly (Merriam, 1998), there was still value in ensuring the data was as reliable and accurately depicted as possible. If the study was reliable, those who reviewed the data, analysis, and interpretation would understand how I got to these conclusions and see the study's procedures as sound (Merriam, 1998).

A way to ensure these conclusions could be replicated (and therefore reliable) came from proper documentation and following procedures (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2018). Documentation and procedures were recorded to ensure there was the ability to review the data collected or assess the data analysis (Yin, 2018). I used a case study protocol with open-ended questions, both with focus groups and individual interviews to ensure reliability. I also kept an observation protocol (Yin, 2018). This case study protocol helped with the process and procedures of focus groups, interviews, observations, and field notes and served as a guide for the data collected and reviewed.

Finally, along with listing my positionality and utilizing a thorough use of triangulation, I used an audit trail to ensure authenticity (Merriam, 1998). An audit trail, integral for determining confirmability, is a case study database where all the data collected can be stored and maintained. I described how my data was collected, the way categories were created, and the decisions I made within the study (Merriam, 1998).

Positionality

Customary to qualitative research, it is important to reflect on one's position as a researcher to allow for as an impartial research study as possible (Jones et al., 2014). Positionality is described as a "text that displays honesty or authenticity… 'comes clean' about its own stance and about the position of the author" (Lincoln, 1995, p. 280). This process allowed me to be more open and ensure a greater level of trustworthiness. Within this section, I discussed my previous life experiences informing this study.

The first four years of my life, I grew up in foster care with an elderly white family. As a young Black boy living in a rural town with a village population less than 1000 people meant that I was familiar with many white families and very few people of color. As I reflect on my days prior to my adoption, I realized I only knew one other Black person in the village and she, like me, was raised under foster care. Although a loving family, interacting with people of color or Black people specifically was a rarity until I was adopted.

Prior to my fifth birthday, I was adopted to a Black family of two parents and five older sisters. I was raised in a city with 90% white people. Throughout my k-12 experience, I was more comfortable and familiar with whites than any other race, including my own. I remember lessons on manifest destiny as a child and believing this concept to be powerful and moving due to the rhetoric used in my classroom spaces. I recall being told states' rights were the primary reason for the Civil War, not realizing how acculturated and whitewashed my academic and personal experiences were regardless of the Black empowerment my family attempted to celebrate. It was not until college that I began to slowly start understanding the influence of white culture and my lack of understanding around Black excellence.

When I started college, I began to embrace my Black identity more and more. It was the first time I became more aware of challenges of Black people in academic settings. I recall seeing crime alerts describing a Black man from 5'2 to 6'3 with dark clothes. It began to bother me more and more throughout the years in ways I may not have noticed prior. People assuming I was an athlete brought on frustration I never recognized prior to college. Although I recognized and disliked these stereotypes, I remained silent, unsure of my place in these racialized experiences.

It was also at this time I began to realize the activism and voice within Black community. Although I would pay attention to events and challenges facing the Black community, I never felt able to engage in the active voice of the Black students. I did not feel Black enough to advocate and connect with Black students. I kept my distance with the hopes one day I would belong. It was not until my master's experience I felt as if I found my voice within the Black community.

During my time enrolled in my master's program, I began to actively engage with my Black identity. I became involved with the Black graduate organization on campus and, perhaps most importantly, became the advisor of the Black Student Union (BSU). During this time, I found myself studying Black students and working alongside them for moments of the challenge and success. Here, I began to recognize the concern of the beat up and run down BSU house being across the street from the police department. I would help advocate and serve as a process agent for students of color who were facing blackface incidents and racially themed parties.

It was here I noticed the climate at this PWI was not too different from my alma mater. This began to raise questions about what Black students holistically experience at PWIs

throughout the country. This began my curiosity around campus racial climate. It is through this positionality; I expose my bias around the subject of racial climate as a form of trustworthiness.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodology used for this case study on campus racial climate. Throughout the chapter I discussed why a critical case study was a methodology process for investigating this phenomenon. I detailed how my data collection was most appropriate for understanding the bounded system of the case with consideration for my theoretical frameworks and epistemological views. In order to maintain a balance between students' perception around the racial climate, I used other data collection methods outside of interviews and focus groups to better situate structural and historical factors students may not have realized. I described the data analysis this case study approach encompassed. Finally, this chapter concluded with an explanation of how trustworthiness will be assured through validity and reflecting on my own personal experiences in relation to this case. Next, I will discuss the findings and what I learned from the data analyzed from this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS BY CLIMATE DIMENSION

The purpose of this case was to learn how Black students perceived the racial climate at a social justice striving PWI. I used several sub-questions to guide the study framed by the Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) (Hurtado et al., 2011), each sub question aligned with an institutional dimension of climate (historical, structural, compositional, behavioral, and psychological). Those sub questions were: (a) What historical aspects of the institution informed contemporary climate for Black students?; (b) How did the institutions' policies and practices influence Black students' experiences with the racial climate?; (c) How did the racial composition of the university inform the campus racial climate?; (d) What did the cross-racial interactions look like for Black students and their peers?; and (e) How did Black students perceive the institution in terms of race? Through case study analysis, I developed findings to describe experiences and perceptions of Black students at Social Justice Serving University (SJSU).

This chapter in particular, focused on the descriptive findings of the dimensions. In order to apply a Critical Race Theory lens (Stefancic & Delgado, 2017), I wanted the stories of the participants to be displayed here. These counternarratives served as a powerful first step to the cross-dimensional analysis, which is the focus of Chapter 5, whereas Chapter 4 was more descriptive in terms of findings.

Throughout the course of this chapter I describe the ways in which participants discussed the five dimensions of the MMDLE. First, I discuss how SJSU preserved whiteness throughout its history. Then, participants provide insights on how the institution's policies and practices led to their isolation and discomfort. After, participants detail the ways in which the institution used its racial composition to leverage power. Next, I detail how participants interact with their cross

racial peers. Finally, I explore the ways in which the campus climate has led to Black students to feel distrustful, inauthentic, and like they don't belong/alienated.

<center>**Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion**</center>

The historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion was centered on the ways in which SJSU welcomed or rejected Black students on campus. In ways students may not have realized, the climate and norms of SJSU had taken shape years prior to their arrival. History often has unforeseen repercussions and helps to explain the context of current policies and practices. In this study, student participants' discussions on historical legacy were limited. Despite student participants' lack of discussion and awareness of the history, the importance of SJSU's legacy of inclusion and exclusion remains intact. In particular, the historical dimension leveraged the institutional knowledge of the faculty and staff participants. The voices of SJSU administrators and faculty, as well as archival records, shaped the findings.

SJSU has had a complicated history as it pertains to its legacy of inclusion and exclusion. For example, in the early 1890s, the first Black man graduated from SJSU. In the same decade, the first Black student graduated with a terminal degree. Fifteen years later, the first Black woman graduated, decades prior to *Brown v. Board*. While supposed accomplishments of inclusion, these instances of integration had some limitations; for example, for these Black students to attend SJSU, they were required to live off campus. Minorities were restricted from living on campus until the 1940s, furthering the notion of exclusion. Sean Miller (a pseudonym), SJSU's first Black varsity athlete, played in the 1930s; however, in some games he was benched because SJSU's opponents refused to share a field with a Black athlete. During the football games in which he played, he was left bloody every week because his opponents and his teammates would pierce his legs with their metal cleats. Black students had to fight for

everything. Whether it was for space, majors, or the right to be acknowledged, Black students have fought to get the climate to where it is today.

All My Life I Had to Fight

Pulitzer Prize winning author Alice Walker (1982) made the saying "All my life I had to fight" famous in her novel, *The Color Purple*. More recently, Pulitzer Prize winning rapper, Kendrick Lamar (2015) utilized this phrase in his song "Alright." Both usages of the phrase encapsulated the plight of many Black students at SJSU. Through conversations with participants, particularly voices of faculty and staff, this concept of fighting for inclusion described the historical legacy of SJSU. In this section, only a small representation of the institution's history was discussed as it would be challenging to fully dissect it all.

Participants told stories of occasions in which the institution was inclusive of only white students. These instances spanned from microaggressions, where the institution struggled to acknowledge their faults, to protests and forms of activism where Black students rose to fight for their right to attend SJSU. Many of the faculty and staff like Dr. P, Dr. Smith, Karen, Casey, and Xavier spoke of times where Black students had experienced racial slights during their time at SJSU. An example of this was when an entire residence hall floor experienced racial microaggressions.

Casey, Tanisha, and Hannah all shared how during the 2017-2018 school year, a living learning community dedicated to social justice and inclusion found itself in a racial controversy. In this learning community, most of the students were students of color. Residents moved into their hall to quickly spot monkeys as their door decorations. Participants shared how furious the residents were at the sighting of this clear racial epithet. Tanisha recalled how students were unhappy with the connection between moneys and Black students, but staff seemed unaware of

any problem. Tanisha explained, "it created a dynamic where students felt there was an issue…administrators were like 'is this really a big deal? I don't understand why this is a big deal.'" As Black students were attempting to have this changed, administration remained oblivious of the racial concerns. This was not an issue created decades ago but took place only a couple years ago. SJSU exhibited exclusionary tendencies, so moments like these were normalized and accepted.

In response, Black students fought back against this clear racial challenge. Students chose to educate and use their intelligence to combat this ignorance. Black students put on programs, bringing in faculty, to discuss the history of monkeys, Black people, and their associations, sparking pushback. Hannah and Casey explained the pushback by the institution was out of fear of being viewed as racist. Once the programming began, the institution only then began to take the situation seriously. Black students were ready to educate others and stand up for themselves, but the university disliked the perception of being racially problematic. Only once the institution's reputation had been marred was there a response. This reluctance to change was a theme throughout the history of SJSU. As Black students gathered and fought to be included and heard, it was only through their collective voice, or embarrassment of SJSU, that change came.

Another instance where Black students gained the opportunity to be included was during the protests throughout the 1960s to present day. Participants like Larry, Jacquelyn, Xavier, Robinson, and Jasmine described times where Black students came together in response to racism on campus; the institution found themselves embarrassed and responded with concessions or inclusion. Participants found the institution rarely wanted to give in, but Black students were determined to come together to achieve racial justice. In the 1960s and 70s, protests by Black students were in full effect and the university was unwilling to listen. Jacquelyn said, "we were

protesting these presidents to death. They probably wanted to kill all Black students, the way we protested." The institution was uninterested in creating inclusionary practices but instead focused on putting out fires and giving out the bare minimum. Instead of spotting the problems, they found ways to blame Black students for their protests.

Through conversations with participants and document analysis, it became apparent Black students only received benefits or concessions when they demanded it. Participants like Jacquelyn, Blue, and Larry explained how, in the 1960s and 70s, Black students were expelled and arrested because of the protests and sit-ins. One of the original Black student protestors during the time said after occupying the president's building:

> It wasn't that I came to a revelation in '68. I just felt somebody had to do something at SJSU. I had gone through four years of crap. There couldn't have been more than 400 Black kids on campus when I was here. I never had a Black professor. Housing was a problem. It was almost like we were not really welcome.

John Evans [pseudonym] continued:

> The cooler head was the provost and vice president of academic affairs. He was basically the one who agreed to a lot of the problems, demands, and requests that we presented in a logical manner. When we walked out, we had an understanding from the university that it had not been doing enough for Black students on all different levels. We felt that we had accomplished something. And we had an understanding of amnesty and that there were not going to be repercussions.

Black protesters were then expelled and arrested for the chance to be a part of the community and to feel respected, validated, and represented. While in the end, Black students received confirmation from the institution they would get what they demanded (i.e. a campus space, a

major, and greater racial representation), many of the expelled students were never given a chance to return. A notable comparison between the Black and white protestors was the consequences. The white protestors who also took up protests received no documented punishments, whereas Black protestors were arrested. It was no surprise that the Black protestors were punished, and white protestors were not, as whiteness was working to protect the groups it was created to preserve.

White Preservation

Participants described aspects of history where whiteness preserved and protected itself from harm or from the racial advancement of other Black people. Almost as if it were a self-preservation mechanism, whiteness at SJSU protected their white students. Historically, when Black students stood up and advocated for themselves, they were met with little interest by the institution. If this initial advocacy failed and Black students continued to press on, Black students were met with backlash and harsh consequences. These forms of backlash and consequences were forms of white preservation. Rather than punishing all students the same, SJSU protected the students for whom the university was built. Throughout its history, SJSU maintained whiteness by demonizing Black students.

An example of this white self-preservation was introduced by Jasmine and Xavier. Both participants discussed when whiteness was threatened, white students or the university responds quickly to remind Black students they are subclass to them. In the early 2010s, the Black Cultural Center (BCC), a second home to many of the Black students, was vandalized. Xavier explained how someone "spray painted 'Long Live Zimmerman' on the side of the building." During this time, the Trayvon Martin trial had just begun, and white people and their privilege felt threatened enough from the trial to cheer on the murderer of a young Black teenager. Rarely

did white people see ramifications after harming a Black body, and this was potentially a first for them. This attack was a clear indication that white supremacy must be maintained at SJSU. SJSU waited for a march and protest before acquiescing to students' demands to release the first ever "Hate Crime" alert. Students fought back against the racist event and then were given justice, but until then, the institution only used rhetoric instead of action to continue to preserve whiteness.

Jacquelyn explained another time a Black artifact at the BCC was attacked after a racially linked incident. She discussed how after a confederate statue was torn down in an entirely different state, a National Pan Hellenic (NPHC) statue on SJSU's campus was torn down the next day. Jacquelyn experienced a similar response with her Black Lives Matter banners. Jacquelyn said, "someone kept tearing them down. Every other week someone would tear them down…someone recently knocked down the Alpha Phi Alpha statue…someone wrote on the side of the BCC last year about niggers, niggers and swastikas." When whiteness was threatened, Black students faced the consequences, whether it be through the destruction of Black property, suspensions, or arrests. Whiteness was maintained because whiteness protected its own self-interests.

While there were many different aspects to the history of the institution, two themes stood out most readily. The first, the institution would act inclusionary only once Black students demanded SJSU to do so. When Black students came together and protested, they were able to find moments of inclusion. This was apparent when Black students were able to claim the entire BCC for themselves after the university initially denied them. Larry explained originally only half of the BCC was made available for students. Larry continued to tell how Black students cornered the President in the BCC and demanded the entirety of the space:

President Roberts didn't take Black students very seriously. Well, we had over 400 to 500

students, they wouldn't let President Roberts out and he learned about Black students.

And they demanded. They like, 'we won't let you out of here.' So, he learned very

quickly…The very next day, they committed the other side, an additional 10,000 feet.

Only through the collection action and fighting for what was their own did Black students get

what they deserved. The second theme was how quickly whiteness preserved itself from Black

students receiving benefits. As Black students were relegated to such a small piece of the

institution, whites believed that anytime that piece got bigger, it was time to take back as much

as it possibly could with a white lash. This history has shaped the day-to-day operations of the

university and the way Black students experience the campus today.

Structural Dimension

The structural dimension of climate has a focus on the ordinary operations of the

institution. This study focused on the ways that institutional policies and practices shaped the

day-to-day functions of SJSU. Three topics were identified which participants discussed at

length. These findings were their limited spaces for community, the inaccessibility to Black

leadership, and the criminalization of Black students through crime alerts. A part of the structural

dimension, described in this section, is the normalcy of whiteness prevailing throughout Black

students' lives and the ways policies and practices shape their experiences.

Finding Limited Spaces for Community

The participants discussed the challenges of finding spaces where they felt ownership or

community. Throughout the conversations, Black students identified very few spaces on campus

in which they felt connected and comfortable. Of those students interviewed, fewer than four

spaces were mentioned multiple times by different students with only one being mentioned by a

majority. Next, I will discuss the spaces in which students felt least connected and provide, through their words, some of the reasons why the participants felt repelled from the space. The next several sections display the ways the institution's practices and policies have left Black students with limited spaces for community. First, participants describe feeling disconnected from work, the classroom, and common spaces across campus. Then, participants discuss their places of solace from the challenging white environments of SJSU. Finally, I detail how those spaces of solace are complicated once other social identities become involved.

Isolated at work. When student participants were asked about spaces, they felt disconnected from, one of the first answers they provided was work. No matter where they were on campus, workspaces felt foreign and uncomfortable. Participants attributed their seclusion to white students and their different cultural norms. When describing her work setting, Vaylani identified one reason as the inability for her colleagues to understand her experiences and identity. Vaylani explained she works in "very, very white spaces. And I always find myself checking my behavior. And also, engaging with my coworkers is very hard too just because there's a lack of relatability." Participants like Jason, Fay, and Alex found themselves feeling like white students only interacted in their own self-interests and were comfortable ignoring Black students' experiences. Work became a burden for participants as their colleagues were unable to understand aspects of their lives; in this case, their interests and hobbies.

An overabundance of whiteness at work made Black students' professional lives difficult. Staff participants, such as Dave and Monique, explained the number of times in which their Black employees were confronted with lack of shared interests, microaggressions, and racist interactions creating a difficult work setting. Monique described a student employee's experience, "I have one Black student who actively avoids the office...if you're Black, unless I'm

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in there, like, you're only really going to see a bunch of white people, and sometimes they're just talking about the whitest stuff." Work and whiteness became so toxic that Black students began to avoid their own office spaces. Within the workspace, it was not just student employees creating an isolated environment, but also full-time staff.

Jimmy, a resident advisor, shared he felt his white peers treated the Black housekeeping staff as subhuman. The group exclaimed the ways in which housekeepers and facilities staff were often treated as "trash." When Jimmy went to his Hall Director about the disrespectful attitudes, the Hall Director excused the white students saying they did not know better. All the participants in the group found themselves frustrated by this lazy approach and indifference to Black employees and explained that white students are not expected to treat Black housekeepers and facility staff with respect. This feeling of disconnect participants felt was not limited to work, but also persisted in the classroom.

Discomfort in the classroom. Participants described their classroom experiences as challenging and taxing. Rather than the academic rigor, faculty and peers created an environment causing discomfort. Participants identified racial representation as one of the reasons why they felt disconnected. Many of the participants like Fay, Kayla, and Malaika discussed how they felt like they were the only Black students in the entire classroom and the intensity that came with that loneliness. Participants expressed how their identities made it impossible to truly be themselves and instead act as if they were foreign in their own classrooms.

Fay explained the group's sentiments that being tokenized led to discomfort. Fay said, "If I'm not the only Black person, I'm the only Black woman…I'm always the only visibly Muslim Black woman. So, it's just that you always, it feels like people are always tiptoeing around you." Here, Fay displayed a couple important sentiments regarding her classroom experiences. Fay

lamented her discomfort being one of few Black students in her academic spaces. As her identities were discussed further, her Muslim background intersecting with her race left her feeling even more ostracized, with the notion people believing she would break down at any moment. As Fay has already felt challenged in classrooms, the rampant Islamophobia only intensifies the racial interactions she had experienced, further complicating the racism in the classroom. Similarly, participants such as Demario, Jason, Michelle, and Asron felt their identities led to them being ostracized.

This discomfort led participants to become a different version of themselves. Many of the students, like Brian, Jalen, and James, talked about filtering themselves because they did not want to be viewed poorly or less intelligent in the classroom for fear of confirming stereotypes. Malaika explained "I'm going to make sure I study because I don't want to be the one to like, oh, they called the Black girl in class, so she didn't know what to say, you know?" Black men shared this mentality, as well. Zay shared, "I really don't pose a different version of myself. I'm just quiet. I guess I do, I'm quiet and reserved… I'm so concerned about asking a stupid question, letting the class know I don't understand what's going on." Classrooms were created to provide a space where mistakes can be made, and learning can take place in a safe environment; however, participants felt incapable of making mistakes in the classroom.

Many of the Black men like Jason, Jalen, Anthony, and Asa were concerned about appearing stupid or incapable of succeeding in the classroom. This led to many of them being underestimated. Asa reflected on his student athlete status:

Being an athlete, people don't really expect much, especially in a classroom… I had to present myself as…the one that may not care, but I probably do care, something like that. But I think the first time I probably noticed this was a group project for class, and

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everybody immediately assign themselves to like certain roles. But my role was simple

and small, it's just afterwards. I think like most of the class and everything was over, I

was just like, "Dang. Like I could, I definitely could have done more."

Although Asa's experiences as a Black student looked different as an athlete, he shared many of

the sentiments of the men participants like Jason and Jalen, afraid of being stereotyped or being

viewed as unintelligent, leading to his frustration and discomfort. As the participants continued

voicing the challenges of class and work, it became more apparent these were not the only spaces

Black students felt discomfort. Participants began describing ordinary, everyday spaces.

No place to go. As participants discussed uncomfortable spaces, common areas began

being listed. Outside a couple spaces that will be discussed in a later section, many participants

seemingly felt uncomfortable or disconnected in every space. Malaika elaborated: "I actually

wouldn't say I feel connected to a specific space." Others voiced a similar feeling when asked

where they felt connected as a Black student, Syd, Brian, and Michelle all agreed that it was

basically the entire campus. Participants explain how most spaces on campus created a deep

sense of discomfort. Taylor, Zay, and Kerry explained that most spaces caused them discomfort,

regardless the time of day. Taylor explained how white people even act as if the sidewalk was

made for them. She explained, "so minute, but they will take up the entire sidewalk ...They won't

move even to take their half of the sidewalk, they expect me to get down and walk around them,

I don't do that, and that's a microaggression." White people dominated and owned the most

common of spaces. As the participants discussed their lack of agency over space on campus

Taylor's sentiments were shared by participants from a different group. Zay summarized:

Walking on the sidewalk, there's a group of five white people and then I'm on the edge

and nobody wants to move over…Like, you're not going to move. And I'm not about to

walk in the street so you can get by, so we're going to collide and that's just what it is.

Although it may be ordinary to feel uncomfortable at night, the lack of ease in the middle of the

day added a new dimension of the understanding of Black students' experiences at PWIs.

Kerry and Demario continued these sentiments as they recalled how they have felt even

their personal space can be violated by whiteness: Kerry explained, "I don't like when white

students walk too close to me and it really freaks me out…it doesn't matter if it's like a in the

morning or like 12 o'clock at night, like if I feel like you're too close." Participants described the

fearfulness they adopt around campus. As many of the participants discussed the notion of

sidewalk and walking spaces as a toxic practice, another common area where students have been

known to gather was the campus green. What has often been seen as an environment for fun and

enjoyment quickly turned into an area to avoid.

Participants like Fay, Kayla, Halima, Donovan, and Taylor described the ways in which

they felt the campus green was not created for them. They felt the culture was reflective of white

norms such as tanning and hammocking, finding little in common with their white peers. Instead

participants felt they were always being watched. Donovan shared, "I just feel disconnected

because the people on the green make you feel disconnected. It's literally 90% white people on

the campus green, so not seeing people like you, or like would want to hang out with you, for

people that you know, is very uncomfortable." Participants walked through the campus green

feeling uncomfortable and alienated. Despite the area having been filled with students, they were

often only white faces and a reflection of a culture that was not their own.

Even residence halls were a challenge for Black students. At SJSU, they have rated

housing. This rated housing dictated where students lived and formed communities. The nicest

residence halls with the newest amenities also came with the highest value. Conversely, the most

cost efficient were the ones with the worst accommodations. Hannah explained how this rated

housing further separates and devalues Black students. Hannah said an issue for housing is the

"cheaper spaces don't have air conditioning and then a lot of our students of color end up in

residence halls with no air conditioning and roaches. It's just a problem." SJSU's solution was to

provide box fans for each room. This led Hannah to express how many students must feel. She

said, "if I'm a student of color and I go visit my friend over here, I'm like, 'do you all really care

about me?' It's so terrible, and that's where a lot of our students of color are." A residence hall,

the home away from home, has become a space for disgusting roaches, hot facilities, and

nonexistent care for Black students.

While many Black students have alluded to feeling discomfort at work, in class, and in

the most common spaces like their own home, there were some areas that offered positivity and

comfort. These rare locations were created as a protective space for Black students.

Spaces of solace. Participants identified a couple consistent spaces on campus that

provided them with relief and connection. Those being the Black Cultural Center (BCC) and the

Multicultural Affairs Office (MAO). Halima described the BCC as "my safe haven. In between

classes I will go to BCC, if I have nothing to do, I will go to BCC, to do homework." Halima

emphasized feelings the majority of the participants shared, an environment where Black

students came and went for whatever the reason, without an agenda. Participants found both of

these centers to act as a reprieve from all the whiteness of the campus. Students like Halima,

James, Virginie, and Kayla described the BCC as a space they felt connected and free. James

summarized most participants thought on why the BCC was so necessary for Black students. James said, "I think when I'm traveling throughout campus, I really notice how white campus is and ...at the core it is uncomfortable, but I guess you don't admit that to yourself on a daily basis because it's a survival mechanism." This idea of a safe space related to a critical mass of Black students surrounding them. The BCC helped participants escape from the challenges of a PWI.

The BCC protected and celebrated their Black identities. Black students desired their identities to be appreciated and supported. The participants further elaborated on the freeing nature of the BCC and how it provides an environment of genuineness. Kayla explained some of the notions that Jason and Virginie were feeling, as she could be "as Black as you want." Whereas other spaces, "we're laughing loud and we're making jokes, people are looking at us like, 'Uhh'. But if I'm in BCC and I'm doing that, like, 'Oh, what are you guys laughing about?' This form of Black celebration at SJSU was rare for the participants, but the BCC provided protection from her white student counterparts.

In addition to finding appreciation for their Blackness, participants alluded to aspects outside of interpersonal interactions. Participants discussed the importance of the organizations and events held within the BCC. Jalen, Syd, Halima, and Fay found themselves in the BCC regularly. While many events and programs took place in the BCC, it was also where a majority of the Black student groups indicated they would meet, developing another reason to engage with the space, Syd explained how BSU meetings brought her to the BCC each week even if "our programs were slow, people still came out and had a good time. There would always be a connection with at least one person there." The MAO created a similar feeling for participants as the BCC.

Although mentioned less often, participants found the MAO to be an area of safety. Demario, Jimmy, Halima, Donovan, Alex, and Jason all found the MAO as a space they felt accepted and connected. Demario described the MAO as a place of solace because he can "find people that I know, who look like me, and I just know it's a safe space for me to go." The MAO provided participants a place where having comfortable conversations can take place without concern or worry, seemingly rare for many of the participants.

Halima shared a similar sentiment regarding her time in the MAO. When asked about the spaces she felt most comfortable, Halima explained the influence of the faculty and staff in the space reflecting her identities. Halima said in the BCC and MAO, the staff were, "more willing to put their neck out for me and help me, they give me more of a push, and they are more of a support system than the other faculty that I come in contact with across campus." As Halima described, the staff and faculty representation in conjunction with involvement within the MAO provided the space with a sense of support and trust that other parts of the campus have not provided for Black students. As a counterpoint, despite the MAO and BCC providing Black students a strong space to feel connected, not all Black students felt these spaces were for them as well.

Not all spaces are for all Black students. While it may have been more convenient to speculate that all Black students have shown feelings of comfort and safety in the BCC and the MAO, it was more complicated than that. Some Black students also named the BCC and MAO as areas from which they felt disconnected. Participants like Josh and Dale felt the BCC was not a space really for them. Josh felt there was an "expectation for me to know how to act. There isn't actually that expectation, but I don't know how to act in that sort of situation, because I'm supposed to be like these people, so what am I supposed to do?" Dale never found himself in

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spaces with many people of color. Both Josh and Dale felt their upbringings, identities, and exposure to other people of color kept them from feeling connected to spaces like the BCC or MAO.

Some Black students discussed how they did not gravitate towards the BCC due to their own connections with Black identity or lack of intrapersonal interactions, another community identified was the LGBTQ community. Participants, both university employees and students, discussed the challenges they have seen being queer in predominately Black spaces. Tanisha elaborated:

I sent out a message to our group asking for participants to come march in Pride, because we had an opportunity to join with the MAO and do that, and I got response back saying that they were very surprised that [we] were searching for a contingent to march in Pride, because that is the very place where they felt discriminated against on the basis of their sexuality.

Participants like Eugene, Tanisha, and Robinson found spaces like the BCC to be potentially terrifying for Black queer students as their identities were anything but affirmed. Tanisha explained if students were "trans or lesbian, or queer, there's often this decision that folks are asked to make between their sexuality, their queer identity, or their race... the experience is more fragmented for students who have multiple marginalized identities." Many of the faculty and staff participants explained, not every Black student felt connected to the BCC, as other identities make it difficult to view the Black community as monolithic.

Within the MAO, some of the participants indicated that, while some may find the space to be comforting for some, when they are seeking out a critical mass of Blackness, the MAO was not the most ideal location. With the MAO focused on serving historically underrepresented

groups and those who are looking to learn more about power, privilege, and oppression, the focus does not solely fall with Black students. These feelings were expressed by the students when discussing programming and the focus of the MAO. Vaylani, Jimmy, and Dave echoed the sentiments that the MAO, while for some may be a great option, often lacked in the Blackness students were looking for. Jimmy described what he saw as a watered-down version of racial focus due to the lack of attentiveness to Black students:

A lot of older students really like MAO, that's where people really go to chill in between classes. And I feel comfortable being in there too cause I know people that work the front desk, I know people within MAO. But in comparison to BCC, it's definitely not as much. Cause I think BCC is more Black, which I think I appreciate multiculturalism, gray awesome soup de color awesome but, my experience as a Black student…BCC for me is for Black people.

The MAO focused on all underrepresented groups, leaving some Black students feeling the space was too white, while other Black students felt the BCC may not work for them because they are "not Black enough" or the space does not support to their other identities. This left Black students with limited community spaces. One of the reasons identified as to why it was so difficult for Black students to feel connected to the space is due to the accessibility of Black administrative leadership.

Inaccessibility to Black Administrative Leadership

Participants attributed one of the reasons they felt connected to the BCC and MAO was the presence of Black administrators and staff. Participants enjoyed the ability to engage with those who looked like them. Many Black administrators provided intraracial support for students. For example, participants spoke at length about the ways Black administrators were a sounding

board for them as they navigated the campus. Michelle, James, Kayla, Jason, and Brian found Black staff had made them feel comfortable and a place where they felt they belonged. It was why spaces like the BCC or MAO were so popular with Black students. Jason explained the Black administrators and staff were the ones he could "lean on all the time, so I just know if I need anything, I can go there, and I'll be in space around Black people that are supporting me." Although participants expressed positivity around Black staff and administrators, participants believed Black administrative leaders (BAL), were inaccessible. These BAL were individuals who served at the power epicenter of the institution. BAL have the ability to make decisions that influence the entirety of the institution.

Participants began discussing how white, academic and student affairs spaces were, causing them frustration and distrust. Vaylani elaborated on how she noticed the frustration she felt with white staff members running a space. She explained, "enrollment management and higher education as a whole is run by white men and white women, especially. And white women are very, very comfortable with erasing the issues of race in spaces." As Vaylani noted, participants like Brian, Michelle, and Syd felt SJSU made most campus areas oversaturated with whiteness. The trio vented on how often the face of diversity was a white woman. Brian described it as "exhausting to say the least" when he found himself working with a white person in a diversity role. As participants discussed seeing white people in many leadership roles or comprising the majority of offices' staff, they explained where they often noticed Black employees.

As stated previously, SJSU had a unique make up of BAL, but many participants felt they were unavailable because of their position. Syd pointed out:

I also feel like there's two ends of the spectrum that they put Black people at here. It's either, some of them are way too high up for you to actually have much access to them. Or they have Black staff that cleans and does all the maintenance work. There's not really like that "middleman" of Blacks that work here. So, you don't have a lot of professors that you can just go to. You don't have a lot of advisors that are Black. It just, there's no middleman that's kind of more approachable.

Syd felt as if it was nearly impossible to receive an audience with these BAL. Participants like Michelle, Brian, and Jimmy agreed on how frustrating it was to have the only accessible Black staff be housekeepers, groundskeepers, and facilities staff in a place removed from the power epicenter. The accessible Black staff at SJSU were often viewed as invisible and unappreciated by the campus. Jacquelyn agreed with the group's assessment, "we have more folks of color obviously as staff cleaning bathrooms on this university than anything else. And sweeping floors and that's problematic for me. Some people call it SJSU the plantation. I hate that." Those who could enact change were inaccessible; those who could not enact change were present. Further, participants noted that the political positions of these BAL made it nearly impossible to advocate for Black progress at SJSU.

Participants described their distaste of the current hierarchy of SJSU by indicating the lack of Black staff in accessible positions of power. Syd, Michelle, and James found it was nearly impossible to reach out to the president. Participants faulted the design of the institution. James explained, "that's the stupid design… How is the top person not near the students?" At SJSU, unless you are the President of Student Government or Black Student Union (BSU), getting an audience with Black leadership was a challenge. I observed a BSU meeting, where the President of BSU was giving advice to first year students on how to survive SJSU while Black.

She shared how she had met with the President of SJSU three times since starting college. She gestured to staff who work within the BCC who had provided her the opportunity, further illustrating the rarity in which Black students are able to meet with those in power.

Robinson, a staff member within the MAO, questioned the President's intentions when he was made available for student interactions. He stated:

> So, we have a Black president, but at the same time too, well ... And for me, again speaking for myself, I haven't seen the personal interaction, or investment, or energy around supporting Black students besides just, like, 'Okay, I'm the president and that's it.' So, it's like, well, hey, you meet with them, and then what comes of it? Do you just want to meet with the students to say you met with them, or how are you trying to communicate and work with your various folks on campus who are engaged with supporting Black students and other student communities so they can have a greater sense of belonging? I don't know if I see that.

Robinson's point further drove the notion that these BAL at the top become less accessible, leaving Black students feeling isolated and unsupportive. Fay explained her love of accessible Black administrators by explaining, "something that I feel like really does have an impact is when like, the people who are actually doing like the day-to-day interaction with students are Black." Participants advocated for more accessible Black administrators on a more day-to-day level, as they felt this could improve their everyday experience. A part of that everyday experience for Black students was being stereotyped as a criminal. Next, there will be a brief discussion regarding a form of university communication and the influence of the public safety notices or crime alerts and how they influence the Black college student experience.

The Criminalization of Black Students through Crime Alerts

Students found crime alerts to reproduce a notion of Black criminality (see appendices: K & L). Participants related the crime alerts back to themselves, as through their descriptions, any Black student could be identified as the perpetrators described in the crimes. These crime alerts left participants feeling disdain and disgust. Within one focus group, Syd and Brian identified concerns with the text. Immediately Syd remarked, "I already see the problems…they're always problematic…no information but 'Black man.' It's never a white man ever." They specifically noted that Black men were always seen as the criminal.

Vaylani, Jalen, and James described some of the repercussions of receiving these crime alerts. They discussed how the vagueness of the report made all Black men suspects. Asa, Anthony, James and Jalen discussed how, as Black men, they always felt targeted by the alerts. The vagueness of the report made them likely suspects as they were all Black men. This has even changed the ways participants dress. Jimmy explained that crime alerts created a sense of nervousness about what he could wear. He explained, "I don't even wear hoodies. That's not even something I could wear, because of that reason." Asa shared a similar thought, "pretty much if you're a Black man, don't go out when you see the report…another one of my teammates got the same hair as me. I text him, 'don't wear this today when you leave.'" The alerts were described as vague and could point to any Black suspect. James said, "that sounds like me. I feel like I did this crime. Black male in the black hoodie. This could be me right now."

Depictions of Black criminality created a mental toll on Black students, especially men. For some, the idea of reading campus alerts led to anxiety and avoidance. The participants described the feeling of a negative smear campaign aimed at Black bodies. Participants like Brian, Syd, and Jalen stopped reading the alerts altogether because they spread this form of

propaganda of Black criminality, further exacerbating the mental toll on Black students. Jalen explained, "I don't read them...they literally, in my building, before I walked in, they had a picture of a Black dude. In Mell Hall, they have a picture of a Black dude and it's bullshit." Upon further discussion, participants explained that these campus alerts would be hung in residence halls to "warn" students. Jimmy, a resident assistant (RA) working in the hall, would be forced to work through their stress in order to further stereotype and demonize Black bodies. Further, one participant who served as a RA called out the double standard:

> We had to put up a paper talking about this Black man that was coming into the res halls and he was apparently a thief and was stealing, and they were like "don't stay out, close your doors." And I was like "you know how many people used to come in on Saturdays and during game days that we don't know with alcohol, going up and down these floors with these first years, that no one knows who they are, rooms open?" But okay, we say nothing to them because they have on football gear, so we just let them in... But then a Black man comes in with a hoodie or a jacket. And I have seen front desk staff actually stop a Black student and be like "are you a student here? Can I see your ID?"

Brian, Vaylani, and Michelle all agreed and found the crime alerts systems to be a form of racial profiling. Participants described how residence halls continued putting up generic or blurry photos of suspects and they were always Black. Other participants like Brian, Vaylani, and Michelle questioned the effectiveness of these alerts as the crimes were committed hours prior to the notice's release.

Participants like Virginie, Michelle and Brian explained the potential damage that could be done through these messages for this racial hunt. Virginie said, "Black men feel like they have to be on guard when it wasn't even them who committed a crime. But you're not actually

catching anybody from using these." Once again, Black students' sense of comfort was ignored as they must always be ready to be profiled. Asa shared when one of his colleagues on the athletic team was stopped and accosted. Asa explained how one of his coaches, "when he was a student here, he basically almost like got like arrested because he had on the same thing that a criminal, another Black guy was described." This narrative expressed the notion many of the participants felt, any Black man will do.

These crime alerts left Black students looking like violent thugs and criminals and the emotional and mental harm comes second to whiteness, as safety has been created for only white people. Participants began noticing the differences between a crime alert with a Black suspect and one without any descriptors. Syd, Jalen, and Michelle began to point out some of the inconsistencies between the alerts (Appendices J & K). Michelle said, "I'm not going to victim blame but one's definitely more biased." The group was confused how there was no mention of race when the person was not wearing a mask or anything blocking their faces. With the previous example, the affected party was able to describe the race; however, in this example, the alert had no indication and simply called the individual a "male." Malaika shared a similar thought as Asa, Zay, Kerry, and Anthony in their group. Malaika questioned, "my thing is, compared the two, if this person legit steals someone's money, how come the race of the individual is not said? If you had an interaction." The participants viewed the example of the Black perpetrators (Appendix K) to have race clearly defined and described. The other alert (Appendix L) was left as "male" and no features or description were presented.

The ways in which Black students described the campus crime alert had a similar theme as an event that took place at SJSU in the early 1990s. Through document analysis, it was found a white woman accused a Black man of raping her on the campus green. After the allegation, the

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university began passing a composite of the alleged perpetrator. In response, Black men at random were questioned in connection with the rape. It was later discovered this report was falsely reported. Black students were furious for the racial profiling. Black students staged a march on the campus green called, "No More Lies." to challenge this myth of violent Black men and call to attention the racist treatment of Black men.

Through personal reviews of other crime alerts at SJSU, it was common to see "suspect details are limited" or no indication of race. Black suspects always had their race identified while other racial groups were vague and unidentifiable. This vagueness left Black students feeling as if the police could do what Vaylani described and say, "well you fit a description, we're going to take you in and question you" with no true insight. The stereotyping and criminalizing of Black students further reinforce Black students' discomfort and enables the practices and policies of the institution to preserve whiteness.

Compositional Dimension

The compositional dimension of climate focused on the numeric representation of Black people at SJSU. In terms of composition, the following findings were identified: (a) dominating and abundant whiteness; (b) challenging notions of a Black monolith; (c) the invisibility of Black faculty; and (d) lacking in community. Throughout this section, I described the ways in which Black students experience the racial climate through a compositional lens.

Dominating and Abundant Whiteness

SJSU has been described as an institution with large population of white students. Participants quickly identified that SJSU lacks racial diversity. Students brought up the rarity of seeing other Black faces. Tori, Michelle, Jimmy, and Jalen shared similar feelings of loneliness as they navigated the campus, feeling an immense representation of white students and a limited

composition of Black students. Brian described how immense the whiteness can feel. Brian

reflected on his time at the gym, "I was coming out that door and I literally did a 360 around and

I was just like, 'holy shit. There's not one person of color.' Every single person was white."

Despite the normalcy, Brian still felt this immense shock. Brian continued, "going to SJSU, in a

lecture and being one or two of Black people in a room of sixty or a hundred eighty people…it's

always an intense feeling. Even if I experience it a hundred times." This whiteness has left Black

students looking for ways to run away as they have felt overwhelmed by their white peers.

Vaylani related to Brian's experience and said, "all I see is white faces, I have no one to connect

to, I feel isolated, I want to leave."

Some participants, like Syd, Halima, and Alex, felt white students were dramatically

overrepresented compared to Black students. Employees, such as Hannah, Jacquelyn, Xavier,

and Cynthia, found Black students isolated as they were rarely represented at the institution.

Jacquelyn stated, "SJSU is very white... it's just a very culturally white institution. Let's start with

the numbers first…numerically, Black students' enrollment numbers are very low and that makes

students feel devalued." Although these numbers have been low, SJSU has done their best to

portray the university as diverse. As the university continued to sell itself as diverse, students

found themselves searching for these Black faces always seen on promotional materials. Vaylani,

an orientation leader, explained some of her interactions with incoming Black students. She

explained how Black students will come up to her during orientation and "pull me aside and be

like 'so what's the up and up with this campus? Because the brochure showed me all people that

look like me, but I'm not seeing that here." Vaylani's story gave insight on how the institution

markets itself as racially diverse but instead, remains as white as always with the campus being

70% white. Additionally, this whiteness has tokenized and ostracized Black students in the classroom.

Within the classrooms, Black students displayed chagrin regarding their low representation, leaving Black students lonely and tokenized. Students like Asa, Brian, Alex, Halima, and Fay found themselves feeling tokenized in the classroom. Jimmy explained his STEM course experiences. He stated that even in a 700-person lecture, "Usually, I'm sitting next to the other Black person that's in the class. That just happens, even if I don't know them, I usually do that." This mass of whiteness has become ordinary, not only for students but faculty too.

Professors like Dr. Smith, Dr. P, and Karen all found themselves rarely surrounded with Black students in class. An African Studies professor illustrated the rarity of Black students in the classroom. Karen said, "been here 14 years and it's only in the last, I want to say three or four years that I've gotten a real critical mass of Black students in my classroom... Even though it's Introduction of African American literature." Here, a professor has had a decade of classroom interaction and identified the few instances in which she had a critical mass of Black students in an African American Studies curriculum. The numbers have become so low that some of the faculty participants now consider five Black students in the classroom to be a critical mass.

Black students felt as if they were constantly being watch or asked to education white students on racial issues; this was usually a result of the limited numbers of Black students at the institution. Michelle, Virginie, Demario, and Anthony and Syd related on how classes contributed to a feeling of tokenism. The group showed the frequency in which participants were tokenized at SJSU:

Anthony: we were talking about racial issues on campus, in my human sexuality class, and everybody looked at me cause I was the only Black one in there and I didn't say anything. I'm like, 'I'm not going to educate you on every racist thing that happens on this campus because it's not my job.'

Group: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Anthony: And this one girl was like, 'Oh, well are there racial issues? Because I've never seen them.' And I didn't say anything.

Demario: Living in bliss.

Anthony: It's not our job to educate people

Black students in the group instantly knew the story and expectations from white students. Participants understood Anthony had been asked to do what they often were asked to do: educate white students despite any racial harm that may come to Black students. This abundance of whiteness at SJSU with little intervention by Black bodies has led to Black students to be viewed as monolithic.

Challenging Notions of a Black Monolith

Participants found themselves frequently tokenized, being forced to become the voice for all Black students. The low Black composition contributed to the notion of a Black monolith. At times, Black students felt their multiple social identities were erased by the institution and their white peers. This notion has created what Tanisha described as a "misconception that all Black students have the same experience on this campus." Syd explained further, "it's like they're unable to stop associating one person with an entire group. They always assume 'okay, one Black person does this, all Black people do this.' It's a commonality with white people." This

monolithic perspective could be viewed as one of the reasons why so few spaces on campus are created with Black students in mind.

In the previous section, there was a discussion on how some Black students may not gravitate to the BCC, whereas some Black students felt as if the campus green was a fun place to socialize. These contrary views displayed differences among Black folks. SJSU instead created an environment where Black students were considered to be the same. For example, creating the BCC with the notion that all Black students will gather there; but if one is Black and queer, what spaces are available for them? If the MAO felt too white for some Black students and the BCC had displayed exclusionary practices with queer folks, where does a Black, queer student potentially find themselves? For example, Eugene, a staff member at the at the BCC, said, "I would be terrified, honestly" if he was a Black queer person at SJSU.

SJSU created an environment in which Black students are forced into specific roles. For example, white students assumed their Black peers desired to be a part of diversity, inclusion, and social justice work despite claiming otherwise. Halima explained:

> A lot of the people they would try to ... I don't know how to explain it, but they would always make you try to do diversity and inclusion things. So, they would automatically, for example for me, you have to choose a committee when you join student government association and I wanted to be in health and safety, but they automatically put me in diversity and inclusion.

White students tokenized a Black woman member and made it seem as if diversity and inclusion would be a place she would be most passionate. They assumed she would be best in the diversity and inclusion committee where she could represent student government as the monolithic Black. Treating Black students as monoliths were discussed outside of spaces on campus and student

organizations, but also includes the resources for various student populations such as Black

women. The next few sections further display the ways in which those at the institution have

created a monolithic mentality.

Black women. As the institution has viewed all Black students the same, the ways in

which resources have been distributed have been impacted. The university provided resources

for only some Black groups, figuring the rest would be fine without additional support. Kerry

explained, "I really don't understand why there's a BMIO and not something of equivalency to

Black women...we have issues when it comes to socializing or dealing with emotional distress.

This campus feels like we are unstoppable superwomen." Participants like Demario, Anthony,

Asa, and Kerry discussed the resources provided at SJSU for Black men. Demario explained:

> The Black Male Initiative Office (BMIO), I will credit a lot of my successes and my
>
> integration from high school to college to the BMIO. I went through the early arrival
>
> program. I've gone through the leadership institute. I've done the Black male retreat and
>
> like all those different things.

Demario was given ample resources and opportunities to be successful. However, Black women

found SJSU failing to support their needs and experiences. Kerry and Malika discussed how they

felt the campus had abandoned Black women and expected Black women to manage since Black

men needed the "limited" resources.

These expectations of Black women were exemplified by the notion there was once a

resource center for Black women, but the institution removed it years prior. The Black women

center was underfunded and understaffed. Participants like Karen and Dr. Smith recalled how

this Black women's center was never truly given a chance to be a successful program with the

university. Now the university has decided to bring it back, but Dr. Smith explained her worry,

"recently that program is being called back up into existence...But it's still not funded. It's not funded at the same level or invested in at the same level that we see BMIO." Prior to Kerry's time as a student, a program was dedicated towards Black women's success. The differences between the two programs remain the staff, funding, and overall sustainability. While the BMIO has been around for nearly 20 years, this woman of color initiative was never given a chance to thrive. Instead both Kerry and Dr. Smith were left to compare the lack of support for Black women to Black men.

The ways in which Black women experience SJSU differently than other populations continue. In the classroom, Black women fought to be recognized within academic discourse. Black women such as Fay, Halima, Kayla, Tori, and Michelle explained how their classroom experiences were difficult because of their multiple identities. The Black women participants found themselves being lumped in as simply women or always Black. The institution as a whole has shown their inability to understand the intersectionality of their experiences. Michelle explained:

> If you're talking about minorities, [white women] shift it to women instead of focusing on, if we're talking about just minorities, Black people, specifically. It was like, 'okay, well all women go through this.' They [white women] always shift it to themselves to make them seem like the victim. In a situation, they always revert to that rather than focusing on, 'okay we get that you have it bad as a woman. But as a Black woman, I have different issues.'

Participants like James, Demario, Kerry, and Michelle discussed how the institution struggled with intersectionality and the different experiences Black women go through because of their multiple marginalized identities. Black women were forced into a monolithic figure in which

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they must either been seen as a woman or Black, but rarely both, robbing parts of their Black women identity. Those who did not identify as African American related to this limiting label.

Ethnicity. Prior to one of the focus groups, the participants spent time getting to know each other. One conversation took place between Jason and Virginie where both of their ethnicities came up. Virginie inquired Jason's ethnicity and Jason responded as Nigerian and when he asked, she said Haitian. Both participants knew they were both Black but recognized other identities could create a deeper bond or better acknowledgement of their differences. Similarly, as I observed a Youth African Club (YAC), the students started by having each member in the audience introduce themselves. As they did, they were asked to state their ethnicity for the group. Although many of them were not born outside the United States, their pride and cheering could have fooled anyone. These two examples made it clear that the institution, and at times other Black people, view Black students as monolithic without a consideration of ethnicity. Throughout this study, participants discussed aspects of their ethnicity that challenged the notion of a monolithic Blackness.

Participants like Josh, Jason, Halima, and Fay discussed times in which their ethnicity had them feel disconnected from both SJSU and other Black students. They felt when people at SJSU used the word Black, they meant African American. Josh said he never felt like he truly fit in and found it difficult to navigate his Black identity. He brought up his ethnicity as part of the reason why. Josh explained, "I wasn't raised in the American culture, I was raised more Caribbean, and there weren't that many Caribbean people around." The monolithic view of Black people has not only made Josh feel disconnected but further put Black people in a monolithic box. Josh explained he did not know how to "act Black" as it was not a part of his "culture, like my mother didn't let us listen to rap music, we didn't listen to R&B growing up. I

have culture but it's not the American Black culture." Here, Josh allowed a white gaze to decide what Black means as he identified aspects of stereotypical Black culture and rejected his upbringing as a way to be Black.

Taylor and Halima discussed the complexity of Blackness and the different forms of Black culture. Halima explained:

I feel that there is sort of sometimes Blackness is described only in an American Black way, but it's like the United States is not the only country ... Is not the only Black country, obviously the United States is not a Black country. There is the whole continent of Africa. So, it's like the American Black experience is not the only Black experience.

Similarly, Black students seemed to adopt a monolithic view of their own race as they have been informed what Blackness is by white society. This also showed that Black students were victims of the white gaze, viewing each other as monolithic at times.

Student athletes. In a previous section, Asa discussed that, because he was a Black student athlete, he felt as if most of his classmates do not expect much from him. He went on to detail how they gave him less work than every other group member. Asa, James and Brian described how people believed Black student athletes were dumb and only capable of playing a sport. Rather than the institution treating them like every other Black student, they have found themselves being treated as idiots, royalty, and, simultaneously, objects.

Black student athletes have been treated like, in Jacquelyn' words, "glorified kings, even when they sit on the bench. As long as their name is known, they're glorified kings. Off the field, students love them...professors want to give them a break and pat them on the back." This mentality led to Black student athletes being treated like celebrities, something to own. James described encounters he frequently ran into as a student athlete. He shared, "people will come up

and they know me from certain things. They'll be 'oh I googled you, I see you.' I'll be like 'alright, that's cool.'" Jimmy and Syd quickly jumped in and expressed the creepiness of James experiences. James responded, "That is creepy, but I mean, I'm so used to it now." Black athletes were fetishized. James described how different his experiences were because of athlete status. While athletes have fans and were treated as celebrities as times, they also were unable to make a profit or money from it.

Like many division 1 programs, SJSU has a competitive athletic program. Over 65% of SJSU's revenue generating teams consist of Black men. Jacquelyn said, "winning in college at football and basketball mean having Black athletes. Period." SJSU's student athletes made the institution millions, yet the student athlete is unable to profit off their name or likeness. This financial deficit reflected the unequal ownership of Black bodies as SJSU continued to make money off their athletes.

Even if a Black student never played a sport, Black men are often thought to come to a university to play sports. This form of microaggressions highlighted that the institution believed Black men were unintelligent and unworthy of a degree. Jason talked about how quickly his peers would assume his athlete status and hope to befriend him because of it. Jason said, "I think especially like early, I got the athlete thing a lot, and so that was like, people flocked you like, 'Oh, let's be friends.'" Black men and Black student athletes became something to fetishize.

As student athletes, there were different expectations put upon them. Imani described her relationships with student athletes. As a learning coach for student athletes, Imani provided her first-hand knowledge of how the institution and coaches view the ways athletes should perceive class and learning. Imani explained how coaches will often say, "'you need to get this class done,' versus, 'you need to do the best you can.' There are some programs where that mantra of

student-athlete, they'll say, 'It's student first, athlete second,' and take that for what it's worth..."
When Imani explained the student first, she gestured with two fingers and when she said athlete, she put up one finger. She then said, "I'm not supposed to know that, but my students tell me that." The coaches told their student athletes that their academic obligations come second to their athletic careers. Student athletes were unable to express individuality. They resigned themselves to the sport and the university continued to profit off their labor and hard work, rather than caring about their academics or personal lives.

All Skinfolk Ain't Kinfolk. An aspect that made SJSU such a unique research site was the number of BAL. SJSU believed by hiring Black administrators, there will be an investment in inclusive practices. While discussing the rarity of the university's racial composition, Participants like Anthony, Kerry, Jimmy, Jalen, and Demario seemed unimpressed. Black students combated the idea that BAL alone led to racial justice. Instead, many of the participants discussed how "all skinfolk ain't kinfolk."

Participants questioned the notion that all Blacks advocated and supported Black students. As many may believe in a Black monolithic, Anthony challenged this thought and said, "just because you Black, don't mean you always going to be rocking for me because I am, you can't just want to reap the rewards with none of that effort to go in." Anthony has entered spaces to benefit others in the Black community, but this does not mean he goes in with the expectations that others will do the same. Participants like Kerry, Syd, Brian, and James echoed a similar sentiment that skin folk did not make other Blacks kin folk, and the expectation of such will only lead to disappointment. Kerry expressed, "I've learned that skin folk don't make us kin folk and I will not go out my way to be friendly with you just because of the color of our skin when I feel

like you're not for me." This not only further challenge the idea of the Black monolith, but also questions the expectations behind SJSU's leadership team.

Student participants conveyed their lack of belief that BAL had any consequence on their collegiate experiences. These BAL were not put into their leadership role to advocate for Black students but participants believed Black administrators were simply a diversity box to fill in to satisfy their constituents. When asked about having so many Black leaders at SJSU, Jimmy responded, "let me just check the box...just cause we skin folk don't mean we kin folk." The positions in which these Black leaders are placed also have engendered doubts about how much the leaders could do for Black students. Fay questioned the impact of those too inaccessible for her. Fay explained, "I feel like a lot of times it doesn't really make a difference who is in like those really high positions. Like, President Echols is Black, but I mean, like I don't know how big of an impact that has on my life." Despite SJSU's representation, it does not mean there will be results towards a more racial or social justice minded institution.

More so, some BALs have seemed standoffish and distant. Kerry spoke of a time that the president was walking across campus and ignored her rather than saying a simple hello. Kerry shared how she was on the campus green and, "President Echols walked past with his publicist, pretty blonde-haired lady, and I was like 'hello President Echols.' She was like, 'yes, please don't talk to him, we're on our way to a meeting.'" While Kerry may not have wanted a long conversation, she continued to question if Black students were being supported by all of their BAL because of the lack of acknowledgement and someone speaking for the president. Kerry described feeling rejected by the president.

Dave questioned this notion of who is advocating for Black students, "I've heard students say that we have a lot of Black representation, but they really don't know if they're really down

for the cause. Like, are they really advocating for students? Are they really advocating for Black students?" While SJSU has determined there is a Black monolith, Black students have seen this not to be the case. Instead, there has been a dwindling expectation for BAL to advocate for their needs as they have figured out what SJSU has not: "all skinfolk ain't kinfolk."

The Visibility of Black Faculty

As previously discussed, Black students have found classrooms to be racially challenging. Participants identified a lack of Black faculty at SJSU as a main reason. As participants reflected, participants realized the rarity of seeing Black faculty. Fay, Alex, Donovan, and Taylor all expressed their surprise that they all had less than 3 Black professors during their time at SJSU, with many only having a Black professor in the African American Studies department. Halima described her desire for more Black academics at SJSU. Halima shared, "I've been at SJSU for four years now and they...I don't think I've had a single Black professor." Participants pointed out the most academic colleges had one or two Black faculty members. Vaylani shared how one of her professors told her, "'I bet none of you would believe me in saying that there are over 100 Black professors that teach on this campus.'" Participants responded with disbelief. Jimmy, Michelle, Jalen, all began to explain how these numbers invisible to them and even if there were over 100, that was nowhere near enough.

After reviewing SJSU's records, the faculty member who told Vaylani there were over 100 Black faculty was telling an accurate depiction of the current composition. In 2018, there were approximately 115 Black faculty at SJSU. What Vaylani's professor failed to report was Black faculty to made up less than 4% of faculty overall.

Both faculty and staff described the repercussions of such a low representation of Black faculty. Dave stated Black students have struggled to find someone to connect with in the

classroom. Dave said, "so, that has been an issue with them trying to find their advisor…or even find other faculty and staff that look like them and connect with them in their college to try to find some type of community." This lack of faculty left students searching for ways to connect in the classroom. Chris, who served as a faculty member, recognized low numbers but also spoke to the efforts the university has said they are striving to attain. Chris stated:

I think the student body has gotten generally more diverse and aware of diversity and issues related to racial discrimination and being supportive or trying to counteract those kinds of issues. Yeah, and I think certainly there's been efforts to hire more diverse faculty and staff. They're not as successful as we'd like them to be, unfortunately, but there are efforts there.

As Chris alluded to the unsuccessful efforts towards hiring Black faculty, he spoke to the efforts the institution has made but according to faculty data in 2011, SJSU had almost the exact same number Black faculty than it currently does now. While the curricular experiences have found Black students feeling isolated, the cocurricular aspects of SJSU served them fairly any better.

Lacking in Community

Throughout this compositional dimension, participants such as Michelle, Donovan, Brian, Jalen, Tori, and Syd identified various ways in which SJSU has made them feel alone, disconnected, and underrepresented as a Black community. SJSU built resources and infrastructure to support a certain type of Black student. Once a Black student has deviated from what the SJSU deemed as Black, the institution demonstrated an inability to provide the support and resources for the majority of other Black students. The inability to see Black students as multi-faceted and dynamic have led participants to feel as if, how Vaylani described, the university ignores her struggles and pretends they "understand what it means to be a diverse

student on campus. But in reality, a lot of it is not being able to connect with professors, not finding communities, social isolation."

The university's inability to recognize differences within the group and account for it has made students like Donovan feel "isolated" and Anthony, "tired." As the institution has continued to fail at enrolling Black students, they, along with their peers, think that all Black students are the same because a critical mass has not been accomplished in the campus. Black students have attempted to make the university aware with their protests.

In 2018, Black students protested their composition at SJSU and created promotional materials indicating they represent less than 10% of the campus. Public records only a few years prior showed record lows with Black student enrollment over the past 30 years in terms of racial composition. The Black students' passive protest quickly made university news. This protest displayed Black student's isolation. Black students felt a lack of community and students' isolation was coming to a head. As Black students fought for better representation, they were still plagued by their cross racial interactions with white students.

Behavioral Dimension

The behavioral dimension interrogated the cross racial relationships of Black students with other racial populations, specifically white students, for this study. The findings within this section were (a) the challenges of involvement with white students and (b) carefully selecting friendships with white students. Throughout this section, I described the ways in which Black students explained their cross racial interactions.

Challenges of Involvement with White Students

Participants provided a consistent message on their social interactions with white students. They discussed how white students have failed to understand the importance of

diversity and inclusion work. Participants like Jason, Vaylani, Michelle, Alex, and Fay, felt

disrespected and erased because organizations' meetings excluded their voices. Overall

participants, while discussing majority white organizations (MWO), vented their frustrations as

white students treated them as unimportant.

Participants brought up instances in which they felt like their voices were unheard or

their opinions did not matter. Vaylani discussed how she felt the executive board rarely listened

to her. As the vice president of her student organization, regularly, the all-white executive board

would do everything they could do ignore her voice. She explained a decision the organization

needed to make, "When it came to marketing...we had the choice between a picture where we

had three Black people and some women, and then white men." Unsurprisingly, the president

ignored her voice and "went over my head and put the picture of all white men. We looked like a

Klan meeting." Vaylani was blatantly ignored as the white students felt they knew better than

her. Similarly, Halima, Alex, and Taylor found themselves frustrated and shocked with how

often these MWOs would silence them or do whatever it took to ignore their contributions.

As Black women were ignored within their student organizations, conversations

continued to display the participants' annoyance, surrounded by all these white students. Brian

attended a student organization meeting in the business school and described it as, "so fucking

cringe worthy." He elaborated, "when you step in there and you're just like 'holy shit, is this

what reaching the top of a corporate company is going to be like?'" He, like Jason and Demario,

often struggled with the whiteness of the student organizations and despaired the day where they

would be forced to work with white people every day.

When asked what is like being a Black person in a MWO, Anthony responded with one

word, "exhausting," while Fay felt it was uncomfortable and awkward. Malaika explained the

sentiments of other participants like Jalen, James, and Brian, and Syd. Malaika explained that when she is in involvement experiences with white people, Black students' experiences were never truly understood. She has become accustomed to hearing, "'I didn't know you had a struggle with that, or I didn't know you had to almost like code switch.'" Moments like these displayed the gaps of knowledge with many of the white students. White students did not know participants' struggles because they did not need to know.

Black students explained the lengths they have gone to be viewed as legitimate in their involvement experiences. Participants like Tori, Jimmy, Vaylani, and Brian always performed at their best to ensure they are viewed as reliable and credible. Vaylani summarized many of the participants' feelings by always "trying to prove that I'm legit in this space, and I'm a voice that can be heard...I'm very strategic in the role that I play, and it's a lot of thinking and it's a lot of stress." Similar to Anthony's feelings of exhaustion and Brian's constant thinking, participants put forth a tremendous effort to be viewed as equals. Vaylani discussed how her constant performance took "a toll on my mental health, which is a big question when thinking about how Black people navigate white spaces. We're constantly having to prove ourselves and we can't get a break." Again, participants faced great pains working with these MWO and found themselves performing to seek out the approval of their white peers regardless of the pain.

Considering the psychological toll that Anthony and Vaylani described, Earl provided an example as to why some Black students have found themselves frustrated and distrusting. Earl explained the Black Accounting Association (BAA)'s collaborations with the Accounting Association (AA). He explained, "the model and logo of BAA, is 'Lifting as We Climb.'" After a month passed and the two groups met, "the majority association, the students, had developed a t-shirt, and on the back of that t-shirt was the BAA logo, we're talking about the majority

organization, that says 'Lifting as we climb.'" Earl exposed the AA's appropriations of BAA's ideas and claimed it as their own. Like Earl, participants were hesitant to trust those in these MWO due to this culture of appropriations and a lack of acknowledgement of the work employed by Black students. Actions by groups like AA have left Black students feeling distrustful and unwilling to work with white student organizations again.

Further, Earl explained that organizations like AA work with BAA for an event and then afterwards pretend they do not exist, unacknowledging their livelihoods. Earl shared how a Black student no longer wants to work with MWOs because of the fake relationships. Earl's student told him, "When we meet with the [MWO] in front of the companies and corporations, we collaborate together, we invite guests in, it's just really one tight family." But the next day, white students will "walk by us like they don't see us, and they know us. In the hallway, they don't even speak, when they're with their friends, et cetera, outside of our meeting that we just met...It's pretentious. It's not real." White students used their Black peers and act like they do not exist. This furthers the tension and fakeness within the group settings.

As Vaylani, Anthony, Halima, and Malaika, mentioned earlier, there have been challenges with Black students working with MWOs. The results have left Black students feeling distrust, exhausted, and unseen. Despite these challenges, participants like Demario, Kerry, and Brian joined these MWOs. While many of the Black participants described their MWO experiences as exhausting and difficult, this was not the case for all of the Black students. Demario had found an organization that led to some connections:

I'm in a senior honorary and one thing they do is they have; we do one-on-one meetings. So, it's like you meet with one person for an hour each week and you get to know who they are...so it's like you're with these people all the time. You have to break that barrier

sooner or later or else it's just going to be me and three other Black people feeling

awkward, with the 24 others. But don't get me wrong, I still feel more comfortable with

the Black people in there, but I, I would go out of my way to hang out with these, with a

small set of white people.

Not every participant had a negative experience with MWOs, but almost every participant

indicated racial challenges. For those who do join MWOs, a theme arose regarding many of the

Black participants' endurance. Participants endured with the hope of creating change.

Creating change. While participants discussed their challenges working with MWO,

they began mentioning this duty to serve the Black community. Participants such as Anthony,

Demario, Kerry and Malaika detailed how they were willing to deal with the difficulties to create

change at the institution. Anthony explained Black students need to get involved in changing the

space. He said, "I feel like we can't try to improve a space. You can't diversify a face, a space, if

you refuse to infiltrate that space." Malaika agreed with this notion and said it was worthwhile

for her to endure because she wanted to create change. Malaika told the group, "there's this

aspect of 'be the change you want to see in the world.' Like it sounds like overused or whatever,

if it seems cliché, but end of the day you have to kind of make yourself uncomfortable." Malaika

looked at the long term and said, when I was a freshman, you could see a little bit of pepper...

next year, I'll be student director. If that, if I didn't make myself uncomfortable within those

spaces, then who else would come?" Malaika believed it was worthwhile to head into the storm,

despite the discomfort and exclusion because she felt like creating change was a necessary

experience. The whiteness she had endured needed to be disrupted and her comfort was a

worthwhile sacrifice.

Demario felt similarly as he saw how these MWO had more resources and opportunities. He wanted what was due to him and his community. He explained, "there's so much money the MWO has, they just give out scholarships like nothing...so I was, 'we need to take advantage of this.' I was willing to sacrifice my, my comfort for the possibility of enhancing my community." As participants like Malaika, Kerry, Demario, and Anthony, were talking, this idea of sacrifice kept reoccurring. They endured the discomfort, struggle, and pain because they felt the resources and connections of these MWOs were made for them, as well. They wanted to reclaim what was theirs. Kerry and Anthony described it as their calling rather than a sacrifice. Kerry shared how she does not see it as a sacrifice but "my purpose. I feel like I've talked to God so much and that He's shown me even when I'm maybe tired, like this is not as high priced, this is where He wants me to be." Kerry and Anthony relied on their spiritual faith to guide them through the challenge and frustration because it felt as if this was a mission sent to them by God. Demario and Asa were hesitant to describe their efforts as a sacrifice but instead a strategy. Demario called it "creating a game plan." This sense of furthering the community, whether spiritual or strategy, has led these Black participants to create change within these MWOs, despite the adversity.

Tanisha, as a staff member, related to Black students' efforts to create change. Tanisha said, "we have some students who are on the Programming Board. We have some students who are in student government. But those are like students who feel like they want to make a change...to advance causes around diversity." Participants believed they could reclaim the money, resources, and spaces preserved for those who have yet to come to SJSU. While some participants have found it worthwhile or meaningful to join these MWOs, others like Jimmy have found more solace in organization reflected in Blackness. Jimmy said, "I think it is very

draining to do that, so I choose to be involved in organizations that are predominantly Black, just for that rejuvenation."

Black organizations. Black students have been put into challenging and stressful situations when in MWOs. While some of the participants found connections in their MWOs and others were aiming to be the facilitator of change, there were some who focused on working with Black organizations. Participants like Jimmy, Michelle, and Donovan found these organizations provided a sense of rejuvenation and connection. Michelle summarized other participants best when she said, "I wanted to get involved in campus...I was still only really interested in Black organizations. And so, I joined BSU. I was an ambassador. And I kinda felt like I wouldn't really run into white people." Michelle used Black organizations like Jimmy to avoid whiteness and find comfort.

As we have thought of cultural centers and multicultural offices as forms of counter spaces, these organizations have served as counter organizations. Virginie shared how these Black student organizations were borne out of necessity to survive:

A lot of white people come up to me and they just like, 'oh, like I heard there's a new Black organization here' like, 'you should totally join it' and I'm like, 'I'm already on the board for it.' They are like," I totally love the fact that, it's just so good that like, it's on campus.' And I'm like, 'yeah, but we wouldn't need it if like y'all organizations were more inclusive and make people feel more welcome.'

Most participants found Black organizations served as a form of protection from white students as MWO were viewed as exclusionary but gravitated towards Black organizations for inclusion.

A couple participants enjoyed Black organizations as they felt their personal passions and interests were being met with Black organizations. Brian, Jason, Halima, Virginie, and Jimmy

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found organizations like the National Panhellenic Council (NPHC) or the Somalian Association better represented them, as it both celebrated their passions but also their Black heritage. Halima felt invigorated because of the cultural connection with the Somalian Association. Halima found her involvement "super rewarding, I got to hang out with a lot of people that come from the same culture as me and speak the same language, and I got to learn more about diversity within my own culture." These Black student organizations served two main purposes, a way to protect from whiteness and a way to explore their self-identity. As the cross racial interactions between white and Black students continued, interracial friendships became a topic of conversation.

Carefully Selecting Friendships with White Students

As the participants discussed their relationships with white students, friendships became a topic of conversation. There were a handful of participants, like Halima, Taylor, Kerry and Jalen, who discussed having positive relationships and friendship with white students. Those who found a rewarding relationship with white students found their friendships to be reliable and authentic. Through careful selection, participants created relationships with white students.

Many of the participants who found positive relationships with white students attributed their friendships to an intentional selection. Participants proceeded with caution. Participants found a certain identity awareness to be a prerequisite to be friends with them. Participants like Halima, Taylor, and Zay all found it important there was a required awareness of their friends' white privilege as well as an awareness of their white identity. Halima echoed the groups' friendship making process with white students, "I select them carefully. The people that I interact with, they are very radical thinkers, and they are very aware of their white privilege...So I have friendships with white students but it's very selective." The awareness of their political identity and whiteness acted as a catalyst for interracial friendships.

While some participants like Zay, Taylor, and Halima found their friends through a selective search where cultural awareness was instrumental. Similarly, Brian talked about the importance of trust and making sure his friends would have his back if it was ever needed. Brian explained his self-described "extreme" measures, "I do this thing in my head where it's like 'alright, if we get into some trouble and the cops came, how would this person react?" The group immediately reacted with Syd, Michelle, and Jalen agreeing that these were not extreme measures but a necessary step. Jalen assured Brian by saying, "hopefully, white boy uses white privilege with you."

Most participants agreed with this initial distrust as they created relationships with white students. Participants needed to be convinced white students were truly friends. Brian, Jalen, Syd, and Michelle needed to know that these relationships were with white people willing to advocate and use their privilege to ally for Black bodies and their safety. Whereas Zay, Taylor, and Halima, there was a need for white peers have an awareness of identity. While some participants found ways to carefully find white friends, other participants struggled and were only able to create shallow or nonexistent interactions.

Many participants in the study found their relationships with white students to be rare and, when they did occur, shallow. Fatima, Michelle, Syd, Alex, and Josh all found their friendships with white students to be shallow, if existent at all. Michelle and Syd listed most activities they do with their white peers were listening to a mixtape or painting. Syd said, "stuff's gotta be surface level." This surface level approach has been in response to the lack of cultural connections that participants sought. Participants described creating low expectations for their white peers. Josh explained, "a lot of the times, those are just surface level connections where I just listen, and we get along fine." Josh did not describe a friendship with white students but

instead, displayed tolerance. Josh continued, "It can really be hard to get a word in edgewise with a lot of white peers, because they just love talking."

Michelle summed up many of the relationships the participants described with white students. Michelle said, "Friendships with white people are different. Let me tell you, you don't have any deep conversations, you don't talk about life, you don't talk about anything." Participants like Syd, Michelle. Demario, and Jason compared the relationships between Black friendships and white ones. Interracial friendships were shallow whereas participants connected and engaged with their Black peers. Syd described the differences between the two types of relationship. Syd explained:

> I have not had a white friend...Every Black person I know, I can get into a very deep conversation with every single one. We can start talking about life, experiences. Literally, I really don't know you guys, it's so easy to talk to you.

In 60 minutes, the other participants in her focus group agreed and found comfort with one another that they have struggled to form with white students. Participants had doubts if white students could really have these meaningful conversations. Kayla believed white students only spoke to her because they wanted to seem less problematic. Kayla felt as if white women would talk to her so they could feel, "I talked to a Black girl today, where's my cookie', is that it's not like real to me. So, it's just very forced and I don't want to be like somebody that helps you...appease your racism." Once again, Black students have adopted this form of mistrust and believe white students were hoping to find their one Black friend.

A surprising number of participants discussed how their friendships with white students were entirely based on alcohol. Jason, Fatima, Alex, and Alex all discussed the importance of drinking to white people during their social interactions. Alex found when working with group

members for a class, she often found they wanted to drink rather than work together. During a group project meeting, Alex described how her white group members asked, "'You guys want to go meet at the bar?' I'm like 'no'... Alcohol is a big motivator." As participants continued to explain, it became common to see drinking as the way white students created relationships. This rarely connected with the participants' values. This fascination with alcohol seemed to begin even before students entered college. Fatima explained she works as a "tour guide and my, the white family, the white like kids will always pull me aside and like make sure they separate themselves from their parents and they're like, 'so like what's the party scene like?'" It almost as if white students at SJSU focused on partying prior to worrying about academics or creating friendships, especially with Black students.

While some participants created friendships with white students, most found their relationships with white students to be either surface level or nonexistent. Participants discussed how little they trusted their peers. Michelle elaborated, "Freshman year, I didn't really have all that many white friends, but I was cool with [people] on my floor and my dorm. Then we had the election and stuff, and that's when I fell off hard as hell." The election of the 45th president changed how students like Michelle and Halima perceived the white students at SJSU.

Other participants felt similarly while avoiding engaging with white students. When others were asked about interacting and creating friendships, the room filled with laughter and Kayla responded, "I try not to" with Asron, Fay, and Virginie quickly agreeing. When asked about what drives their friendships with Black students at SJSU, Jason simply stated, "survival" making it apparent that interracial interactions have left Black students psychologically reeling.

Psychological Dimension

Black students have discussed their negative racial interactions and experiences at SJSU. In this section, the emotional and mental responses to SJSU racial climate will be described. The findings in the section were (a) the impact of racist encounters; (b) Black students' sense of belonging; (c) feelings of distrust; (d) the loss of authenticity; and (e) feelings of unworthiness.

Impact of Racist Encounters

Participants experienced a significant number of microaggressions and racist encounters. These encounters left students feeling disconnected, uncomfortable, and unappreciated. Throughout this section, multiple racialized incidents shaped Black students' feelings towards the university.

Fay, Casey, and Jason discussed the rise of conservative and alt-right speakers at SJSU. In particular, they spoke about an event featuring conservative commentator Ben Shapiro. Personally, while observing the protest, the frustration and pain could be felt from all the protesters, especially the people of color. When Jason found out Shapiro was coming to speak, he could, "feel the tension" as students were protesting someone Jason described as "anti-Black." Participants described their disgust at anti-Black speakers coming onto campus. These anti-Black speakers left Black students feeling tense and unwelcomed by the university. Fay summarized the feelings of participants like Asron, Kayla, Virginie, and Jason when she said, "they allow people like Ben Shapiro to come and give talks. It's basically like them saying we value free speech more than we value our own students being comfortable on this campus." While Fay understood free speech policies, she also understood that this hate speech undermines the university's supposed care for inclusion.

Participants like Jason and Fay found the lengths the university went to provide support to Shapiro to be quite informing to the values of the institution. Virginie said the large university police presence "speaks volumes to see like what they're doing to protect Ben Shapiro and his people." Black students' comfort came second to policy. Hate speech has been protected while Black students' feelings remain open for attack. Jasmine and Casey, similarly, found many of her students upset by Shapiro's visit. Casey said, "a lot of my students, of course, were upset because there was someone who was speaking all of this stuff out, and the university allowed them to be in this space." Black students felt their safety and comfortability only comes second to the needs of white students. SJSU was quiet with a speaker of racist speech and made a habit of such silence.

In 2017, Charlottesville was home to a white supremacist rally. This rally led to the death of one of the protesters against white supremacy. Institutions often condemn acts of terror. At SJSU, student organizations were left to deal with the aftermath of such events after the institution remained silent. Michelle attended a student organization event dedicated to discussing the Charlottesville riot. Michelle found herself disappointed and in disbelief during Partners for Inclusion program, with Jimmy quickly agreeing, as the organization failed at conversations with diversity and inclusion, calling them "a joke." Michelle described how multiple months after the Charlottesville riot, a group at SJSU finally decided to go talk about it and they were immediately tokenized. She described, "we were the only Black people to show up...They didn't even know the general idea of what happened. And we were just there as tokens. They wanted us to explain everything." Similarly, SJSU seemed to know nothing of the riots as they provided no official responses to racism and hate. No email was sent making students aware of the resources, no formal announcement, but instead, silence regarding the matter.

When the President did send out an email, it was vague, and students were most likely unsure of what he was referring to. Ten days after the conclusion of the rally, students received an email from the President. The email began with a welcome to the school year and excitement about welcome week. The president condemned hate and said students have, "witnessed tragic examples of hatred, racism, and bigotry. They have been shocking to us all, have no place in our society and certainly no place on our campuses. We pride ourselves on being broadly diverse and actively inclusive." What was the president talking about? This email said nothing about SJSU's concern of students nor the acts of terror that took place in Virginia. The president instead left this vague message ten days after a racist event. The email immediately pivoted towards convocation and the welcome week. The message was viewed by participants as callous and irresponsible. SJSU provided no resources, no policies related to hate on the campus, and no ways to combat bias on the campus.

However, comparing that response to when a natural disaster hit the United States, the university responded with:

> As Hurricane Irma tracks through the Caribbean and toward the United States, we are just
>
> beginning to see its impact. We join the entire SJSU community in extending our
>
> heartfelt thoughts and prayers to you, your family and friends during this time of
>
> uncertainty. A support meeting will be held at 6 p.m., Monday, September 11

The email went on to discuss how students could find support meetings, counseling, class assistance, emergency grants, offices to contact if necessary, with phone numbers provided. What a stark difference. In the case of this natural disaster, an immediate email with resources was sent out on the same day. During the Charlottesville riots, the university took ten days to acknowledge general hate in the world. This is not to minimalize the harm that has come from a

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natural disaster, but to emphasize the lack of explicit concern by SJSU related to racism. Instead of resources to affected students, SJSU provided silence.

As these previous narratives have displayed, students have described themselves as tired, neglected, exhausted, tokenized. Syd, James, Vaylani, Jalen, Brian, and Michelle all shared stories where they felt ignored, disregarded, and unimportant. For example, Jimmy told a story about a racist comment made by a professor, who called it a joke, regarding immigration and conversations around building a wall between Mexico and the US. Jimmy explained his frustration afterwards, "I sent her an email, you know, I never got a reply back on the email. She never said anything about it. She never came to class and apologized. She never openly said what she did was wrong." The focus group members were repulsed by the professors' actions but were unsurprised by the lack of a response, as they all had seemed to experience the silence, too. Silences like these have influenced the participants' sense of belonging.

Sense of Belonging

Participants described feelings of being undervalued and uncared for. Vaylani, Malaika, Donovan, and Jimmy all felt as if the campus, including students and employees, were uninterested in supporting them. Vaylani said, "It's also just gets very frustrating, I've found, where you know people aren't listening to you to understand. They're listening to you to combat respond or find a point of relatability to shift it back to themselves." Similar to Josh, Vaylani found white people want to shift the attention back to themselves and are uninterested in Black voices. Participants were unable to even have a simple conversation in class before students shift the conversation back to them, displaying a lack of value.

Students attributed this lack of care to graduation numbers where Malaika and Donovan believed the institution cared about athletics and overall graduation rates, not Black students.

Donovan expressed a similar feeling, "that's why you have Black kids dropping out at significantly higher rates than other students. So, I think that's an issue that needs to be addressed, the structural issues." As Donovan suggested, the Black graduation rates was more than 10% lower than white students at SJSU and more than 12% than the average.

Staff employees like Debbie, Dr. Smith, Casey, Jasmine, Eugene, and Carl found themselves believing a similar thought, that the university has made little progress for Black students. Debbie said, "I don't necessarily see as much movement in the space to make sure that everybody feels included, right. I think we throw around the words, diversity and inclusion so much, but we forget what that actually means." The university has displayed a fake concern around diversity and inclusion and continue to serve those who have been most represented. Dr. Smith said, "I do have concern that as our numbers continue to decrease that there will be less emphasis on those students because there's just not a critical mass." As Black student enrollment continued to decrease, there was fear voiced by Dr. Smith that Black students will lose the small amount of attention that they do receive.

Most participants including Jimmy, Kerry, Anthony, Brian, Michelle, to name a few, within the study, struggled to maintain an ownership over their self-concept. They felt there was no place truly for them and began to see themselves as guests in someone else's home. Their lack of sense of belonging led them to feel as if they needed to be perfect. Whether it was smarter, more professional, or less emotional, participants exhibited signs of imposter syndrome while attending SJSU. Participants believed failure would reflect on their race and they would only confirm the negative stereotypes around Black people.

Jimmy wanted to be seen as extraordinary and have his intelligence validated. Jimmy summarized the voices of many of the participants when he explained, "when I study with a

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white person, in the back of my mind all I can think about is 'wow, I have to prove I am smarter than them.'" Competition and perfectionism drove many Black students like Kerry, Anthony, Zay, and Malaika. This feeling was drastically different when Jimmy surrounded himself with Black students. Jimmy explained, "when I'm with a Black friend...we're helping each other get to the exact same position we want to be in." Jimmy described the community building with his Black friends and felt freer than when surrounded by his white peers. This notion of perfection has expanded to the professional realm for participants, as well. Competition often indicated when participants felt like imposters. Kerry felt uncomfortable attending career fairs. This normal aspect for a college student became a place causing worry and stress. Kerry attributed her identities as a Black woman as to why she was unqualified and an imposter from the start.

Brian, Michelle, and Vaylani always strove for an unrealistic view of perfection as to never be seen making a mistake. Brian said, "I always make sure that my shit is perfect. Any meetings that I have, I always follow up with the email and confirm everything because you're never going to catch me fucking up." Rather than accepting mistakes as a normal part of life, participants insisted success was the only option. Anything but perfection would leave participants from opportunities and damaging their reputation, something many white students do not have to contend with. Michelle resonated with this notion of credibility as she had been socialized to believe she needs to be "ten times better for them to see you as 'oh, this is a real person.'" Participants like Jimmy, Michelle, Brian, and Jason made failure or a lack of execution a grueling and emotional task instead of a normal part of life. Through their relationships and experiences at SJSU, participants found themselves exerting more effort, developing feelings of insecurity, and perfectionism leading them to additional emotional labor, anxiety and pain.

Distrust

Participants expressed the constant turmoil they experienced at SJSU. Whether it was white supremacist speakers or racist crime alerts, participants exhibited distrust towards SJSU. These feelings of distrust towards the institution began when participants were introduced to the institution believing it would be inclusive and have found themselves often ostracized in class, on the campus green, at work, and almost everywhere Black students go. Since then, participants like Brian, Taylor, Jimmy, Michelle, and Syd have described a sense of distrust towards their white peers and SJSU.

Earlier, participants described their interracial friendships with white students. Most participants said they were selective and careful when creating these relationships, showing the difficulty of trusting their peers. Early on, as Black students were recruited and selected SJSU, participants pointed out how they felt deceived by what they were promised, believing the marketing materials and promotional videos. Taylor shared a similar story in which someone she believed to be aware of privilege and power until they made a racist joke and said to Taylor "'those Peruvians, they don't know how to wash their hands.' And I'm just like ... I'm just like "you've shown yourself."

Participants, like Taylor and Brian, hoped their friends would display a more inclusive attitude, but instead, made a joke at the expense of a different racial group. This distrust was not limited towards white students but also the leadership. Participants had little to no expectations of the president. Participants had lost faith and trust in the leadership to advocate for their needs. They felt as if politics were more important to the university than their lives and sense of belonging. Asa, Anthony, and Kerry felt the president and the university leadership team were politicians working to solve their own system. Kerry said the university was failing Black

students because "even the people that you feel like are doing the best by you, don't really care for you." Participants felt as if the political environment made Black students causalities.

Casey empathized with the Black students and their distrust of university officials. Casey said, "you have a Black president, and you have all these racist things happening, but my president doesn't say anything." Similar to the university's response towards the Charlottesville riots, whenever racist events occur, Black students have been left to pick up the pieces alone. Casey has found that the leadership remains quiet on racism, creating a hesitation to trust the administration. These feelings have a drastic effect on Black students and their ability to trust the institution. In addition to these feelings of fatigue and distrust, Black students struggled with remaining authentic and seeing themselves as extraordinary due to the racial climate.

Losing Authenticity

Participants found themselves struggling to maintain a sense of self that made them proud. Participants like Brian, Vaylani, Demario, and Jason described having to perform and filter themselves. As they committed to this performance, it began clearer that Black students expressed a concern of losing themselves along the way. As a survival mechanism, participants discussed their codeswitching for white people. SJSU left Black students feeling unlike themselves. Brian explained wanting to be his "raw authentic self but then realizing, 'okay I can't be my raw authentic self to its full capacity and still achieve what I want to achieve.'...and it infuriates me about the fact that we have to be so strategic." Michelle described this as a "constant battle with yourself to negate whiteness is greatness, like that sort socialization that we all have, and it's like we code switch to be less who we are." Once again, this notion of losing oneself appeared. As this occurs, Black students felt as if they were in fact losing a part of their Blackness, losing ownership of their identity.

As Black students navigated SJSU, Brian, Vaylani, Syd, Alex, and Taylor described losing a piece of themselves, often an aspect of their Black identity. Syd explained all her classes were with all "white people and then I'm the only Black person I'm like, 'okay I gotta do it for sixty minutes.' You do it for so long ...you lose yourself piece by piece." Although code switching has been perceived to have the ability to help students persist, participants like Michelle and Brian felt they were losing themselves. Syd continued, "you kind of just like look back and you're like, 'okay, what part of that was actually me? Where do I come into this conversation and actually realize that I'm being myself?'" Black students, unallowed to fully embrace themselves, leave SJSU, unable to recognize themselves.

Vaylani, like Halima and Michelle, found themselves not only frustrated, but constantly thinking about the way they were perceived. While in class, Michelle felt she "always has to be conscious about what you say in class, how you come off." This immense amount of thinking has only made it harder for participants to embrace who they are and feel as if they were truly authentic. SJSU coerced participants to change themselves to be accepted. Participants lost pieces of themselves in order to be accepted in white spaces, but still felt unworthy of the institution.

Feeling of Unworthiness

One of the most important aspects about the psychological has been the ways in which students were led to believe they were unworthy of SJSU, even beginning as early as their application. In particular, SJSU created an environment where policies, like Affirmative Action, was the only way white people believed Black students were deemed appropriate for the institution. Although students did not discuss admissions, faculty and staff shared their

experiences with admissions and Affirmative Action and the ways in which the policy was weaponized to make Black students feel undeserving.

Through conversations with faculty and staff, it became apparent that non-Blacks have deemed Black students only admissible due to Affirmative Action. For example, participants like Dave, Cynthia, and Karen discussed how Affirmative Action had been weaponized to make Black students feel as if they were not admitted on their own talent and intelligence but instead due to the policy. Dave recalled, "a lot of times they hear all the white students say they only got here because they were Black, you know? Affirmative Action and things like that. So, not because their merit, not because they're smart...because they were Black."

Cynthia in enrollment services detailed a confrontation with a parent and a Black student. Cynthia recalled, "we had a parent one time ask one of my students what their [ACT/SAT] information was, and they said, 'I don't feel comfortable sharing it.' And he's like, 'Oh, you probably got in on affirmative action.'" Black students have had their intelligence questioned from the second they enter the institution and build this feeling as if the institution was too good for them. This has led to Black students becoming less confident in their own talents. Karen, a Black professor, elaborated how she lectures in class to her students:

> Your entire education has said that when that cis, straight white man walks in here, his authority is legitimate, and when I show up, something just ain't right. You're encouraged to think, 'Oh, the only reason she's here is because of affirmative action'

This weaponization of affirmative action has not only damaged Black students' sense of belonging and worthiness at the institution, but also shaped the ways they see Black leaders, faculty, and administrators. Black students become socialized to believe affirmative action was the only way any Black presence can exist.

Black students have been socialized to believe that they were only granted opportunities because they were Black; some responded by attempting to erase aspects of their identities on applications. Earl explained what Black students have told him, 'No, I need to take my race off.' It's not because they got a scholarship, it's just that they don't want a minority scholarship... because they believe they're just based on their own merits." Black students were socialized to believe minority scholarships were less than and instead want to compete with their white peers, despite these scholarships being made to even the scales between minorities and white students. The weaponization of Affirmative Action taught Black students to hide their race and aspects of their identities, making them believe they were undeserving of being admitted to the institution.

Students and families have not been the only ones falling prey to the belief that Black students do not belong at SJSU; faculty believed that Black students were only accepted because Affirmative Action. Jacquelyn exclaimed her frustration, "white professors talking about Affirmative action and putting this lie and myth out there that Black people that may have beneficiaries of Affirmative action. Statistically that's a lie...And it makes Affirmative Action appear to be this welfare granting body." White faculty, parents, and students have been implicated into believing that Affirmative Action has led to an undeserving Black student, because Black people altogether were undeserving.

Conclusion

This section highlighted the challenges faced by Black students during their time at SJSU. Throughout the chapter, participants described on the ways in which each individual dimension led to Black students' general disconnection to SJSU. Whether it was the history, day-to-day operations, composition, cross racial, or emotions developed by participants, the institution was an isolating and lonely experience for Black students. While these dimensions

separately provided an insight on Black students' perceptions on the racial climate, overlapping

or blending the dimensions show how SJSU disenfranchises Black students and maintains a

system of power for white people and whiteness. In the next chapter, another level of analysis

connecting the dimensions was used to inform the campus racial climate for Black students.

CHAPTER 5: CROSSING DIMENSIONS

Chapter 4 described the participants' experiences and put their narratives at the forefront to be fully appreciated and understood. The previous chapter also allowed for Critical Race Theory's focus on counternarratives to shape the findings (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Hurtado's (2011) MMDLE's dimensions provided a framework to explore Black students' interactions with the campus racial climate. Although the previous chapter took a more descriptive approach to robustly capture each dimension of climate, this chapter serves as an opportunity for analysis across dimensions to make further analytical claims regarding the ways Black students engaged with SJSU and the overall campus racial climate. Clearly, the dimensions of climate are connected, as all the findings could not perfectly fit any one specific dimension. Similar to their diversity, Black students' stories displayed the dynamic nature of climate and some findings could not be contained in a single dimension.

In order to appropriately pay homage to the narratives of Black students and lack of desire to constrain Black students' voices, this analysis crossed dimensions. The MMDLE shaped each of these findings. Those dimensions were the historical legacy of inclusion and inclusion, structural, compositional, behavioral, and psychological (Hurtado et al., 2012). The following themes shaped the findings: (a) manipulating ownership; (b) false interest in racial justice; (c) power in numbers; (d) divided we fall; (e) playing straight into their hands; and (f) crabs in a barrel. These crossing dimensions and themes helped inform the campus racial climate for Black students at SJSU.

Manipulating Ownership

Throughout the various dimensions in this previous chapter, participants discussed the ways in which they felt uncomfortable, unsafe, and tense. A lack of agency and control aided in

these feeling of disconnection. Connecting conversations across policies, safety, importance, and identity; participants felt disempowered and disenfranchised since enrolling. In this section, I discuss how SJSU manipulated participants into believing they lacked ownership at SJSU.

When participants detailed the rare spaces in which they felt connected, both the BCC and the MAO were named as potential safe havens. However, these two buildings indicated participants felt other spaces were not created for them. Because they did not feel like they belonged in classes or at work, participants felt they were guests in white peers' home (psychological). Black students believed spaces such as the campus green, student organizations, and work were made solely white students. SJSU quickly manipulated participants to show Black students their second-tiered place at the institution. Here, the structural practices of the institution coincided with the psychological aspects. With the institutional spaces being made exclusive through policy and practice (structural), participants were further driven to feeling a lack of belonging (psychological). While utilizing the space, Black students received the messaging that they were not fit to occupy the majority of the campus.

Participants demanded, and eventually received, rare spaces from the institution, but even those spaces were not created for all Black students, depending on the students' identities. Even the idea of the institution granting the space has complications. Black students fought to have these spaces "granted" to them; however, despite their efforts, these spaces were reserved to only certain types of Black students. James reminded his focus group, "the BCC, they created a safe space for Black people... but then it's BCC and they're still ignoring a lot of portions of what BCC represents, you know what I mean? Including like trans, and bis, and LGBTQ+AI." During a BSU meeting I attended, students went through an identity workshop. Those who identified as LGBTQ agreed with James's sentiments that the BCC has rarely been a space for queer students.

One attendee said, "I have to choose between being gay or Black in most parts of campus, and in here, I need to be Black." Participants were not only limited in spaces in which they felt welcomed, but some even lacked the ownership to claim all their identities if they wanted to survive in the space. Here, the historical legacy of the institution connected with the structural and compositional dimensions. As Black students combatted SJSU's history of white preservation, the institution employed their monolith view of Black students to maintain the dominance of whiteness at the university. In this case, giving a space that would only appeal to a group of Black students, while still ignoring a large portion.

As students described, often those who identify as queer lose an aspect of their Black identity when in certain spaces. Similarly, as depicted in the previous chapter, participants felt they lacked a sense of ownership over their Black identity, as well as their other identities (compositional and psychological). As participants codeswitched and took on characteristics of imposter syndrome (psychological), it became clear participants did not truly have full ownership of their identities. Participants were lost, unable to truly be themselves. Similarly, they described feeling like a monolithic group (compositional), lacking the ability to be more than Black. The small racial composition influenced Black students to feel they needed to change who they were in order to fit in and assimilate to the institution's normative whiteness. This allowed the university to manipulate ownership over the ways Black students understood their own bodies and identities. The composition, structure, and psychological dimensions culminated in Black students losing their identities and sense of self.

Earlier, participants described they felt a lack of control over many facets of the institution, whether it be spaces, policy, or representation. This lack to control also spanned to safety and security. Experiences like Ben Shapiro triggering and invalidating Black students

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(psychological), Anthony and Zay's fear to walk the streets during the night or the day (structural and psychological), or Kerry being followed home (structural and psychological) have made participants lose a control of safety. Kerry explained, "I was followed home once by two men.... I was going to take a safety drive, but the safety driver canceled on me...There was literally nobody out. All I remember doing is running." Safety and security, for participants, particularly Black women, were anything but assured. Safety became a form of property for – and only entitled to - white people. In this case, participants like Anthony, Zay, and Kerry's history with the institution taught them the daily practices of the institution was unsupportive of their presence. Fear became the most logical response. The campus, through decades of exclusion, was not created for them and, in turn, taught them to be afraid, run, and know that safety is a privilege reserved for whiteness at SJSU.

Black men developed a different sense of fear on SJSU's campus (psychological). With police brutality as a nationwide issue and Black men constantly being criminalized and killed, Black people were fearful everywhere. Specifically, this also led to Black students anticipating confrontations with the campus police due to the policy and procedures at SJSU. Zay explained, "I always try to have my ID in my hand just so if I get accosted or something, I have it to say 'I'm a student, like I go here, I pay tuition. I'm not somebody from off campus'" (structural). In these examples, participants lost ownership over their security and safety. The structure of the institution, myths of criminality, tied in with the psychological components of fear and unsafety manipulated Black students out of their sense of ownership. This overall ownership deficit led to the conclusion Black students were rarely granted power.

Previously, participants said it was a challenge to get in front of Black administrative leaders (BAL). Participants felt BAL, those close to power and decision making were

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inaccessible and those who were accessible were powerless (structural). By design, SJSU initiated a system where Black students were incapable of creating a relationship or connection with the university. Participants like Darius and Robinson questioned what these Black leaders were truly doing to advocating for their needs. Chris discussed students feeling "like they can't always necessarily get in to see the people who are running the initiatives, or they've tried to talk them, and they were just not felt like they were heard and listened to." Chris alluded that Black students have neither ownership over the decisions being made about their lives nor an ownership to even connect with those who are representing Black students' interests. Participants believed their numbers, compared to the abundance of white students (compositional), were indicative of how much voice and power they had at the university. Without an abundance and dominating force of Blackness, changes benefitting Black students become more challenging and the strength of SJSU's ownership is the silent consent (structural). As previously demonstrated, the university chooses silence over conversations about race. The small racial representation (compositional) and silence employed by the institution (structural) have led to participants feeling invalidated and unimportant (psychological).

Despite participants' disdain for the current environment at SJSU, they accepted it as their reality with little efforts to take down the system and reclaim an ownership over the school. Students accepted their situation, despite their dissatisfaction. After all, the history, structure, and composition showed Black students they could fight, but very little change would occur. They had limited allies (behavioral and compositional) and would have to take on an entity designed to protect itself from anything but whiteness (historical). By creating an environment where students have been deemed unimportant, SJSU stripped them of their ownership. Black students,

with little power, felt they lacked a voice within the institution, thus enabling SJSU to create a racial hierarchy with no interest in racial justice.

False Interest in Racial Justice

Diversity and inclusion have become buzzwords within SJSU. As participants indicated, SJSU created strategic plans and promotional materials regarding its diversity and inclusion; however, little change occurs. In this section, I demonstrate how SJSU had no genuine intention or interest in supporting Black students nor advancing racial justice. This disinterest led to Black students feeling distrustful and stereotyped.

As previously indicated, throughout SJSU's history, Black students fought for their right to be included at the institution. Black students protested when there were no spaces designated for them, no academic majors reflective of Black history, and the enrollment of Black students was desolate (historical). Today, the same issue occurs. It was by no accident that both in the 1960s and in 2018, Black students voiced their concerns over the lack of representation (compositional). As the university continued to promise more representation as it did in the 1960s, Black students still needed to fight for the right to be acknowledged. Looking through institutional data, although SJSU had claimed to work on increasing their diversity and inclusion, Black student enrollment has remained less than 6% or less for the past 12 years. Moreover, in 2018, the percentage of African American students enrolled was the exact same as 1976. The institution showed there was little concern regarding the population of Black students. The university had not seen change, displaying a false interest in racial justice. The institutional practices and policies (structural) kept the enrollment of Black students at a crawl (compositional).

As the institution spoke on their interest to be more inclusive and recruit more Black students (compositional), they also strove to become more competitive (structural). SJSU aimed to rise in the rankings and elevate their prestige. This determination to be seen as elite, only fueled competition and capitalism. This competitive practice led the institution to directly contradict the inclusivity with which they were tasked at their founding (historical). Instead, SJSU would rewrite their history to ensure whiteness was upheld and exclusivity was a part of the university structure. This institution was created to be a space of inclusion for all and, instead, found itself only looking to maintain their whiteness. SJSU became a selective institution going from averaging an ACT of less than 24 in 1997 to 20 years later, averaging above a 29. By this standard, the institution became increasingly inaccessible and less likely to admit those from populations with less financial opportunity (structural).

SJSU's obsession with elitism left them blinded by the reality that white students from wealthy areas would thrive at the institution, whereas Black students from lower socioeconomic status (SES) would flounder. While not all Black students came from low SES, a disproportionate number of Black students come from these lower SES areas. As the institution maintained a false interest in racial justice, they leaned into capitalism and encouraged a system of winners and losers. Institutional policies and practices, like admission criteria, further drove Black students away from the institution (structural), severely damaging the racial composition. With less Black students on campus, less attention was placed on resources devoted to Black student experiences, another example of the ways the policies and practices have informed the day-to-day operation of SJSU. SJSU's mission to become elite (structural) left Black students feeling unworthy of the institution (psychological). After all, white students had adopted the

history and messaging of the institution (historical/structural) and believed the only way a Black student could be admitted was through athletics (compositional) or affirmative action.

This false interest in diversity and inclusion was expressed through the way Black students were relegated to limited spaces on campus (structural). The university found a means to segregate Black students from the rest of the student body (behavioral). Considering Black students were distrustful of the institution after SJSU told them they would be valued and well represented (psychological and structural), Black students were unable to affirm the majority of the institution comfortable or safe. This showed SJSU had not intentionally created spaces for Black students to flourish and feel connected. Through the lack of intentionality, combined with how Housing segregated Black students through rated housing (structural), the university established a tendency to put Black students in their place, with shoddy accommodations and nowhere for Black students to belong (psychological) rather than furthering racial justice.

Black students who have other marginalized identities were forced into isolation and self-segregation (compositional and psychological). The university prided itself on the BCC and MAO as a space for Black students; however, this is not racial justice. These spaces served as a Band-Aid on a bullet wound, and instead, fooled others to believing Black students were given racial justice. As explained, space is the way individuals make meaning with an environment. Spaces were not just the comfort but the aesthetic, values, and meaning created by the individuals. SJSU orchestrated a space reflective of white values.

In the way that silence is complicity, a blank wall or empty classroom sent a message to Black students. Students wanted to see themselves in a space and gain an ownership over it. Walk into the BCC or the MAO and many Black students felt an openness to the space. They

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feel an appreciation for the artwork, reflective images of their experiences, see a mirror image of themselves through the administrators.

SJSU's attempts to create mirrors for Black students through BAL came with the misunderstanding that all skinfolk are kinfolk. SJSU, perceiving Black people as a monolithic group (compositional), believed that by hiring these BAL, racial issues could be fixed without any acknowledgments of the mounting problems. Instead of making radical changes to the institution, SJSU continued with their everyday racist practices (structural); in turn, helping maintain white dominance. The work to further racial justice would have distracted SJSU from maintaining their brand and revenue. Participants felt SJSU's had a false interest in diversity and inclusion, reinforcing distrust felt by Black students (psychological). Malaika summarized the thoughts of the Kerry, Anthony, and Asa when discussing how the university does not care about Black students. Malaika said, "as long as like the athletics are the same and people are graduating on time, they're not going to care."

Another way to identify this disinterest in racial justice was through the university's communication. These communications came in two forms. The first form was when participants mentioned the silence they felt when speakers like Ben Shapiro came to the institution (structural). Participants described how they felt like the university did not care about them (psychological). The university found comfort in silence as they were compliant by not speaking out against these racist speakers and racial instances. Even creating language around how these speakers did not reflect the values of the institution and there were resources available would have taken a stance supporting the feelings of Black students; however, this never occurred. Another example of this silent complicity was through the way SJSU responded to racialized events like the Charlottesville riots. Once again, the university chose a vague response nearly

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two weeks later because they did not care. The institution was more concerned about students getting their resources during a hurricane in the Midwest than about racism. SJSU used this silence to support their white students and maintain their power. This marginalization was intensified considering the ways crime alerts recreated notions of criminality of Black men.

In the 1990s, Black students gathered and protested, "No More Lies" after a white woman reported a false claim of being sexually assaulted by a Black man (historical). The university subsequently began questioning random Black men. 30 years later, this phenomenon of criminality existed today through crime alerts. The second form of a disinterest in racial justice, in terms of SJSU's communication, was through the use of crime alerts. The university never hesitated to send out information incriminating Black students. SJSU's hesitation showed the resistance to acknowledge Black students' strife and struggle, but also highlighted the comfort the institution felt confirming Black students as criminals. This fake and ingenuine interest in diversity and inclusion was further summarized by the structures of Black staff and administrators at SJSU.

In both cases of communication, the structural procedures of the institution led to Black students feeling psychologically drained and distrustful. The two dimensions further created a narrative that Black students were unworthwhile at the institution. It became easier to stereotype Black students as criminals or unimportant because there were so few Black students at the institution. This myth of criminality only lends to a more challenging time to create meaningful and trusting friendships with non-Black students (behavioral). This myth of criminality was something created and enforced decades prior to today, clearly still making its mark on students. White students become afraid of their Black peers, avoiding them, and Black students become

frustrated by white students' ignorance, self-segregating. All this resulted in SJSU maintaining power, regardless of the BAL.

SJSU's BAL structure convinced others to believe there was an interest in racial justice; however, SJSU kept top leaders busy and Black students left with the support of Black staff furthest from power, those working in areas such as housekeepers and facilities (compositional and structural). Black students even found themselves struggling with their white peers (behavioral), because white students would treat these Black staff members like trash. This structure acted like an illusion, a mirage of racial progress and advancement, but all the while whiteness reigned. While the BAL were left incapable of providing any aid to Black students, the staff, housekeepers and facilities, who were around further divided Black students from their peers (behavioral) because of the ignorance exhibited by whiteness and the common practices of the institution (structural). Despite the BAL (structural), Black student enrollment and Black faculty hiring remained stagnant (compositional), and BAL were set up to protect and preserve whiteness when necessary.

An example of BAL preserving whiteness was a couple years ago when a coach from the athletics department failed to follow procedures and policy. The Black director of athletics, unaware of the coach's transgression, came under fire. The white coach broke procedures but got off with a mild sentence. The Black director was investigated as well and faced a similar sentence as the coach. In the end, the Black president, President Echols took the worst of the public bashing. It was reported the president received hundreds of hate emails for the decisions to punish the coach. Additionally, the president received even more hate emails for not punishing the coach enough. This goes back to sentiments voiced by participants like Malaika, the institution cares more about the athletics than it does people, especially Black students. Mostly

the Black leaders, the president and athletic director, faced the consequences while whiteness continued to protect itself and individuals like the coach from losing their job. The BAL acted like the figureheads and puppets protecting whiteness and succumbing to the will of the institution.

Power in Numbers

A common expression is, "strength in numbers." It means that if there was a task that needed to be accomplished or a mission completed, others involved would lead to a greater likelihood of success. Instead, I purposely use the phrase "power in numbers" to highlight the structural power white supremacy holds over the lives of Black students. Through the disproportional composition of white students, Black students were isolated and alienated.

Participants discussed the challenges facing an abundant and dominating force of whiteness (compositional). Every turn taken, Black students felt devalued because they were unable to see themselves throughout campus (psychological). This dominating presence of whiteness empowered the institution to continue creating inhospitable and toxic environments for Black students. If Black students argued, the institution would be less likely to hear the concerns or pain of Black students due to this low composition. As discussed previously, BAL, the most likely to advocate for Black students were inaccessible and unwilling to meet with anyone who is not the BSU president or a specifically picked out token in the Black community. The practices of the university had encouraged those in leadership to only create relationships or check-in with Black students in particular roles (structural). As such, Black student leaders were placed into a tokenized and monolithic role and asked to represent the entirety of the institution (compositional).

This abundancy of white students (compositional) barraged Black students with exhausting mental racial battles regularly (psychological). Not only were Black students isolated from one another with no more than two or three Black people in class, but were surrounded by whiteness at every turn. In the classroom, Black students experienced microaggressions and invalidations (compositional); outside the classroom, they were stereotyped and literally shoved to the side (structural). Through this overwhelming whiteness, SJSU devised a way to ensure Black students were unable to gather, both with white and Black peers (behavioral), and create change. Historically, during protests, when Black students gathered and allied, their demands were considered, albeit begrudging. An effective way for SJSU to ensure Black students' needs were unmet was to ensure only whiteness engulfed them (compositional). Black students felt too disconnected from each other and surrounded only by white students. In this case, the small racial composition left Black students disregarded in terms of spaces as well as psychologically, with consistent racial conflicts. This small Black representation also helped whites weaponize stereotypes.

Creating falsehoods about Black students were easy because Black students were in the minority. These false narratives were strengthened by the monolithic beliefs of whites (compositional). Stereotypes would be more challenging to maintain if there was a greater representation of Black students because with the wider the variety, the more challenging it is to put a group in a box. However, since there was a limited racial representation, it became easier to reproduce the myth of Black criminality. Through an abundance of whiteness and isolated Black students, the institution used crime alerts (structural) and white academic inferiority myths (psychological) to reproduce notions of criminality and white academic superiority to further wedge Black students from engaging with the institution and taking an ownership of the school

(behavioral). These distractions kept Black students from seeing the real obstacles at SJSU and instead focused on avoiding stereotypes and using mental space to ensure they were perfect and top of the class (psychological).

SJSU found strength by limiting masses of Black students. Through low numbers, SJSU was able to limit the versatility and complicity of the Black student experience (compositional). SJSU treated Black students as a monolith (compositional) by limiting the variety of Black students on campus through admission policies and practices (structural). A reason why white people have not been stereotyped or pigeonholed by their identity is because white people have the privilege of being individualized whereas racial minorities do not. By robbing Black students of their individuality and multiple identities, white people stole their ability to be complex and dynamic. As seen in the previous chapter, participants recognized the complexity of Black people; however, the institution had no incentive to do so as the resources and support (structural) for Black students were built on the notion that Blacks were monolithic (compositional).

As SJSU forced a monolithic perspective upon Black students, students were forced to choose a specific aspect of their identity, ignoring multiple identities and intersectionality (compositional). For example, a Black woman accepting fewer resources because the university has not created tailored options for both being Black and a woman (structural). Instead, this bind has a Black woman accept only being Black or being a woman. The institution made it impossible to be viewed as an intersectional, as acknowledging intersectionality facilitates breaking down systems of oppression like whiteness, with which SJSU would directly conflict. I connect this concept to many women's marches where Black women are often forced into simply being a woman. If Black women refused to be relegated to one aspect of their identity, they were

unaccepted and are forced on the sideline, further strengthening patriarchy. Here, the institution becomes stronger by forcing Black people into only one aspect of their identity and erasing Black complexity.

SJSU devised a system where whiteness was protected and Black students were forsaken (historical and structural). This monolithic perspective resulted in Black students feeling divided (psychological), further limiting their power and collective strength. Instead of a united front, Black students argued amongst their own community, begging for their other identities to be acknowledged, once again dividing the Black community and granting SJSU, power in numbers (compositional). Black students found themselves divided and disconnected, with the ones most likely to help, Black employees, unable. The important connection between the composition, structure, and psychological responses by Black students is apparent.

SJSU was less likely to create resources and support services for Black students because of the lack of racial representation. As Black students were tokenized and seen as monolithic, the institution felt no need to acknowledge the different identities of Black students. This further empowered the institution to maintain the status quo in terms of institutional policies and procedures. Moreover, this status quo made Black students feel unwanted and distrustful of the institution, leading to a lack of belonging. This lack of belonging was also fueled by the poor representation of faculty, administration and staff.

SJSU created a system where Black students were unable to regularly interact with Black faculty and entry/mid-level administrators. Faculty and entry/mid-level administrators have been effectively silenced through their limited representation. While BAL were better represented, participants also discussed the lack of entry/mid-level administrators. In addition, staff like housekeepers and groundskeepers were in full supply, but unable to advocate for Black students.

While many BAL were viewed as unhelpful to Black students, participants described BAL as too busy preserving whiteness, as not all skinfolk were kinfolk (historical and compositional). Entry/mid-level administrators were situated away from Black students, thereby removing administrators' impact. Similarly, with only 110 Black faculty, Black students were challenged to find their mirrors, helping to decrease their feelings of belongingness (compositional and psychological). The Black faculty who did support Black students were burdened by the additional service work, making their jobs more tiring and demanding compared to their white peers. This scarce representation of faculty and entry/mid-level administrators expedited their burn out (structural).

To explain further, the practices and culture of the institution encouraged Black faculty and entry/mid-level professionals to devote their energy towards supporting Black students (structural). Because there were so few Black faculty and entry/mid-level administrators and such a harsh environment for participants (psychological), more Black students needed support. The invalidating environment created by SJSU left Black students searching for these faculty members and entry/mid-level, further fatiguing them. This additional energy devoted to Black students led administrators and faculty to invest more emotional and mental labor, leaving many tired out quicker than white employees (Allen, Epps, Guillory, Suh, & Bonous-Hammarth, 2000). As these Black employees quickly left, feelings of unsupportiveness and disconnection reproduced amongst Black students (psychological), especially compared to their white peers. All the while, the university reported having a large racial variety of university employees. However, a disproportional number of these employees were Black staff, deprived of power. The university used this to manipulate the facts, making it seem like SJSU cared about diversity without making any positive changes.

Another way SJSU benefitted from maintaining low representations of Black faculty and entry/mid-level administrators (compositional) was the guidance they could provide Black students. Accessible faculty and entry/mid-level administrators have the ability to support and help advocate for Black students by modeling the way. However, the institution has also limited the unity amongst these Black employees. Participants like Hannah, Robinson, and Casey found the Black faculty and entry/mid-level administrators have no Black support group or coalition. Staff were not even a part of the conversation as the university has divided them and treated them as unworthy trash. The university never provided an opportunity or interest in such a group (structural). Participants were shocked by the lack of a professional Black community. Administrator and faculty participants believed these types of support groups would be helpful to navigate the challenges posed at SJSU. Once again, by keeping the numbers of Black faculty low and Black administrators inaccessible, the institution maintained their power. Rather than the professional Black community leading by example with a united and supportive front, SJSU kept the professional Black community weak and tired, unable to help Black students gather and fight back against their racial challenges.

The racial composition of the university influenced the strength and power of white supremacy at SJSU. SJSU effectively kept Black people in a place where they would never have a united front, nor the numbers to create racial change. As SJSU divided the Black community, the institution reinforced its power by limiting Black students' belief they could create change. The institution made it nearly impossible to challenge the system when Black students were overwhelmed by whiteness with little support to fight back.

Divided We Fall

SJSU protected itself from any significant advancements from racial justice. This self-preservation was upheld by ensuring Black students felt they had nowhere to turn and no support. This was clarified as the institution kept their front-line forces of support, Black faculty and entry/mid-level administrators, out of reach or commission. However, inaccessible BAL were not the only way Black students were isolated. The institution also turned one of their most powerful potential allies against them, white people. SJSU maintained power by creating an environment so engulfed in division that Black and white students avoided creating cross-racial friendships. Through this division, Black students were incapable of making potential allies to advance racial justice.

SJSU had no interest in Black and white students creating friendships. In the past, when various Black groups came together and fought for equality, there was a chance some change may come. However, every time white people collaborated with Black students, as the holders of power and privilege, things escalated quickly and attracted national attention. SJSU was created to preserve whiteness but when white students combatted the institution, the institution faced internal turmoil. When the institution and the student body the institution was designed to preserve, white people, come into this conflict, something has to give, and in the past, it is often the institution. SJSU needed to find a way to limit Black advancement and saw division as an option to facilitate this limitation.

An effective way to divide Black and white students was to literally separate them. As discussed earlier, Black students only felt connected in specific parts of campus. This division worked in two ways; the first was to relegate Black students to a limited number of spaces (structural). By putting Black students in a corner of the university, they would be less likely to

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venture out and create relationships (behavioral). The second division tactic was to make those

spaces seem like they only served those populations (structural). This meant making spaces like

the BCC or MAO only serve Black students and other marginalized identities. Similarly, the

MAO may seem as if white people were not allowed to enter the space unless they fit the office's

mission. This form of division effectively assured white students would not venture into spaces

created with Black people in mind (behavioral). Cynthia, who worked with campus tour guides,

delineated the discomfort white tour guides felt discussing non-white spaces. Cynthia explained:

> We made the MAO and BCC a mandatory stop on campus tours. That was probably the
>
> piece that we had the biggest pushback on, because people didn't really know how to talk
>
> about those things. What I heard from a lot of folks was that, well, 'if I don't see someone
>
> who looks like they need those services, then I just don't talk about it.'

Even university tour guides struggled with seeing the space outside of people of color because of

the university design. Here the university's silence about inclusion informed white students that

race was an unimportant topic that could easily be avoided (structural). This also bred a distrust

of white students (psychological) by Black students as participants described feeling as if their

white peers had no interest in creating relationships or getting to know their experiences

(behavioral)

During observations of meetings and programs in the BCC, the room would be filled

with anywhere between 30 and 130 people. The most white people in attendance was one, if any

at all (behavioral). This division of space also appeared in residence life through their rated

housing and learning communities. In the past, the Black learning community used to be in the

lowest rated housing, the worst conditions, where those with the least financial privilege were

able to live. While most white students lived in rate one and two housing, those who identified as

working class were forced away from those with more financial means (structural). Those with more financial opportunities were more like to be white, once again, separating those with power and those with none (structural and behavioral).

This division of spaces also affirmed with white people that most spaces on campus were created for them. As white students occupied nearly every space with a critical mass, they developed a dangerous ownership of the institution, leaving Black students cautious to utilize common spaces. In this housing example, it can be seen that the structural aspects of the institution align with the compositional and behavioral dimensions. With Black students literally divided by buildings, the racial representation of Black students is even easier to hide and separate from white students. Another step towards division was to stratify the Black and white students.

SJSU created a system of winners and losers, of haves and have nots. SJSU developed a hierarchy with white people being viewed as intelligent, hardworking, and trustworthy, and Black students, the opposite. In the study, participants explained how their voices and experiences were silence and ignored (psychological). This quickly taught white students who was valued and who was not. Further, SJSU employed a culture of fear mongering and mythmaking to stereotype Black students (structural). Through the use of crime alerts, Black students were made to look like violent criminals. Through this process, white students feared and avoided Black students. Once white students believed they were virtuous, smart, and valued, there was no reason for them to get to know their counterparts. The shallow relationships with Black and white students were fostered by false Black myths. Once again, the structure of the institution tied in with the psychological, leading to Black students' inability to connect with white students and create networks to further justice.

Black students recognized the hierarchy created by SJSU (structural), and in turn, the disparities between themselves and white students. In response, Black students were also uninterested in being treated like second class citizens. Black students approached white students with distrust and little interest in getting to know them, as well (psychological). This toxic cross-racial friendship making process led to Black students further self-segregating (behavioral). Although they were already relegated to specific parts of campus and filled with distrust, this reconfirmed that spaces like the MAO and BCC (structural), and the non-present or inaccessible Black employees were all they had (compositional), solidifying a vicious cycle. This self-employed isolation acted as a necessary form of protection (psychological), but also reinforced the institution's power, cementing the manipulation and control of Black students all the easier.

By creating this stereotypical, dangerous, and stupid Black person, white students saw Black people as subhuman (structural). The small number of Black students assisted white students come to this conclusion, as well (compositional). SJSU racist narrative was only strengthened by the monolithic viewpoints established by the institution (compositional). The increased interactions and engagements would make stereotyping more difficult; however, the institution kept these enrollment numbers low to prevent this option (behavioral and compositional). Instead, the university made Black people scarce in numbers and in positions to serve whites, such as positioning most Black staff members in housing and facility roles (structural and compositional).

The final feat of division employed by SJSU was the distraction that Black students alone could create change. Although some small changes may be enacted by Black students entering white spaces or majority white organizations (MWO), participants described feeling mentally and emotionally depleted by these interactions (psychological). Participants joined the MWOs to

facilitate change but instead became the tokens (compositional), furthering white supremacy at the institution. White students were able to parade their token Blacks in diversity and inclusion committees and the university marketing materials (structural and compositional); all the while, Black students were lined up to slaughter. The exact change Black students were hoping to create also sharpened the knife to their own destruction. Their mental and emotional destruction in the end (psychological), only empowered SJSUs, as their aim was keeping Black students divided and weak.

Playing Straight Into their Hands

Black students endured challenge after challenge at SJSU. The barrage of racism and invalidations made Black students feel exhausted and unappreciated. As participants described their feelings and responses to racial incidents, it became clear they were falling into the hands of structures of white supremacy. This was achieved in two methods. The first disempowerment method was through creating environment of unworthiness. The second method was facilitating a crab mentality on Black students.

The first step of weakening Black students' resolve was by unacknowledging their experiences and identities. The universities' silence around racial incidents like Shapiro and the Charlottesville rally let participants know their feelings were unimportant (structural and psychological). The silence showed the university was unwilling to jump in on race relations. The university had made a point to remain silent; this structural practice led to the invalidation of Black students (psychological). Although this silence was important, it was not always the way the university responded to incidents around race. An example of the university responding to a racial topic was to preserve whiteness. In 2017, a SJSU administrator-ally said, during a MAO workshop, only white people can be racist. SJSU quickly responded that this was not the position

of the institution. SJSU continued to comment, "nor is it the position of the university that white people cannot be victims of racism" (structural). The university showed during racial incidents whiteness must be preserved while Black students were ignored and unvalued (historical, psychological, and structural). Here, institutional practices showed Black students how institutional silence only took place when you are Black, but white people should be defended and exempt.

As Black students felt undervalued and harassed (psychological), they responded by retreating to their places of protection (structural), leaving the institution, or changing the way they act to conform towards whiteness. As Black students began adapting to whiteness, they lost aspects of who they were (psychological). Participants described how they were losing pieces of themselves in order to fit in with their peers (behavioral). The constant pressure and overwhelming whiteness surrounding Black students made it nearly impossible for them to remain authentic because in this case (psychological), authenticity is privileged and owned by whites. Instead, Black students would "shuck and jive", as Vaylani described, to locate a sense of success, despite the costs. Regardless, SJSU still won.

SJSU maintained power and manipulated Black students into turning into unrecognizable versions of themselves. This code-switching survival mechanism reproduced feelings of unworthiness (psychological), further distancing Black students from white students (behavioral) and SJSU. Participants felt too tired, frustrated, and disconnected to advocate for themselves. Often, when Black students fought, it was in-group conflicts.

Crabs in a Barrel

Limited resources breed a system of competition and comparison. The winners, rewarded the spoils,, and the losers, scraps. This has defined capitalism in the United States and power

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structure at SJSU. Whites have been rewarded authenticity, spaces, resources, and safety whereas

Black students have been left with scraps. SJSU facilitated an environment where this

competition thrives on inner-community conflict. Black students were relegated to combat one

another for resources like crabs in a barrel. This metaphor originated from the concept of a crab

mentality. If the crabs organized and helped each other while trapped in a barrel or bucket, they

would escape their demise. Instead of collaborating, crabs pull each other down. Similarly, Black

students have competed with one another, dragging each other down, preventing their

collaborative success. SJSU produced an environment where group conflict has distracted Black

students from furthering racial justice.

A method for SJSU to maintain power without challenge was the creation of a hierarchy.

SJSU created a system where some Black students were treated slightly better than others. As a

result, those who disperse resources become hated because they were denied by other Blacks

rather than the institution. Throughout this section, the ways in which SJSU created a racial

hierarchy will be examined to understand the ways Black students were divided, helping SJSU

maintain power.

Slavery illustrated this concept. Some slaves were given a role beneath the overseer,

referred to as drivers (Koger, 2010). These drivers were given more power and supported the

overseer; however, at the end of the day, was a slave. These drivers became tools for whites and

were persuaded with the illusion of power, yet never fully grasping it. Drivers were resented by

fellow slaves and were still viewed as objects by their captors. While extreme, today, there has

become a similar notion of dividing power to maintain supremacy. Resources were allocated to

certain groups or groups of people, creating internal resentment (structural). These limited

resources have led Casey to believe, "at SJSU, the Black students are not super supportive of one another" (psychological).

Earlier, Kerry discussed the lack of resources for Black women compared to Black men (compositional and structural). In a system of haves and haves not, regardless of their limited power, internal dispute and resentment is the outcome. This intraracial competition distracts from the actual challenge. Rather than focusing on the role of the university to create the necessary resources for Black women, SJSU left students to compete amongst themselves. SJSU, without comparison, needed to provide the necessary resources required for Black women to be successful. SJSU may begin by looking at the opportunities given to Black men, but also consider the ways in which Black women's identities creates a different experience and ensure the appropriate support. Instead, individuals compare and compete rather than holding the institution accountable. SJSU's refusal to equitable create and distribute resources has fostered a competitive environment within the Black community, only hurting Black students and protecting whiteness.

Another instance of this internal fighting dealt with the structure of the BSU. This organization has funds from the university's budget, unlike any other majority Black student groups (structural). Taylor explained the differences to BSU's finances. She explained, "SJSU doesn't give us necessarily the resources... BSU gets so much funding, but I've been in NAACP and the Young Africans Club (YAC), we have to beg for funding. They think giving money to one Black organization is enough" (compositional). Rather than fully acknowledging the role the university has put these students through, the attention shifts towards BSU.

BSU has been given the responsibility to allocate their funds to other organizations. This gave BSU control over allocating money for programming (structural). Responsibilities like

these led to resentment towards BSU (psychological). Groups like YAC found this problematic.

Casey explained the dynamic between the two:

> BSU is pretty largely funded, and of course YAC is not. I don't know if anyone is sponsoring them or if they just have to fundraise outside of their student activities, the money that they get. But ours is through the university, so of course, we get a good amount of funds, and so we do sponsorships and collaborations. And so again, they don't get along. YAC will send a request form, they may not send it in correctly in the right format, and just assume that it's going to get approved. And so, the board will decide whether or not it's something that they want to approve. And so again, that can create friction, but then if YAC is asking for $3,000, we're not giving them $3,000. And so, when you give them their response, and like, "Okay, we can give you $500," what does that look like? And so generally they're not super happy with that.

As the ones who dispersed the money, BSU was the target of frustration because they did align with the requesting organization's request. Rather than blame the university for this inconsistent structure, BSU becomes the target of frustration. This tension between the two of the largest Black majority groups has not been limited to funding.

Two political areas of the university have been the ways an institution allots spending and distributing space (structural). At SJSU, both YAC and BSU meet at the same time, day, place. Although they both support Black students, they have definitively decided they will have no overlap between those who identify as Black and African, reproducing SJSU's monolithic myth (compositional). As stated previously, ownership over space has been politicized. BSU has been awarded the BCC's largest room, the best A/V, and a stage. YAC, with a similar number of attendees, has been given a classroom that fits 40 in the BCC (structural and compositional). In

addition, as SJSU has ignored the differences between ethnicities amongst the Black students,

Black students also ended up forgoing the importance of this identity. The messiness of race and

ethnicity ended with Black students acknowledging important differences amongst each other.

This BSU exceptionalism and the lack of acknowledgement of ethnic differences further created

rifts between them and YAC.

For the past two years, BSU and YAC have been trying to fix their rift. Barry explained,

"they had a dialogue and it didn't turn out the way that it should've been and there were some

harsh feelings between our African students, YAC and BSU, and we're still trying to patch that

up." Considering the "limited" resources, both space and funding, organizations have been

forced to compete with one another. Rather than holding the institution accountable for their lack

of space and funding options, groups combat BSU, further wedging any Black community, and

strengthening the institution. While these student organizations have fought, the university

thrives with ample money. With two of the largest Black student organizations left fighting, it

distracts from the bigger fight to be had.

This tension was not limited to BSU and YAC, but also extended to the attention of the

institution. Earlier, it was mentioned the BSU's president was given at least three instances to

have sit down meetings with the SJSU president. In a leadership position representing all Black

students, BSU president is given all the opportunities (structural and compositional). As

participants described the inaccessible BAL, they also discussed how unfair it was for groups

like BSU to get all the attention. Similarly, the marketing and communications often gear

students near the university's investment (structural), leaving other organizations spiteful of

BSU's platform. Kayla wished the university would "promote organizations other than BSU." As

BSU has been given all the attention, money, and space, the university has provided itself a

scapegoat from having to concern themselves with frustrated and unheard Black students (psychological).

Institutional practices and policies (structural) led to black students experiencing an environment with limited resources. Limited, in this case, meaning limited for Black students. By creating an environment with fine resources, Black students, who already psychologically felt unimportant and unseen, wanted to ensure they had something to call their own. Because of these feelings, Black students did whatever they could to get support services. The institution manipulated this desire by creating a monolithic narrative, meaning that all Black students would want the same thing. As a result, Black students fought within their own community to be acknowledged; however, some groups were privileged amongst others. This structural hierarchy reinforced many of the Black students' feelings of unimportance. Due to all these factors, the monolithic narrative, finite support services, and feelings of unimportance, Black students adopted a crab mentality to survive, despite any pain it may have caused other Black students.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was twofold. First, I analyzed the dimension-based findings in the previous chapter to better identify the overall campus racial climate for Black students Second, I connected the dimensions of the MMDLE in order to better understand the ways in which SJSU has manipulated and disenfranchised their Black students. In the next chapter, I explain further what the campus racial climate is for Black students at SJSU in relation to previous literature, and what this study offers in terms of its contributions and implications.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

The previous chapters presented the findings, describing and analyzing the experiences of Black students at a four-year, research 1 PWI, which was also uniquely situated as what I called a Social Justice Serving Institution (SJSU). This investigation was framed by the Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). Through observation, artifact collection, interviews, and focus groups, I developed findings to discern the racialized experiences of Black students at SJSU. These results connected to the MMDLE's historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion, structural, compositional, behavioral, and psychological dimensions of SJSU (Hurtado el al., 2012), with findings crossing amongst the dimensions.

In this chapter, I first summarize the findings and relate them to the research questions, framed by the dimensions of the MMDLE: a) What historical aspects of the institution informed contemporary climate for Black students?; (b) How did the institutions' policies and practices influence Black students' experiences with the racial climate?; (c) How did the racial composition of the university inform the campus racial climate?; (d) What did the cross-racial interactions look like for Black students and their peers?; and (e) How did students respond to racial interactions? In doing so, I propose a summary of each of the five dimensions framed by the MMDLE. Next, I provide a discussion regarding the study and link the importance of the study in relation to the literature on Black students and PWIs. Having offered a discussion of the findings, I then articulate limitations of the study. After, I move towards providing recommendations for practice, policy, and research. I end with recommendations for students and final thoughts.

Summarizing the Findings

In this section, in an attempt to respond to the sub-research questions informing what the campus racial climate is for Black students at SJSU, I summarize the findings from the previous chapter. The following sections were framed to address the sub-questions provided earlier.

Historical Legacy: To the Victor Goes the Spoils

Throughout the study, it became clear the historical legacy of exclusion and inclusion had been lost to participants. Students rarely discussed SJSU's legacy. Despite the limited historical discussion by student participants, the racial history of SJSU holds lasting impacts on the climate. By SJSU masking its history, it further strengthened the control on Black students. Participants' unawareness gave SJSU the power to fool Black students into believing their challenges were isolated events and not a structural problem. In this case, the spoils, context and power, provided SJSU two methods to maintain dominance. The first, the ability to learn from past failures to protect whiteness. The second, in the eyes of the institution, creating an ignorant Black student.

In SJSU's history, Black students fought for racial progress and the university resisted. This resistance against racial progress was an attempt to protect and preserve whiteness. Through these exchanges between the groups, SJSU learned from past encounters and adapted to maintain dominance. Any time the institution conceded power, SJSU responded by creating regulations and policies, like the group disruption policy, to ensure Black voices were silenced in the future. The institution used the past as a guide to limit Black students' interactions, stymying unity with white students. SJSU regained power by taking ownership of the history and finding new ways to squash Black students' dissatisfaction. For example, rather than racial profiling like in the 1990s, the institution used policies to enforce the racial stereotypes of criminality. SJSU's historical

legacy of exclusion acted as a guide to continue to dismantle Black unity and racial progress. Whiteness protected whiteness which was initiated by learning from the past.

In the case for Black students, those unaware of history are doomed to repeat it. The second way SJSU maintained dominance was through facilitating unawareness of its history, particularly for a Black student. Hearing from faculty and staff participants and reviewing historical documents showed that the struggles Black students faced back over 50 years ago were very similar to today. Participants advocated for space, money, and representation, echoing demands from the past. While SJSU used its history as a map to oppression, Black students were left unaware of this history, limiting their strategies for progress. For example, when Black students protested in the 1960s, they were able to receive additional resources and support. In response, the institution created a policy that made gathering and protesting against the rules. This, in turn, resulting in Black students getting suspended two years later. SJSU found a way to use the history to silence unrest.

The historical dimension's history has often made itself seem as inclusive and dedicated to Black students' experience; however, with a racial lens, the history was exposed as racialized and discriminatory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). SJSU has marketed itself as a space as welcoming for all students, but the institution only looked to preserve whiteness and maintain power. Through CRT's revisionist history, it became clear that the institution worked out of self interest in the past to uphold the status quo (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) rather than advocate or provide care for Black students. Each time Black students were "granted" a new resource (e.g. academic major or the BCC), the institution would proudly exclaim all the progress they have made for other Black students rather than tell the true history, that Black students had to come together to fight back against the racist and hostile environment.

In the end, the institution believed the narrative it created regarding Black students. SJSU bought into their racist belief that Black students were unintelligent and lazy; however, Black students showed the ability to counter this narrative when they have united and fought against these white ideologies. Afraid of this power, the history was kept silent. The spoils, context and power, were held back from Black students, keeping them docile and weak.

Structural Dimension: You Are On Your Own

SJSU approached Black students' experience with indifference and a false interest in inclusion. The university fooled their various stakeholders, particularly Black students, with fake concern. This was clarified when discussing how the university positioned itself and Black students. On a day-to-day basis, SJSU created an environment poised to disenfranchise Black students. Whether it was the spaces, access to Black administrative leaders (BAL), policies, or university responses to racial incidents, participants were confronted with university facilitated racism and apathy. In the end, while white students had support, facilities, and access to mentors, Black students were on their own.

SJSU promised to strive for inclusivity; however, the institution instead found ways to ensure Black students had to navigate racism without any help, upholding the status quo. Rather than creating inviting spaces and encouraging Black students to explore and appreciate their identities, the institution focused on revenue. Rather than addressing a speaker spewing hate speech, SJSU responded with silence. Instead, SJSU found strength creating positions with Black administrative leaders to trick others into believing the institution has a stake in diversity and inclusion.

This false interest in inclusion for Black students has resulted in feelings of disconnection from the university administration, as they were unable to receive support. SJSU's fake concern

has also led to Black students feeling unsafe or terrified about being profiled as they move about campus. Finally, the neglect of racial justice led to Black students feeling disconnected from nearly every campus space. Participants came to recognize they were less important than the university's reputation, graduation rates, athletics, and white students. The institution approached Black students with hostile interactions and made sure they were on their own to figure out how to deal with the aftermath. When Black students had to figure it out, they had to do it with limited spaces to feel connected, a lack of accessible BAL, and while feeling criminalized and unsafe at every turn. These feelings of dejection and invalidations empowered the institution to continue the status quo and further divide Black students.

Compositional Dimension: Way More than a Number

A common higher education phrase is, "you are more than a number" as a way to show each student matters. In this case, SJSU seemed to be manipulating the racial composition to ensure Black students do not matter and limit their influence. Participants were overran by the whiteness engulfing the institution, whether it be students, staff, or faculty. Rather than the ability to see those who looked like themselves, Black students were overwhelmed by the racial composition. Here, Black students' treatment linked to the composition, as this section highlighted the importance of representation for Black students and the campus racial climate.

Stereotyping and isolating participants was much easier because of the pitiful Black student population. Rather than a robust Black student representation, the university ensured Black students were unable to unite together. By employing a monolithic ideology on Black students, Black students' identities and ability to be authentic were confined. As whiteness dominated the campus, Black students were left to codeswitch and be unauthentic to be viewed as legitimate. The composition also limited the amount of ownership Black students felt with the

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institution. As most of the university was ran by white people, Black students felt they lacked the ability to claim ownership of the university.

Another important aspect of the racial composition was its influence on other dimensions of the university. It was easier for SJSU to create stereotypes and notions of incompetence with a small Black student body. One of the most important aspects of the influence of the racial composition was the establishment and distribution of resources. With such a small Black population, the institution was empowered to nullify multiple identities treating Black students as monolithic. In particular, the composition also played a role in the process of creating friendships for Black and white students.

Behavioral Dimension: Proceed with Caution

I sought out to learn about Black students' cross-racial interactions. I found participants were hesitant to create friendships with white students. Some participants were able to create relationships with their white peers. In cases like these, those who connected with white students did so by ensuring their peers were culturally conscious and aware of their power, privilege, and oppression. When Black students created relationships with white students, they proceeded with caution as the institution had constructed a distrustful, racially charged environment. Most participants were uninterested in creating relationships with white students, citing their shallow interactions or whiteness that made it difficult.

When describing student organization experiences, Black students were often relegated to the least important roles, ignored, or tokenized. Friendships occurred similarly. Rather than developing meaningful and intentional relationships, participants felt white students were uninterested in them. Only those with other marginalized identities or an awareness of their privilege were seemingly able to gain participants' trust. Some participants found engaging with

majority white organizations (MWOs) to be meaningful as they aimed to change the group. The resources and opportunities in the organization were unfairly granted to white members and participants found it to be their mission to reclaim the space. Although students may not have enjoyed being with these MWOs, they were driven to ensure Black students had the same opportunities as white students.

I argue this inability for Black students to create a relationship with white students was in part designed by the institution. SJSU benefitted from division and limited cross-racial interactions. SJSU feared cross-racial friendships as white students held the power necessary to disrupt the hostile racial climate. Whiteness benefitted from Black students having division and limited cross-racial interactions. The pervasiveness of racism, as well as SJSU's colorblind approach with Black students (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), left the institution unaware of the challenges of cross-racial friendships. Instead of assisting with breaking down racial barriers, like microaggressions, the institution did nothing, believing each collegiate experience is the same. Additionally, no actions were taken whenever negative racialized messaging came out from the institution. Once again, the whiteness normalized these negative racial narratives and made them ordinary to whites (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Due to this unawareness and indifference, participants proceed with caution to create relationship with white students with most finding the process tedious and unworthwhile.

White students accepted SJSU's negative narratives of Black students and actively avoided creating meaningful relationships with them. The institution had put no real effort into educating students on their power, privilege, and oppression, further ensuring white and Black students' friendships was limited. The friendship process was severely damaged once both Black

and white students found the other to be either unworthy or unaware. Due to this negative process, most participants found the cross racial friendship process to be tiring and pointless.

Psychological Dimension: My Own Worst Enemy

Participants discussed at length the frustrations and difficulties they faced while attending SJSU. Not only were their safety and trust compromised, but Black students began competing with one another for resources and acknowledgment. I argue, Black students became their own worst enemies in response to racial incidents by intraracial competition and falling into the university's trap to willingly seclude themselves.

As the university and white students barraged Black students with invalidations, Black students began retreating into safe or counter spaces. As the institution relegated Black students towards limited spaces, Black students also wanted freedom from the abundant and dominating whiteness throughout SJSU's campus that had left them feeling a lack of belongingness and distrustful. Black students reasonably needed these counter spaces as a reprieve; SJSU wanted them isolated. In this case, Black students and SJSU's interests converged, granting Black students an opportunity for temporary solace (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015) while simultaneously allowing university to continue their current racist practices with Black students out of sight. Black students began noticing the institution treated some Black students better than others. Rather than holding the institution accountable for the differing treatment, intergroup fighting occurred instead.

Black students, desperate and worn out because of the distrustful environment, began looking to blame each other rather than the institution. Black students seemed disinterested in learning more about how ethnicities have influenced their experiences at SJSU and instead, reproduced the institution's ideology of ignoring ethnic identity. Black students compared their

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own experiences with other Black students without considering the ethnic identities and began getting frustrated about the differences amongst each other. This crab mentality led to infighting; a symptom of the white supremacy pervasive within the institution. Rather than acknowledging their differences, learning more about the complexities of Blackness, and joining hands with their Black peers, they turned on each other. Black students turned to in-group fighting, falling into the hands of white dominance and becoming their own worst enemy.

Discussion of Findings Related to the Literature

As seen with Chapter 4 and 5, there were a number of emerging themes related to answering the research question and sub questions of the study. The theoretical framework, Multi-Contextual Model of Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE), provided a guide and lens to better understand how Black students at SJSU engaged with institution. The literature review in Chapter 2 highlighted the many challenges Black students have faced during their time in college, providing a context to and rationale for the study.

When specifically reviewing the literature on undergraduate Black students attending PWIs, there were many findings that aligned with previous research regarding Black collegians, as well as new themes and ideas that emerged, as well. This section focuses on the following areas of scholarship that were most relevant in demonstrating how this research was or was not consistent to previous literature. The three sections of literature will include: (a) the relationships between Black students and their peers; (b) how Black students internalized the institution; and (c) perceptions of the institutional environment. These three areas also addressed the research question of what the campus racial climate for Black students is.

The Relationship between Black students and their Peers

Throughout conversations with participants, most felt their relationships with white students left them feeling unheard, silenced, and frustrated. Within student involvement experiences, Black students found themselves typecast as the diversity and inclusion tokens. Participants described feeling uncomfortable in majority white organizations (MWO), many choosing to avoid them rather than engage with them. As institutions say they encourage engagement between racial groups, these findings pointed to a different conclusion. Participants contradicted the notions that PWI displayed, that cross racial friendships and involvements were taking place all the time. Many participants preferred Black organizations as a respite from whiteness. Participants like Jimmy, Michelle, and Donovan expressed the cultural connections they felt in Black majority organizations unlike with MWO. Park (2014) found similar themes as Black students gravitated to Black organizations as a way to find comfort from MWOs and, specifically, white students. Similarly, Strayhorn (2011) established Black students felt an increased sense of belonging and persistence when participating in cultural organizations.

Despite the pain Black students experienced in these MWOs, participants like Jason, Anthony, and Kerry described attempting change within the organization. While this theme was consistent with the works of Harper (2009), there was a difference between the two studies. Harper (2009) found Black students aimed to create counternarratives to how Black students were viewed, aiming to dismantle stereotypes. In this study, participants described two reasons for joining the organization. The first reason was Black students joined MWOs to create change for other Black students. They wanted to intervene in the dominating whiteness in the MWOs. Participants made no mention of the stereotypes of Black students but wanted to assist in dismantling whiteness in MWOs. The second reason participants wanted to create change in

MWOs was to gain ownerships over the resources MWOs possessed. As MWOs were resource rich in participants' eyes, participants wanted access to those resources. Participants felt compelled to create change with their peers and organizations as they wanted to create a more positive organizational experience for future members or reap the benefits that MWOs typically hold. These two differing reasons served as an addition to the literature.

This research was important to understand the reasoning behind why Black students want or do not want to engage with MWOs. Little research has dealt with Black students' engagement with MWOs. Understanding the reasons why Black students wanted to engage with MWOs, not solely because of an interest, shows a new understanding of the motives of Black students. Instead of pretending Black students aimed for cross racial involvement experiences, Black students wanted to create change for future Black students to ensure a more equal and equitable campus environment. It was also important to recognize that participants shared their frustrations, disrespect, and lack of belonging in these MWO, similar to the findings of Sutton and Kimbrough (2001).

While some participants were able to engage with their white peers, most felt an ease creating friendships with Black students and struggled with white students. Literature suggested similarly, where there was a preference of same race friendships for racial groups, including Black students (Bowman, 2012). While these Black friendships were typically made with ease, many found white students were a different story, citing only shallow friendship or nonexistent ones. This racial avoidance was often connected to the prejudice and racist perceptions white students held. These hesitations for cross racial interactions and friendships were echoed by the findings of Case and Hunter (2012). Black students established a disinterest and easy avoidance to white students. Specifically, Case and Hunter (2012) discussed how counterspaces serve as an

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adaptive response to oppression from whiteness. Similarly, Park (2012) and Martin, Tobin, and Spenner (2014) found Black students described no pressure or obligation by the institution to create these cross racial interactions between Black and white students. To the contrary, it appeared the institution gained power from keeping these racial groups separate while maintaining the illusion of racial integration (Saichaie, Hevel, & Morphew, 2012).

The uniqueness of this study comes from participants describing shallow friendships with white students. Participants found keeping things shallow while with white students adds to and complicates previous literature. Research from Park and Kim (2013) as well as Park and Bowman (2014), describe the ways student organizations and structural interactions influenced cross racial friendships. Park and Bowen (2014) discussed how positive interracial attitudes promote cross racial friendships. Park and Kim (2013) found the diversity of an institution has a positive relationship on developing cross racial friendships. This study's findings questioned how racial groups describe these friendships. More specifically, these findings called into question the meaningfulness of these relationships and questioned, if there was a lack of trust within the friendships, should this be considered a friendship at all? Participants not only discussed the distrust they have felt towards white students, but elaborated that many times these "friendships" were shallow in nature.

While participants voiced their concerns with creating relationships with white students, their Black peers on an individual level were easier to build bonds with. Black students spoke about how they felt they lacked the composition to feel connected to SJSU. Some participants purposely kept themselves away from white students because of the overwhelming mass of whiteness surrounding them. This also attributed to reasons why participants avoided MWOs and interacting with white students. These findings were supported by the works of Griffin,

Cunningham, and George Mwangi (2016). Griffin et al. found Black students felt the institution was racially uniform, separated, and unwelcoming. Similar to research by Martin, Tobin and Spenner (2014), participants described a majority of their friends were Black and they surrounded themselves with other Black students. Participants leaning towards other Black students aligned with the works of Case and Hunter (2012) who found same race friendships made avoiding racist attitudes more likely. What departed from literature, like Martin, Tobin and Spenner, as well as Case and Hunter, was the internal conflicts taking place in SJSU's Black community.

Participants displayed tendencies of competing with other Black students, and rather than working together to achieve solutions, they would blame each other, with the most privileged group bearing the brunt of the frustrations. For example, many Black customs in the United States tilt towards African American experiences as opposed to other Black ethnic groups. Rather than the more privileged Black student or Black group, allying and advocating to create change, they took on the crab mentality. These findings were consistent with the works of clinical psychologist Taylor (2015). Taylor (2015) discussed how this crab mentality has damaged the relationships amongst Black America. Further, he detailed the salvation of Black America starts with a united front. Limited empirical research exists regarding this crab mentality but there has been documented cases by Jaschik (2017) where Black students at Cornell protested the institution for admitting more first-generation immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean and counting them as Black but not considering the number of African Americans. The stories and tension of Cornell were similarly described by Black students at SJSU, as well.

Finally, this study revealed the lack of responsibility the institution has put on itself to facilitate cross racial relationships. Rather than situating Black students in environments where

friendships were more likely, the institution created systems limiting the interactions between racial groups. This was seen through the use of spaces and a lack of meaningful opportunities to break down barriers and engage in discussions about power, privilege, and oppression. Similar to research by Bowman and Park (2014), participants described the cultural competence of white students to be an important indicator to create these relationships. However, at SJSU, participants saw white students as struggling with even the most basic understandings. As the institution required no trainings or discussions regarding power, these rare interactions will persist. With SJSU's required diversity courses so expansive, lessons on race become watered down and less important when there are over 100 course options for diversity credits. This was important as participants indicated what they need from the institution in order to create these cross racial friendships, a culturally competent white study body, where whites advocate for racial justice.

Internalizing the Institution

The purpose of this section is to highlight the ways in which Black students adopted the nature of the institution through conscious or unconscious assimilation. Understanding the attitudes and behaviors developed by the participants through the institution is important when determining the campus racial climate. This section focuses on the literature associated with how Black students internalized the values of the institution.

A theme that emerged in the findings was the ways Black students felt the institution was not theirs nor created for their success. Participants indicated the institution was reflective of white values and began detailing SJSU's pervasive whiteness. The university's values of protecting whiteness came to the forefront and Black students in turn adopted this mindset. The university's values became a form of white property (Harris, 1993). As Harris stated, property has characteristics to it such as the right to use and enjoy and the right to a reputation. In this

case, the university took on characteristics of property and became the right to whiteness and white people. One of the only ways for Black students to gain an ownership of this property was to start adhering to values of whiteness. Some participants described concepts of a Black monolith, while others accepted making themselves smaller or confining themselves for the sake of whiteness. Almost each participant described a way they had internalized the white values of the institution, creating an inhospitable racial climate.

The internalized white values participants adopted were through coercion and consent. Edwards (2008) expressed that ways in which dominance over a social group has to be established over time and, once established, runs deeply into the core of the social order. Edwards (2008) discussed hegemony in a way that aligned with a tenet of CRT where racism has been engrained and made ordinary in the United States (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), and in this case, at SJSU. Participants began accepting what Vaylani described as a "constant battle of whiteness as greatness." Participants believed they needed to "act white" in order to be seen as legitimate. This also was the case in the classroom. Black students employed a perfectionist attitude to show they should be seen as intelligent and valid. The hegemony and embedded racial order had established whiteness as normalized to society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Edwards, 2008; Gusa, 2010). As participants began losing aspects of their authenticity and individuality, it became clear they also accepted this idea of white ascendency, consistent with findings from Gusa (2010), where whites have legitimate authority and advantage.

Similarly, this fear of "acting white" aligned with previous literature by Durkee and Williams (2015) regarding Black students' mental health. Like Durkee and Williams (2015), participants found themselves feeling discomfort regarding their identity and self-concept. If these white structures did not exist, Black students would be seen as valuable and important

simply because they were, and not because of alignment with white values. These white values created a scenario where Black students could strive for validity through whiteness but never achieving it, all the while continuing the system at play.

The value SJSU placed on whiteness made participants believe they were only at the institution because of Affirmative Action and needed to prove their worth. In this case, Black students' intelligence and presence were so disregarded, they began to believe they needed to change who they were for the institution and its values. In turn, Black students were unable to fully acknowledge themselves as valuable, important, and intelligent. These findings were consistent with works by Gusa (2010) and Smith, Hung, and Franklin (2010) as they both described the hegemony experienced by Black students employed whiteness. Similarly, Black students adapted to ways spaces were allocated and the white culture employed with campus geography.

Participants described the limitations on spaces they were able to utilize at the institution. Black students accepted the institution's values and created meaning with the university's environment. As Mitchell, Wood, and Witherspoon (2010) indicated, spaces began to take on meaning through the use of culture and human interactions. This history and culture made spaces like the campus green or union untenable for most participants, as the historical legacy of the spaces excluded Blacks. As Mitchell et al. (2010) found, hegemony was continued through the usage of space. Black students were coerced from the structure of the university to believe the BCC and MAO were the only spaces they were able to use. This form of hegemony led to Black students adopting the attitude that the classroom and work were white spaces

The historical legacy and structure ensured Black students understood and internalized the values of the institution. Current higher education research had not discussed how the spaces

Black students utilized on a PWI were exclusionary, due to the culture and history of the institution (Tissen & Deprez, 2008). Black students coerced into internalizing values of SJSU have been barred from comfortably accessing most of SJSU. This study extended work by Strange and Banning (2015), who have discussed at length the ways in which the environment and people influence spaces. However, Strange and Banning never spoke on racial spaces and how they socialized groups of students in higher education literature.

The contribution of this study's findings is also important when considering the power of whiteness and changing national demographics. Research continues to show how by 2050 there will be a change in the racial makeup of the United States with white people for the first time being minorities to people of color (Frey, 2018). Despite this population shift, the climate of the institution cannot be viewed as changed. Hegemony and the historical legacy influenced the values of the institution reflected in whiteness. This white hegemony influencing the whiteness of the institution connected directly with the works of Gusa (2010). Gusa (2010) argued that the white institutional presence and culture was far more important than the demographics or racial composition. This meant racial diversity alone was irrelevant to this white institutional presence.

Although research such as Frey (2018) say the country and universities will need to adjust due to the new 2050 racial makeup, the current study shows the climate will remain the same as long as the coercion and consent process is maintained at PWIs. Ortiz and Waterman (2016) discussed changes need to be made to support the influx of collegians of color, such as being aware of what racial groups are on campus and attending multicultural programming; however, a more systems-level approach needs to be taken. This extends the notion currently in place regarding the thoughts of the impending 2050 racial shift. Regardless of the institutional composition, the climate and white hegemony need to be studied. Until then, the values and

attitudes of Black students will be impaired by the institution's desire to maintain and protect whiteness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), despite leadership.

Another important aspect of this research was the internalization that took place with a non-white university leader. Despite Black people in positions of leadership, Black students still internalized values of the institution. Whiteness and racism were so embedded into the institution (Brown & Jackson, 2013), it became impossible for participants to resist (Gusa, 2010). This showed how the leadership of a university is but one part of change necessary for a more racially just university. The leadership cannot look to alleviate the pains of embedded racism. The structure of SJSU has taken on a colorblind approach, believing the institution has positive racial relations without reccognizing the deep seeded racism pervasive at the PWI (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). SJSU had a Black president, but participants still described the challenges of denying the idea that whiteness was superior to Black. This showed the Black leadership solely was ineffective to the institution's values. A similar contemporary example of this can be seen through the presidency of Barack Obama. People had the misguided belief that the United States was in a post racial era. For many, the election of a Black president, meant racism was over.

SJSU seemed to have taken a similar approach. However, the hegemony and white institutional presence that Gusa (2010) and Edwards (2008) discussed proved otherwise. SJSU's whiteness could not be changed by BAL alone. This does mean Black leadership was unimportant and regardless of leadership things cannot be changed, but it is more than the composition or structural dimensions of the institution. More needs to be done than hiring a couple of Black leaders.

Perceptions of the Institutional Environment

This section of the discussion revolves around the ways participants perceived the institution. Many PWIs, with no exception to SJSU, pride themselves on inclusivity, diversity, and access. However, as participants detailed their experiences, rarely did they talk about the ways they felt included or important to the institution. Rather, participants described the institutional environment as one with a limited interest in diversity and inclusion, with Black students feeling like second-class citizens. This perception of the institutional environment created feelings of distrust for Black students. This cultural distrust discussed by participants is not uncommon as Whaley (2001) found that this mistrust is influenced by a person and their environment. In this case, participants and their institutional environment led to Black students feeling uncomfortable and silenced. In addition, Whaley, discussed how this cultural mistrust has significant ramifications for Black students on their mental health, leading to increased mental illness and dissatisfaction with their respective institution.

Participants perceived the campus environment to be challenging and uninviting with some bringing up forms of harassment they had dealt with in the past, specifically Black women. Many of them described feeling exhausted and tired, both from being tokenized but also from the inundation of white people surrounding them. As Black students felt unsupported, they believed the institution had a hand in creating this racist and uncomfortable environment, acting as if racial tensions never existed. These findings were consistent with studies conducted by Rankin and Reason (2005) and Cole and Harper (2017). Rankin and Reason (2005) discussed the disproportionate harassment students of color faced opposed to their white peers. This study extended works by Rankin and Reason by specifically focusing on Black students rather than students of color. Cole and Harper (2017) described the frequency in which universities

remained silent during racial incidents. Similarly, this study validated these previous findings as many participants voiced frustrations by the lack of attention taken by the university, specifically the president, during these moments of racial hardships. As Cole and Harper found, the university responded with a vagueness or silence to racial incidents, leaving the affected populations feeling unimportant and neglected. This study differed from Cole and Harper as it focused on Black students solely whereas Cole and Harper focused on all racial minorities. This was important as often research focuses on all people of color, missing opportunities to understand how disaggregated racial communities may experience different phenomena. In this case, Cole and Harper's research is strengthened and extended as narratives to a specific racial group, Black students, was included into the literature.

Participants felt the unique Black leadership structure was devised to fool Black students into believing the university was a welcoming and inviting space. Instead, participants perceived the university as an environment with a fake concern with diversity and inclusion. Many felt this Black leadership structure was devised to have a figure head in place, separated from Black students, but left the accessible staff members powerless. This aligned with findings by Harper (2015). Harper found PWIs place people of color solely in custodial, secretarial, groundskeeping, and food services roles. In this study, Black students felt as if white students treated Black staff like trash, reinforcing Harper's literature.

While Harper's (2015) literature displayed similarities to this study, contradictions existed as well through SJSU unique structure. Harper made the argument, white students have not seen Black staff in Vice President roles, Dean roles, and as President. While perhaps often true, this was not the case in this study. What I have found is that even if these Black administrators are in positions of power, racism, politics, and colorblindness still run the campus

climate (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; 2017). This has given SJSU and its students the illusion of inclusiveness and racial justice; however, this SJSU's structure furthers racism. SJSU made these administrators inaccessible to the average student. This faux Black presence in leadership perhaps has done more damage for Black students, as they have not been given a connection to those in power but creates a mirage of support.

SJSU created a Black monolith narrative that Harper and Nichols (2008) argued against. As this research indicated that all the Black monolith is damaging and that skinfolk ain't kinfolk, SJSU reproduced the opposite of what Harper and Nichols described as Black heterogeneity. In the study, Harper and Nichols discussed distinct and different types of undergraduate Black men. SJSU has to move away from this form of oppression as it anchored Black students' experiences as monolithic, rather than heterogenetic, furthering the emotional damage on Black students. This study strengthened the claims that not all Black people advocate and believe in the same things and the institution does a disservice to Black students by trying to make this true, similar to the literature by Harper and Nichols (2008). In this case, the focus was on BAL rather than undergraduate Black men. Institutions would benefit from learning the risks of assuming cultural care just because of the race of the person. Cherry-McDaniel (2019) described a similar sentiment as too often educators are assumed to have a strong cultural responsiveness simply due to the race of the individual. Instead, this assumption that SJSU made has the potential to have similarly dangerous results as leaving white people in charge with little to no cultural competence (Cherry-McDaniel, 2019).

Black women's perceptions of the institutional environment were important to consider as well, as the experiences differed. These differences with Black women displayed how intersectionality of CRT create different experiences in terms of being silenced and harassed,

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resulting in feelings of inauthenticity (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; 2017).

Women participants were more likely to discuss how unheard they felt by the institution

compared to men. Many of the women detailed concerns around safety far more than the men.

Specifically, what areas of campus felt safe opposed to comfortable at times, or the ways their

experienced harassment. Even while discussing forms of codeswitching, Black women described

their experiences more viscerally, as if the frustration surrounding the university's expectations

differed between them and men. While men were annoyed about code switching or losing a piece

of their authenticity, it felt different, more laborious for Black women displaying how

intersectionality created a more complex situation. Earlier, a participant mentioned how white

women erase Black women experiences, forcing them to choose between being Black or a

woman. This again showed how the institution failed to acknowledge the ways social identities

intersect.

These findings aligned with research by Johnson (2012) who described women of color

felt a lack of belongingness and isolation. Further, Johnson's research indicated a similar

conclusion that the race and gender influenced the ways they perceived the campus. In addition,

literature by Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, and Huntt (2013) found a similar conclusion

regarding the ways Black women felt silenced in the majority of spaces. Lewis et al. (2013)

found the gendered racial microaggressions were common amongst Black women indicating a

more challenging perception to the campus racial climate.

Black men experienced the institution differently too. Crime alerts influenced the ways

Black students perceived the campus environment. While women participants recognized the

challenges of stereotyping, often, Black men as criminals, the men found this to be even more

unsettling. Participants described feeling targetted as a perpetrator of campus wide

announcements due to the vagueness of the alert but also always seeming a Black person. The history of SJSU revealed any Black man will do when it comes to criminalizing Black men. This profiling by false accusations was similar to literature by Patton and Snyder-Yuly (2007). These sentiments men participants shared correlated with findings from Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007). In this study, Smith et al., (2007) described the ways in which Black men felt stereotyped and under surveillance by the campus and surrounding community leading forms of racial battle fatigue through fear, frustration, and shock. Participants felt similarly as a consequence to the crime alerts.

This study extended literature regarding perceptions of being criminalized at institutions. In addition to this criminalization of Black men, these findings on crime alerts also showed the ways in which whiteness and racism is normalized at the institution (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). As victims described perpetrators, Black people were also identified but any other time, no description was presented. This showed that Blackness was bizarre and different to victims, whereas white people were so normal, it made no sense to even describe a race. This normalcy of whiteness aligns with literature by DeCuir and Dixon (2004), where they discussed how othering is created by making whiteness ordinary and Black as strange. In this case, crime alerts acted as another form of othering, where Black is made as vile and detestable and whiteness, pure.

Crime alerts in this capacity were rarely discussed and provided a new lens for understanding the ways in which Black men perceive PWIs like SJSU. As many of these crime alerts come out online, via email or text message, the internet has influenced Black students' perception of the climate. Participants described avoiding their emails or the notices entirely as it caused them frustrations. Tynes, Rose, and Markoe (2013) discussed the ways in which discrimination and perceptions of the racial climate were shaped by the internet and online

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platforms. As Black students continued to spend a large portions of time online, this digital space contributes to the SJSU's negative and uninviting perceptions.

Theorizing the MMDLE

Throughout this study, the MMDLE served as the framework to inform this campus racial climate (Hurtado et al., 2012). Throughout this section, I provided insights on how the MMDLE could be further theorized to better investigate campus racial climates at institution. Throughout the study, the institutional dimensions of the MMDLE were analyzed with a CRT lens. This meant that while investigating the experiences of Black students and the racial climate, racism was inherently tied to every aspect of the institution. As racism has been embedded in American culture and in this case, SJSU, the study also revealed the challenge of investigating the racial climate without studying racism at a PWI. Due to this, the MMDLE has the potential to better identify the experiences of racial minorities if merged with a CRT perspective. What this means is that the MMDLE is currently trying to capture diversity more broadly. While important, this pursuit of broad diversity then loses the ways in which racism and the diverse learning environment overlap in the experiences of racial minorities, in this case, Black students. CRT centered throughout the study gives the researcher the ability to focus specifically on the connections of race and racism while learning the campus racial climate. What this means is that the MMDLE in its current iteration diluted racial and social justice in exchange for the more broad diversity. The use of CRT or other critical race theories (e.g., Lat Crit), depending on the racial group, could enable the researcher to better use the MMDLE with a racial and social justice frame rather than a diversity approach. This CRT lens, combined with the MMDLE, led to a more racial justice minded result.

In addition to looking at the MMDLE with a new perspective, a CRT lens, there was also power in the study by overlapping or crossing the institutional dimensions of the MMDLE. As exhibited from Chapter 5, there was new meaning and perspectives when blending the dimensions. As scholars continue to utilize the MMDLE and specifically in this case, the institutional dimensions, a consideration of crossing dimensions, will only lead to new findings and conclusions on what it means to be a racial minority on a college campus. In addition, as institutions look to improve the racial climate, it will be imperative for university officials to stop looking at their institution as individual dimensions or functional areas but as a connected web creating the racial climate. This means that institutions cannot rely on the admissions department to fix the climate by enrolling more Black students or believe that building trust between racial groups will solve all the problems at the institution. The problems Black students are facing, similar to the MMDLE, are complex and overlap over many different aspects of their lives. Similar to BAL, although each measure helps, the responsibility cannot be solely on one aspect of the institution. As seen in this study, although BAL are an important step towards improving the climate if they are empowered to make change, BAL or one specific remedy cannot be the only way to improve the climate and move towards a more racial and social justice minded institution.

Campus Racial Climate at PWIs

Throughout this study, I sought out to address: What was the campus racial climate for Black students at a social justice striving PWI? As a means to identify the answer to this question, several sub-questions were used to better understand the historical, structural, compositional, behavioral, and psychological aspects of the institution framed by the MDDLE. While the MMDLE served as an excellent frame, many of the Black collegians' experiences fell

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outside of the MMDLE's dimensions. This was an important finding as most research utilizing the framework confined the study to specific dimensions. For example, Griffin et al. (2016) utilized three of the dimensions to arrive at their findings, whereas in this study, the analysis was strengthened by considering the intertwined aspects of the Black student experience. In this section, I describe aspects of the campus racial climate while linking this to purpose statement of the study. The purpose of this study was to examine the campus racial climate for Black students. Here, I discuss aspects of SJSU's racial climate and provide connections for other PWIs, as well.

This consideration of aforementioned crossing and blending dimensions was important to note as increasing attention has been placed on campus racial climate. As social media and other forms of news bring attention to world events, there has been increased exposure of racial incidents and racism on campuses (Garcia, Johnston, Garibay, Herrera, & Giraldo, 2011). However, institutions still struggle to conceptualize the campus racial climate outside of the compositional dimension (Hurtado et al., 2012). That being said, while PWIs have been increasing efforts to address racial challenges, universities need to fully embrace the racial justice mindset or will be wasting time and money. Considering how many institutions are unprepared for the reality of the campus racial climate, this additional nuance will make the process even more difficult (Harper, 2015). Harper (2015) discussed how institutions will spend tens of thousands of dollars and then ignore the findings because change is tough and costs money. SJSU as well as other PWIs need to work through their apprehension about making radical change considering the barriers hegemony and racism create. In Harper's case, racism had become so entrenched in policies and procedures that PWIs did not want to face racism on their campuses and would have preferred a non-racial approach (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). This study showed how there is much to be learned about how to

best identify the campus racial climate. PWIs will need to make a legitimate investment, both in terms of time and finances, in order to facilitate change. In this case, by overlapping the dimensions of the MMDLE, I better recognized the campus racial climate.

I found Black students at SJSU experienced an unexclusive, racially charged, invalidating environment. SJSU was described as an overwhelmingly white institution. Although SJSU was an institution with an abundant and dominating force of whiteness, this has also been the case for many other PWIs (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). This whiteness is in terms of composition and in terms of the culture (Edwards, 2008; Gusa, 2010). SJSU as well as other PWIs have created a climate built to support white supremacy to such an extent that Black students began maintaining damaging relationships with their peers. In SJSU's case, this made Black students feel like imposters, incapable of trusting the institution to care and support for them. Literature on imposter syndrome mostly concerned postgraduates. Research by Griffin, Ward, and Phillips (2014) and Patterson-Stephens and Vital (2017) focused on the graduate school experience or faculty experience respectively; however, participants established a lack of comfort being themselves and sought out perfection, as well. This was important as concepts like imposter syndrome have been rarely discussed in campus racial climate studies, especially work framed by the MMDLE. Similar to crossing dimensions, inclusions of new research like imposter syndrome will better assist researchers understand the campus racial climate; in this case, the psychological dimension and the connections to the behavioral and structural dimensions. PWIs will need to begin looking at authenticity and code switching differently, as literature would suggest imposter syndrome is becoming more and more common nationwide (Griffin et al., 2014). Through the institutions' design, Black students began absorbing characteristics and values of SJSU, providing more opportunities for SJSU to control Black students.

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Many participants perceived the institution as disinterested in their experiences, yet rarely called attention to their grievances. SJSU utilized an intentional form of hegemony (Edwards, 2008) to maintain their systems of whiteness. As SJSU paraded notions of inclusivity, they continuously coerced Black students into uncomfortable situations. Black students felt stereotyped as criminals and unintelligent (Steele & Aronson, 1995), and were frustrated when the institution was silent on racial issues. These feelings Black students felt connected with the idea of stereotype threat. Rather than navigating college with confidence, the perceptions put on Black students have placed them in a negative light, always attempting to not live out stereotypes. Steele and Aronson (1995) found that stereotypes have psychological repercussions; in the case of this study, being stereotyped left Black students feeling targeted and unsafe, leaving them to make efforts to avoid embodying the stereotype. These negative emotions left Black students unsure of who to trust. SJSU created a system of white supremacy where Black students accepted their reality and put up little protest. As shown by Von Robertson and Chaney (2015), stereotype threat is a phenomenon that has no regional bounds. Von Robertson and Chaney discussed how Black men at a PWI in the South responded to stereotype threat with similar negativity. As long as whiteness and racism exist, this challenge will persist at nearly every PWI.

Spaces on campus, feelings of authenticity, and safety were just a few of the realms in which Black students felt they had little ownership over. Instead, Black students were only allowed to act as guests in the home of whiteness (Harper, 2015). The aforementioned areas became property to be owned by white students exclusively (Harris, 1993). Even the resources allocated towards student organizations were mostly managed and given to white members. SJSU had functionally become a conduit for whiteness. In Harper's study, he studied multiple

PWIs to learn about the Black students' collegiate experiences, similar to research produced by him. PWI like SJSU need to consider how whiteness has protected and reproduced forms of white property.

In the case of this study, whiteness dictated the decision making of who received the resources and support of the institution (Harris, 1993). An example of this was when participants described how unsafe they felt at the institution. Whiteness granted protection and resources to protect white students, whereas Black students feared for their safety and avoided interactions with police. Further, SJSU determined the right to use and enjoy (Harris, 1993). For example, white students were given access to all the spaces on the campus they wanted. When white people felt unable to gain access to a space, they vandalize the space, like when the BCC was spray painted, "long live Zimmerman." Further, the university was used as a form as white property when considering the way participants made sense of graduation rates and sports. Participants felt that as long as the football team was winning, and graduation rates were consistent, Black students were unimportant. The reputation and status of the institution was secured as a form of white property (Harris, 1993). As Black voices were silenced and ignored, there was no damage done to the reputation of the institution. Graduation rates and the football program remained successful; therefore, the reputation and status of the institution was never threatened. Finally, whiteness as property has the ability to exclude (Harris, 1993). This was seen throughout the study as Black students were historically and contemporary left out or pushed aside in order to preserve whiteness. The institution became the embodiment of white property.

Racist incidents at PWIs like those involving racist graffiti have become common as white students have felt challenged by any forms of racial advancements. PWIs dealt with a similar issue where students left cotton balls at the Black Cultural Center, a link to picking cotton

and slavery. These types of racism have become common at PWIs as a result of the institution being seen as a form of white property.

An important finding of this study was the inability of the institution and other Black students to fully acknowledge the complexities and messiness of race and ethnicity. As Johnston-Guerrero (2016) suggested, race and ethnicity were often conflated for the institution. This study extended the works of Johnston-Guerrero as it provides context of the importance of moving towards an intersectional analysis of understanding of race and ethnicity. The challenges Black students discussed were valid and real. For example, when participants discussed the tension of YAC receiving no money, worst spaces, and less attention. As tensions were discussed amongst different Black groups, collective action amongst the Black community cannot happen until there is an acknowledgement of differences, mutual empathy and understanding developed, and a strategy to combat the systems in place, erasing the complexities of identity. PWIs such as SJSU and Cornell have struggled to fully appreciate the intersectionality of Black students. In this case, PWIs have left Black students internally fighting with the institution being viewed as ethnic racial beings. The institution displayed an inability to facilitate these types of conversations and coalition building, and will continue to struggle as long as they continue to view the Black students as monolithic, furthering the stress on Black students.

This site was particularly interesting due to the unique nature of the institution. Rarely, if ever, do PWIs have the number of BAL in place as part of its leadership team. With this in mind, it was a goal to see how these BAL influenced the experiences of Black students. However, it was apparent this leadership team filled with BAL had less influence on the campus racial climate. SJSU structured itself with an illusion of power for Blacks. The reliance on a handful of Black leaders to alleviate racial issues is nothing more than the hiring of a Chief Diversity

Officer (Morrison, 2015) and foolishly hoping diversity challenges will be resolved. Institutions cannot rely on enrolling Black students or BAL to create racial reform at PWIs. In the beginning of this study, I asked what if an institution did more than simply post a diversity statement and attempted to strive for a more socially justice campus experience in order to facilitate a positive campus racial climate? How would this influence the experiences of Black students? The simple answer is that despite this institution being called Social Justice Striving University, this was not the case. SJSU was a misnomer.

SJSU was not a social justice striving university but a diversity striving PWI because it was diversifying its leadership, but not making any changes towards actual social and racial justice. Instead of simply placing Black administrative leaders at the institution, more complexity is needed for change as racism is complex. Racism has been too embedded in the institution to rely on only a couple solutions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Only by acknowledging that more needs to be done, rather than relying on tokenized Black leaders, can PWIs begin to combat racism and white supremacy on campus. Instead, PWIs like SJSU need an intentional multi-tiered approach to ending white supremacy.

Limitations

Customary with research, there were limitations associated with the study. One limitation was the Black and white binary created through the research. As I attempted to understand Black students' experiences at SJSU, I honed on the privileged group that racism has been created to support; in doing so, there were times other racial identities may have been excluded. For example, I sought out to understand cross-racial friendships for Black students, but specifically focused on Black and white friendships opposed to Black and other racial groups. Other opportunities to learn about participants' experiences regarding their cross racial friendships

were missed here. The main reason for focusing on white people was related to the study's CRT approach. As beneficiaries of racism, white people and their dominant ideologies needed to be challenged to better solve problems for racial subjugation (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

As stated previously, at times, history can be difficult for students to learn unless the institution has explicitly explained the context to them. With this said, a limitation of the study was the lack of conversation from participants regarding the historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion. This was attempted to be allayed through conversations with staff and faculty participants as well as document analysis; however, as the study focused on the voices on Black students, this served as a miss to the research.

Another limitation was that certain social identities were not as represented in the study as ideally possible, such as students who identified as LGBQ or trans*. Although there were participants who identified as gay, there was a lack of participants identified as another other than gay. There was data collected during observations that had bi and lesbian women' voices involved but not through the focus groups. Future research should aim to gain these groups narratives to better understand the ways their experiences the campus racial climate.

A potential limitation of this study was regarding participants' knowledge of BAL. BAL tend to be in political situations and their responsibilities may not be as student facing as participants may anticipate or hope. Participants may not have been as aware of the BAL' roles and responsibilities and because of that participants may have had had a conflicting expectation compared to those in the BAL position.

Another limitation was the transferability of the study. Despite best efforts to ensure transferability, no study can be duplicated with the same results. In this particular situation, this case was determined by the uniqueness of the institution. The number of BAL at SJSU made the

university a rare site to choose. As such, rarely do other institution have this type of administration, meaning that there would never be a perfectly transferable study at another PWI. In addition, using the MMDLE meant that the dimensions were contextual to SJSU, considering the historical legacy, for example. It would have been challenging to have a fully transferable study. This is in part the reason why I chose a hybrid between an intrinsic and instrumental case. The uniqueness of the institution was particularly interesting as the case, but there were enough connections to apply to other PWIs making both a compelling option.

<center>**Areas for Future Research**</center>

As this study aimed to contribute to higher education literature, there were also several areas for future research. Specifically, to the theoretical model, this study heavily relied on aspects of the MMDLE to frame the research (Hurtado et al., 2011; 2012). Throughout the study, it became apparent the MMDLE has opportunities to grow in its current application. As seen in chapter 5, the institutional dimensions go hand-in-hand with one another. Because of this, it is possible for others to explore the ways the dimensions overlap and connect with one another to better inform diverse learning environments. The opportunity to identify ways the MMDLE's institutional dimensions coalesce would only strengthen our understandings of the framework.

Similar to other campus racial climate study research and work with the MMDLE, additional research would benefit from finding ways to better incorporate the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion. As Black students were unaware of the history, this privileged Black students' perceptions without a historical context limiting the knowledge surrounding the legacy of inclusion and exclusion. Future research moving away from the privileging of their perceptions and incorporating the historical legacy would strengthen the MMDLE. Finally, in addition to reconsidering the MMDLE dimensions, much could be gained by studying the

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influence of social media on the campus racial climate. Although there was no mention in the original MMDLE, adding social media would only strengthen the usage of the framework

One of the more protected collegiate student populations are student athletes. Due to the political nature of athletics and the difficulty to often approach student athletes, it is rare to have them participate in studies. While over 10% of the participants involved with the study were in athletics, there is still much to be learned about Black student athletes. As scholars such as Harper, Williams, and Blackman (2013) have begun conversations on student athletes, researchers should work to gain access to this population and share their experiences. Particularly, how Black student athletes handle their "celebrity" and being "treated as kings" while still being treated as property. Future research could capture the fetishization they experienced as a product to be packaged and owned for their status as a student. Further, participants discussed student athletes lacking an ability to be anything but an athlete. It would be interesting to learn more about how student athletes make sense of this experience.

As participants discussed their classroom racial climate experiences, most of the topics centered on the professor and the peers in the classroom. An area for future research is to learn how the professor's pedagogy and curriculum influence the ways in which Black students connect with the course material. Scholars such as Ladson-Billings (1995; 2014) studied culturally relevant pedagogies and curriculums; however, limited research exists on the influence of these topics on Black students. Learning more about the classroom racial climate would bolster our current our understandings for Black students at PWIs. Mentioned previously, SJSU has no specific mandatory courses regarding race. As a way to positively influence the classroom racial climate, additional research on mandatory courses at PWIs on power, privilege, and oppression would be helpful to see the effectiveness of the general campus racial climate.

Outside of the classroom, a recommendation for research is to seek more clarity regarding Black students' interactions with MWO. In this study, participants said they joined these MWO to create change and to claim ownership over resources. This served as a new contribution and provided a new lens to understand the mindset Black students take on when joining organizations. With this said, more research focused on Black students joining MWO would be beneficial, as there are opportunities to learn more about what the experiences are like and the perceived effectiveness of change and reclamation once students with these motives join. An additional question could be asked is at what cost do these sacrifices burden Black students?

Most of this research took a Black-white binary approach to the study. This was done to maintain a manageable amount of data. A recommendation for future research would be to begin understanding how Black students interact with different racial populations throughout their collegiate experiences. For example, what does the friendship look like for Black students and Asian students? In a similar vein, future research could dive deeper into the complexities of same-race interactions as well. Participants and the study revealed the challenging relationships between African students and other Black students, mainly African American. Existing research on the populations such as Fries-Britt, George Mwangi, and Peralta (2014) and Griffin et al. (2016) began to explore the relationships but experiences such as Cornell (Jaschik, 2017) show there is still much research that needs to be done to better support these various Black populations.

Another area of future research should focus on Black students and the ways in which they experience the campus racial climate in relation to their Black identity development. Participants who seemed most at odds with the institution were those who seemed to have reflected deeply on what their Black identity means to them. Future research may want to look

deeper at how a students' racial identity development influences the ways Black students make meaning of the campus.

Recommendations for Practice and Policy

Based on the findings and stories shared by participants, I have a number of recommendations for university and administrative leaders, in terms of policy and practice. As many PWIs claim to appreciate diversity and inclusion, this institution is an ideal case toward understanding the campus racial climate for Black students. The number of Black administrative leaders at SJSU make the institution an exemplar of a diversifying PWI. As an exemplar, this case study provides ways for institutions to better serve and support Black students. As institutions continue to market their campus-wide diversity and the importance of representation, many PWIs will see this study and its findings to be of great value.

Throughout the study, all the participants discussed the lack of spaces they felt connected to, considering their Black identities. This finding provides an opportunity for PWIs to look at models such as the BCC and MAO and better understand what about those spaces are different than the rest of the campus community. By intentionally creating spaces with those with underrepresented groups in mind, it will also still serve as an environment that supported privileged groups. Artwork, books, and furniture reflective of Black students' experiences have the potential to bolster students' sense of belonging. In a similar fashion with spaces, there are benefits to moving away from rated housing, segregating students from one another. This segregated housing moves away from inclusivity and places those who fall into a low socioeconomic status into the worst housing conditions segregated from the university. Despite not all PWIs have rated housing, it is possible that there are unintentional forms of segregation on campuses. Additionally, it is important to note, not all Black people would fall under the

lowest tier of financial opportunity, there is a disproportionate number of Black students in those spaces, as well. The way the university shows their values through space is apparent; the university needs to do more to understand the critical geography of spaces and work towards an intentional racial justice minded approach.

Connected to the way participants made meaning of campus spaces, PWIs would benefit from creating a system in which Black students felt as entitled to the university as their white peers. Whether it be campus spaces, access to BAL, or resources on campus, it is important for Black students to be empowered and to feel an ownership of the campus. Many participants stated that they felt unheard and unimportant. Many participants also said the focus group was one of the first spaces where they felt connected and heard. This means the university holding forums and utilizing research might give Black students the opportunity to connect with the decision makers, the administrative leaders, and create real and tangible solutions. This is a potential way Black students can gain an ownership of the university, by seeing the results and subsequent institutional changes influenced by their input. Increasing mechanisms for input may also mean placing Black students on university committees. While slotting Black students in these committees, institutions need to ensure multiple Black students are sharing the same spaces with faculty, staff, and other students rather than serving as a tokenized member. In addition, there needs to be heterogeneity in the Black student population selection. With such a multitude of Black student experiences, it is imperative to diversify within the Black student population. There also needs to be multiple Black faculty, staff, and administrators.

Placing Black students in audiences with other BAL, high up administrators, and university officials near the power epicenter encourages the opportunity for Black students to be heard and seen as important owners of the institution. These feelings could contribute to

providing a deeper sense of entitlement and ownership to the university. Similarly, BAL, higher up administrators, and university officials near the power epicenter need to also begin being more present about the campus community, particularly Black students. While Black students should have the opportunity to be in audience with these university officials, only select few may receive this opportunity. Due to this rare opportunity, it would be advantageous for university officials to be more present around Black students in spaces like the BCC, MAO, and student organization meetings, to name a few.

Participants were treated as a monolith and, in turn, two recommendations should be considered. The first, PWIs need to be upfront about the lack of Black students. Too often PWIs use diversity as a watered-down word that loses its meaning, often being used to describe "diversity of thought." Participants stated they felt misled by the university's marketing and the ways the institution displayed their racial diversity (Osei-Kofi, Torres, & Lui, 2013). Osei-Kofi et al. (2013, p. 42) said regarding admission marketing materials, "the quest to appear diverse, bodies of color are positioned against a White norm and are used in viewbooks to invoke racial harmony...Viewbook discourse attempts to play to liberal desires, wishes, and fantasies of racial harmony." Students pay significant funds to attend college and have expectations that the university will commit to their promise. Black students should not find out upon arrival their experiences will be far different from the advertised version. Institutions need to acknowledge their history and move away from this raceless approach and stop pretending there is racial harmony instead of strife (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Institutions owe students the transparency to state the challenges they may face and hear how the institution intends to address those concerns.

Another recommendation is that PWIs need to acknowledge their racial history. Throughout the study, the historical remnants of the institution were pervasive. Until the university has developed comfort with acknowledging their historical legacies of exclusion against Black bodies, these actions of not acknowledging their history fully should be viewed as a form of revisionist history (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), whitewashing violence and exclusion. Looking through the archival records regarding the SJSU 30, recently, a few students were interviewed and were shocked about the events with no knowledge of these incidents. SJSU and other PWIs need to be explicit of their history if they hope to resolve the scars of the past.

Similar to institutions needing to acknowledge their racial history is the importance of looking at trends from the past to the present. Throughout the archival analysis process, it became clearer that the challenges Black students faced in the 1960s were very similar to those in current day. The adversity Black students endured are not so different. More than just acknowledging the racial history, institutions need to begin acting on what Black students have been demanding for nearly 60 years. Acknowledging the history means learning and becoming comfortable with the reality that this racial history occurred, has meaning, and using it to guide and alter the current conditions and experiences Black students face.

Increase Representation

PWIs need to learn how to better recruit Black students and provide more financial opportunities. Many of the participants talked about the lack of scholarships or monetary assistance tied to the school. If SJSU truly has a commitment to recruiting more Black students, then the institution should continue to identify ways to recruit and support them. In recorded history, Black students has never been above 10% of the student body, thereby demonstrating institutions like SJSU need to fully invest in the recruitment of Black students. Many PWIs also

struggle with this recruitment as Black students represent far less than even 10% of the student population. As the institution parades Black students on magazines and television advertisements, there needs to be money allocated to actually bring them.

In a similar vein, PWIs need to listen to Black faculty, staff, students, and administrators and increase the populations of each of these groups. An institution with less than 5% faculty and inaccessible Black administrative leaders will only continue to alienate Black students and Black university employees. Participants wanted to see Black administrators throughout every part of campus, in every type of role, rather than the current set up. Earl explained how there were some entire departments without a single Black person or person of color. Rather than the university expecting inaccessible Black leaders to carry the load, every area should have Black employees.

Courses and Trainings to Improve Racial Interactions

As participants discussed experiencing microaggressions and feeling misunderstood, they alluded to many at the institution, particularly white people at the institution, being unable to comprehend their experiences. If the institution wants to foster a supportive racial climate, then required trainings on privilege, oppression, and power would be a beginning point. One reason why Black students felt distanced from the campus community was the lack of competency around their experiences. These mandatory trainings would enable all to begin understanding how power influences the lives of Black students.

As mentioned previously, the institution currently offers bonuses to faculty who complete teaching trainings to better support students of color, among other identities. These trainings are created to ensure their faculty are culturally component and prepared to work with a litany of diverse students. While a noble intention, this striving for cultural competency also serves as a challenge for Black students and their ability to feel included and important in spaces.

Institutions need to shift from the diversity and inclusion catch all and focus on specific populations. Rather than simply creating workshops on all historically underrepresented groups, Institutions will benefit from moving away from cultural competency and moving towards racial competency or literacy. Cultural competency tempers the ability to serve and support Black students. By focusing on Black students through trainings, workshops, and dialogues, racial literacy can change the ways Black students experience the campus and the preparedness of faculty, staff, and administrators to perceive Black students' realities.

Mandatory courses for all students on the racial experiences of Black students with Black authors at the forefront of the curriculum would benefit Black students. Equally important, these classrooms would need to be taught with the awareness that Black students should not be the ones teaching white students about race, since this responsibility does not lie with Black students. Mandatory courses and workshops on topics related to race would also help to support Black students when they interact with white students not only in classroom, but also at student organization meetings and programs. The current divide of Black and white students only hurts the university and racial climate as a whole. As students stated their dissatisfaction with the racial climate, they were less likely to persist. Institutions should want more positive interactions because, with a more positive climate, graduation rates and its reputation will improve.

Black students would benefit from the university facilitating friendships with both their Black and non-Black peers. As Black students mentioned earlier, there has been a significant lack of positive and meaningful interactions between Black and white students. PWIs have created a system in which Black and white students are rarely friends. One of the ways Black students would feel more comfortable with white students, based on participants' narratives, is improving white students racial literacy. If white students were more racially competent, Black

students would not only be more at ease at the institution and perceive the school as more inclusive but would also be more willing to engage in positive interactions. This current divide between Black and white students has only hurt Black students' ability to have their voices heard, which means eliminating aspects like rated housing and promoting positive ally ship so Black students feel surrounded by individuals who are racially aware and literate.

Related to friendships, a recommendation for university practice is to better support the intraracial relationships of Black students. As mentioned previously, Black students have been competing with one another in order to receive more attention and resources from the institution. There are two ways to help solve this problem on an institutional level. The first way to solve this infighting is to better recognize the differences amongst Black students. This may require intergroup dialogues as a means to begin the conversation. The African diaspora is expansive which means the Black student experience is just as large. Institutions need to begin recognizing the intersectionality of Black students. The limited resources existing for Black students is difficult enough but dwindles even more once other identities become more relevant. Institutions' unawareness of Black students and their other identities such as their sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, or gender only encourages Black students to ignore those identities, as well. If the institution begins recognizing the expansive Black student experience, Black students would also begin to start looking at the complexities within the African diaspora.

The second way to better alleviate this crabs in a barrel mentality is to allot more resources to all the various Black student identities and their organizations. A catalyst to this within-fighting is the limited resources amongst Black students and their organizations. The institutions approach of only recognizing the Black Student Union and the BCC as places for Black students has essentialized specific Black students and groups and have left many Black

students feeling unseen and unheard. The institution needs to reform their approach by ensuring Black student organizations and spaces are given sufficient resources to better support their Black student body.

Improving University Communication

Another set of recommendations for PWIs, is to improve the methods of communication to Black students regarding racial incidents or during controversial speakers. During racial events like the Charlottesville rally, PWIs need to create messaging to support Black students. While the university may have a "view-point neutral" stance on politics, PWIs need to also understand that neutrality does not exist and colorblind approaches are inherently racist (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Institutions need to consider how these racist incidents affect students and thus, intentionally support Black students. First, the institution needs to be explicit about what happened. A nondescript email of a racist event helps no one and instead weaponizes silence to support whiteness. Next, empathize with Black students on how these types of events may make Black students and employees feel. Next, provide as many resources as the institution would for a natural disaster. Institutions not providing these resources display apathy towards racial hardships. One of the best ways to facilitate this is with the help of the Chief Diversity Officer or the Director of Diversity and Inclusion. Collaborating with staff and faculty trained in racial matters will only improve the display of care. This may result in conversations around trigger warnings or best being able to support Black students.

As participants were discussing crime alerts, it became apparent they had experienced harm through their implementation. This is why a recommendation of this study is to review the Clery Act in its current form. Participants questioned the usefulness of the act. Students questioned the effectiveness of receiving notifications of a crime hours later. As technology has

improved, universities now have the ability to communicate to students when a crisis, crime, or incident is taking place. These crime alerts often lose their utility after several hours have passed. For the time being, institutions need to be mindful of the stereotypes they are reproducing and truly evaluate the function of the Clery Act.

Finally, PWIs need to better acknowledge and market the current work being done by the university. SJSU and many other PWIs are so large that the institution becomes so decentralized, many of the efforts are missed by students, faculty, and staff. Institutions creating a clearinghouse of all these efforts not only spotlights the great work being done by professionals and faculty, but also shows the institutions' care around race and support of Black students. This clearinghouse, working as a vehicle of communication, could be a website with relevant programs, trainings, and dialogues that directly tie into the Black student experience. A lot of work has been done by individuals and university departments but a large institution makes this difficult to always spot. A well-marketed clearinghouse could both celebrate the work being done while also providing resources to students who need and deserve it.

Recommendations for Students

Throughout the entirety of the study, there was an emphasis on Black students and their needs. As a result, it is imperative to provide recommendations for Black students, as well. Using a CRT approach to both challenge dominant ideologies and provide a commitment to justice, these recommendations serve to push Black students through their collegiate experience (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). This section speaks directly to Black students and will provide recommendations for Black students attending SJSU or other PWIs with similar feelings or circumstances to hopefully help further racial justice and self-preservation.

The first recommendation is for you all to make efforts to come together and include all those interested in being involved with the Black community. This connection begins by learning about others within your own race. The multiple identities a person holds will change their understanding of the world; however, seeking commonalities while respecting differences is the first step. By acknowledging your own differences and learning from them only strengthens the community and the ability to advocate for one another. It will be important to move away from this crab mentality and recognize the joint structural racism affecting all Black students, whether apparent or implicit.

The second recommendation is for you all to learn the racial history of the institution. There are lessons that you can take away by educating yourself on the institution and the way Black students have been treated. More importantly, demand the institution to own their history and share the racism and racial experiences of Black students. Students tend to be at an institution for anywhere between three and seven years; history can be lost unless stories are told or the history is made public. By allowing the institution to erase or hide your racial history, you are empowering the institution to silence your voices. Expose the racial history and highlight the institutions' shortcomings to connect these hardships throughout time. History, especially Black history, may illuminate pathways to create a better environment for you all.

Next, I recommend for you all to advocate for campus spaces and begin reminding yourself that you have an equal stake at your institution. Although supremacy has socialized you to believe you do not have an equal ownership of the institution, you need to keep reminding yourself that the campus is yours, too. Remind yourself not to move off the sidewalk for anyone and that you can take up as much space on the campus green as you may need. The campus needs to acknowledge your power. Take friends who will ally in these spaces and occupy spaces

the way Black people did in the 1960s. If whites are feeling uncomfortable, that is just a fraction of your daily experience and you have a right to be here.

My fourth recommendation is to remember your power and have the courage to take a stand. The history of SJSU showed the collective power Black students held and still have, if you choose to use it. Connect with Black faculty, administrators, and staff. Encourage these employees to support Black initiatives. Do not limit yourselves from others as the university may hope. Ally with white students and employees who may look to support your cause. Similar to the freedom riders in the 1960s or SJSUs' protests during the Vietnam war, having white allies changes the magnitude of Black voices. Ally to have your demands heard and remind students who follow after you what you fought for so that history is never lost. Share your stories.

Finally, take care of yourself. That means utilizing mental health services and practicing self-care. Just surviving at the institution can be a challenge, which means every moment could be taxing. Do everything you can to find joy during your collegiate years and, if a counselor or therapist helps, then find a professional. No one is stronger alone and by seeing a professional counselor, they can support you when you may feel like no one can. Black students, you are valid, important, and your feelings matter. Stay persistent and keep fighting for the respect and equitable treatment you deserve.

Researcher's Reflections

It is such a privilege to be able to share the voices of the incredible students, administrators, and faculty at SJSU. When talking with the students, it was such an honor to hear the ways they have navigated their time at SJSU and the ways they overcame strife while attending SJSU. Throughout this study, I aimed to ensure their voices were heard and were as accurately depicted as possible. With all this being said, this study has reinforced that we as a

society need to do better to support our Black students. As conversations around mental health steadily rises and overt racism continues to seep into the university, Black students are forced to bear the brunt of these attacks. Those passionate for social and racial justice, please use your privileges to move the needle forward towards justice. Take care of yourself, but also keep pushing forward. These Black students, the ones who may not recognize the systems of racism and hegemony but feel it every day, need us to continue fighting for them. These Black students deserve our very best. This study left me in awe of the participants' strength and reminded me of my duty to serve and advocate for them, as a scholar-practitioner, but also as a Black man who has navigated PWIs throughout my life.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to describe and respond to the original research questions, along with a discussion on how the findings and analysis of this study aligned with literature on Black students. This chapter then provided shortcomings of the study. Then, this chapter gave recommendations for future research, practice, and policy to help Black students matriculate through their time at Predominately White Institutions. In addition, recommendations were made for Black students to help them find ways to survive and thrive while attending PWIs. Finally, this chapter included a brief statement describing the researcher's reflections.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Message

Expert Nominator Letter [Students]

Hello [Name],

My name is Lane Washington and I am a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University. I am currently seeking out student participants for my dissertation study that explores the experiences of Black students at Predominately White Institutions. Participation would consistent of a focus group interview and a one-on-one interview. As an individual who works with Black students, I was hoping you may be able to connect me with individuals who may be interested in participating in this study. I am looking for students who meet the following criteria:

- Must be enrolled full time (12 credit hours)

- Between the ages of 18-24

- Attended the institution for a minimum of 1 year (2 terms)

- Identify as Black and/or African American

- Have been born and raised in the United States

- And involved with at least two co-curricular forms of involvement activities (e.g. clubs, work) at the institution

To ensure students' identities are protected and that they are opting into the study themselves, please send along this email to any student who may be interested and ask they contact me at Washington.262@osu.edu. Thank you for your support on this important study.

Sincerely,

Lane Washington
Doctoral Candidate, Higher Education & Student Affairs

The Ohio State University

Expert Nominator Letter [Staff/Faculty]

Hello [Name],

My name is Lane Washington and I am a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University. I am

currently seeking out participants for my dissertation study that explores the experiences of

Black students at Predominately White Institutions. More specifically, I am seeking out faculty

and staff who work with Black students in some capacity whether it be advising, mentoring, or

teaching to name a few. Participation consists of a one-on-one interview. I am looking for

faculty/staff who meet the following criteria:

1. Must be employed at SJSU as either faculty, staff, or an administrator full-time
   (100% FTE).

2. Must have been employed at SJSU for a minimum of two years.

3. Must have some type of direct engagement or work with Black students.

To ensure their identities are protected and that they are opting into the study themselves, please

send this along to any faculty and/or staff who may be interested, and ask they contact me at

Washington.262@osu.edu. Please do not send me their names or email address. I will be in touch

with them once they contact me. Thank you for your support on this important study.

Sincerely,

Lane Washington
Doctoral Candidate, Higher Education & Student Affairs
The Ohio State University

Appendix B: Listserv Recruitment Email

Are you a Black student attending a PWI interested in sharing your story? There is the opportunity for you to discuss what it is like to be a Black student. If you fit the following criteria and interested in sharing your experience, reach out to Lane Washington at Washington.262@osu.edu.

Criteria to participate:

- Participants must identify as Black and/or African American.

- Participants must be a full-time undergraduate student between the age of 18 and 24.

- Participants must have been born in the United States.

- Participants must have attended a PWI for at least one year.

- Participants must have at least two forms of involvement at their PWI (organizations, employment, volunteering).

Those who participate in the study will be awarded a $20 gift card. If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to Lane Washington.262@osu.edu

This study has been determined Exempt from IRB Review at the Ohio State University

Seeking **Black** Undergraduate Students for a Research Study

Participation will include:

- Focus Group (based on availability)
- One-on-One Interview
- Each 60-90 minutes

CRITERIA TO PARTICIPATE:

- Participants must identify as Black/African American

- Participants must have been born in the United States

- Participants must be full-time, undergraduate students (18-24 years of age) who have completed at least one year at a predominately white institution

- Participants must be involved in at least two forms of involvement at the institution

To indicate interest in participating in this study, please fill out this form:

https://osu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9yIsbD77HSYeKGh

Questions?
Contact Lane Washington at washington.262@osu.edu

This study has been determined exempt from IRB review at The Ohio State University

Hello and thank you for your interest in participating in this study.

About the study: My mane is Lane Washington and I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program at The Ohio State University. The purpose of the study is to understand the experiences of Black students at predominately white institutions (PWIs). I am seeking out undergraduate students who fit the following criteria:

- Participants must identify as Black and/or African American.
- Participants must be a full-time undergraduate student between the age of 18 and 24.
- Participants must have been born in the United States.
- Participants must have attended a PWI for at least one year.
- Participants must have at least two forms of involvement at their PWI (organizations, employment, volunteering).

Purpose of the form: This form will gather preliminary information about you. This form will help select participants for this study. While not everyone who completes this form will be selected for this study, everyone selected to participate will receive a $20 gift card.

If selected: You will be asked to complete a 60-90 minute focus group as well as a one-on-one interview.

This study has been determined Exempt from IRB Review at the Ohio State University.

Please note: We will work to ensure no one sees your survey responses but because we are using the internet, there is a chance that someone could access your online responses without permission. In some cases, this information could be used to identify you.

Full Name:
How long have you attended this college?
Possible pseudonym (alias):
Email:
Age:
Race:
Ethnicity:
Gender:
Years in School:
- Second Year
- Third Year

- Fourth Year
- Fifth Year
- Sixth Year
- Seventh Year

Campus Involvements (student organizations, employment on campus, student government, etc.):

General availability for a 60-90-minute interview during the week? Weekend days can be included as well.

Anything missed that you would to have mentioned?

Thank you for your response and interest.

Lane Washington, doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University, will be in contact with you if you are selected or not selected to participate in the study. If you have any questions about the study, please email Lane Washington at washington.262@osu.edu.

Appendix E: Student Introduction

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group. As you all may know, I am interested in learning about your racial experiences and what it is like to be a Black student at SJSU. I am going to begin by asking a series of questions to learn more about your experiences. Whenever possible, please be as detailed as possible and provide concrete examples and context. If you do not have a thought or opinion on a specific question or topic, please do not feel obligated to answer and simply pass.

As stated in the consent form, I will be recording the interviewing and taking some notes throughout our time. If at any point you feel you cannot continue with the interview, please feel free to exit the group without any consequence to you or your status as a student.

Before we get started, will you please state your selected pseudonym that you indicated previously as well as state your year here at SJSU.

Appendix F: Faculty/Admin Introduction

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As you all may know, I am interested in learning about your racial experiences and what it is like to be a Black student at SJSU. I am going to ask a series of questions to learn more about your experiences. Whenever possible, please be as detailed as possible and provide concrete examples and context.

As stated in the consent form, I will be recording the interviewing and take some notes throughout our time. I want to reiterate the confidentiality of this study. If at any point you feel you cannot continue with the interview, please feel free to exit without any consequence to you or your status as a student.

Before we get started, will you please state your selected pseudonym that you indicated previously.

Appendix G: Student Focus Group Questions

1. As a Black student, what spaces on campus do you feel most connected to?

2. As a Black student, what spaces do you feel least connected to?

3. Tell me about your experiences with interacting and creating friendships with white students?

    a. What about as an involved Black student in your orgs and work?

4. Since your time here at SJSU, in what ways has SJSU made you feel a part of the campus community?

5. Since your time here at SJSU, in what ways has SJSU made you feel like you were not a part of the campus community?

6. Are you all aware of campus crime alerts on campus? I am going to pass out a couple of these crime alerts and have you all take a moment to review them.

    a. As Black students, what are your thoughts and feelings regarding crime alerts?

    b. What has led you to think/feel this way?

7. Switching gears, since your time here at SJSU, in what ways have you seen the institution advocate for your needs?

Appendix H: Faculty/Administrator Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little about your current role here and how you interact with Black students on campus.

2. Put yourself in the shoes of Black students here at SJSU, how would you describe their experiences here?

3. What are some conversations or topics you have heard Black students discuss when it comes to their racial experiences here at SJSU?

4. How do you think the university leadership does at supporting Black students here on campus?

5. As someone who has been at the SJSU perhaps longer than many of the students and having a different perspective than the students, how has the institution improved its support and treatment of its Black students over the years?

    a. How has the stayed the same or declined in regard to its support and treatment of its Black students?

6. How would you describe the racial climate for Black students to someone outside of the university?

7. Any additional thoughts that you would like to share?

Appendix I: Observation Guide

Date/Time of Observation: _____

Location of Observation: **_____**

Participants Involved in Observation: _____

Purpose of Observation: **_____**

_____

Descriptive Notes:

1. Physical Space: Describe the setting.

2. Participants: Who are they? What are their perceived racial/ethnic identities? What are their roles? What are they doing? How do people interact? How many people are there?

3. Activities: What activities are going on? Who is involved?

4. Conversations: What is the content of conversations going on? Who speaks to whom? What are the topic of discussion?

5. Subtle Factors. What symbols are apparent? What is the mood in the space? Are there indicators of racial/ethnic identity within the environment?

6. My Behavior. How do I react to the environment? How am I feeling within this space?

7. General Thoughts/Overall Impression

Appendix J: Documents Reviewed

Documents reviewed will begin in the year 2012 and conclude in 2019. Any document found prior to 2012 can only be introduced by a faculty, administrators, staff, or students or mentioned in other documents found between the years of 2012-2019. Documents reviewed:

1. SJSU's Mission, Vision, and Values

2. SJSU's Website

    a. Academic departments

    b. Student services

    c. Administration

3. Website of BCC and MAO

4. Institutional Research

    a. Characteristics and composition of students

        i. Admission numbers

    b. Characteristics and composition of faculty/staff

5. University newspaper articles (archives) related to Black student experiences

6. Alumni Association website and history related the Black students and graduates

7. University announcements or campus wide alerts related to race or the experiences of Black students

8. Office of Minority Affairs Website

9. Campus Archives

    a. Student Protests or Movements (2012-2019)

    b. Racial incidents (2012-2019)

Appendix K: Crime Alert 1

Public Safety Notice For:

Campus Area

Date:

Thursday, September 13, 2018

Alert Code:

▮▮▮▮

The following crime occurred in the campus area

On 9/13/18, at approximately 6:20 p.m., a female ▮▮▮▮ student was walking on campus on ▮▮▮▮, when an unknown male pulled up in a vehicle and motioned that he needed assistance. When the student approached the vehicle, the suspect threatened harm unless she handed over her money. The student complied and he left eastbound on ▮▮▮▮▮▮ Street and the off-campus area. No weapons were shown and no injuries were reported.

The vehicle is described as a small, light-silver Ford SUV. Suspect details are limited.

Appendix L: Crime Alert 2

Public Safety Notice For:

Campus Area

Date:

Saturday, December 30, 2017

Alert Code:

████████

The following crime occurred in the campus area

On 12/30/17, at approximately 12 p.m., a parking employee reported being robbed at gunpoint outside of the ████████████████████ Road. The suspects fled northbound on ████████ Road away from campus in their vehicle. The driver was described as a light-skinned black male with freckles wearing a gray hoodie. The passenger of the vehicle, who was armed with a handgun, was described as a black male in a black hoodie. Both suspects had their hoods up with the drawstrings cinched tight. No injuries were reported. No additional vehicle details are available.