Organizational Fit of Non-Academic Administrators of Color at Small Liberal Arts

Institutions

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Abstract

Diversity has become a central organizational goal especially as the U.S. population is experiencing racial demographic shifts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Employees of color makeup one-third of the workforce, yet higher education institutions have been slow to adjust to the shifting demographics (Birnbaum, 1988; Brown, 2004; Yancey, 2010). Higher education leaders are seeking ways to recruit and retain growing numbers of administrators of color to work at their institutions. Available research focuses on organizational fit and faculty of color (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Jackson, 2003b; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Ortega-Liston & Rodriguez Soto, 2014; Victorino et al., 2013) or examines organizational fit at research universities (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Gasman et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2012; Turner et al., 2011). A review of the literature shows there is scarcity of scholarly knowledge on the experiences of administrators from historically minoritized groups with organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions.

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe how administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions experience organizational fit. The conceptual framework for this study was Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model. The participants in the sample included Black/African American, Asian American, Native Hawaii/Pacific Islander, and Latina/o non-academic administrators from institutions with less than 2,500 students.

Using a phenomenological design, I interviewed selected administrators twice using a modified version of Seidman's (2013) life history structure. Data analysis revealed six themes including the pathways into higher education, attraction to small liberal arts institutions, institutional culture, position empowerment, multiple hats/roles, and professional success. The findings suggest these administrators of color experience similar ERA processes as other administrators. These similarities include desiring to fit in, an on-going process of building trust, and enjoying the small family business environment of a small liberal arts institution. Unique findings included how participants valued their quality of life despite limited salaries at small liberal arts institutions. They

also assimilated, code switched, and served as cultural guides, adding responsibilities to an already hard working group. Implications for higher education leaders concerning the importance of supporting administrators of color can be gleaned from these findings.

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General Audience Abstract

Higher education leaders are seeking ways to recruit and retain growing numbers of administrators of color to work at their institutions. However, most of the previous research focuses on faculty of color or employees at large research institutions. There is limited research on administrators of color working at small liberal arts institutions to aid these leaders.

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe how administrators of color experience their fit at small liberal arts institutions. I interviewed nine administrators, who work at small liberal arts institutions with less than 2,500 students. These administrators identified as Black/African American, Asian American, Native Hawaii/Pacific Islander, and Latina/o and had three or more years working in higher education. I used Jackson's (2005) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) model to better understand the experiences shared by these administrators.

These administrators shared about their journey into higher education careers and what attracted them to their institutions. They also spoke about the culture at their institutions, how they are supported in their positions, their difficulties around taking on multiple positions, and how they view their professional success. These administrators also talked about their desire to fit in, an on-going process of building trust, and enjoying the small family business environment of a small liberal arts institution. They also mentioned how they valued their quality of life despite limited salaries at small liberal arts institutions. This research is important as it assist higher education leaders to better understand the experiences of current administrators of color. They can use the findings from the study as they examine their own institutional culture to ensure it is open and receptive to new or current administrators of color.

Acknowledgements

"Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart"

– Psalm 37:4 (KJV)

When I was younger my mother shared her vision of me receiving a doctoral degree. For years, I fought against that vision and claimed I had no desire to ever go back to school, let alone earn a Ph.D. After spending six years working with amazing students at King's College, it became apparent that I needed additional tools and research techniques to better serve students of color and to advance the work I love within higher education. After taking a year off to find myself, God made the path clear that Virginia Tech was where I would attend to gain these skills. Although, this journey was never easy, God provided just the right people to ensure I completed this degree. I am extremely grateful and thankful for everyone who helped me along the way. This degree would not be possible without my family, friends, writing partners, professors, faith community, and a whole LOT of answered prayers!!

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Chapter One

Introduction

In the 21st century, the workplace conversation in the U.S. has shifted to include diversity as a central organizational goal (Brown, 2004), especially when determining how organizational fit influences employee hiring decisions. Federal legislation grounds the focus on diversity, which provides employment access to members of protected groups (age, disability, race, color, sex, religion and national origin) within the workplace (Civil Rights Act of 1964). However, the term *diversity* did not emerge until the 1990s (Pompper, 2013) and has an "aim to create an inclusive culture that values and uses the talents of all would-be members" (Herring, 2009, p. 209).

Diversity is often an ambiguous term with varying definitions depending on the group using it (Herring, 2009). Recently, the definition of diversity has been expanded to include multiple social identities found in contemporary society (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). These social identities include the race, gender, sexual orientation, age, geographic region, language, and other characteristics of the employee. Organizational leaders who value diversity recognize their employees bring multiple social identities to the workplace, which can be used to help the organization compete in a global society (Burns, Barton, & Kerby, 2012; Konrad, 2003; Herring, 2009).

Leaders have broadened the definition of diversity to be more inclusive without fully addressing the underrepresentation of historically marginalized people within the workplace (Ahmed, 2012; Bond & Haynes, 2014; Collins, 2011). Historically underrepresented groups include Blacks/African Americans, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Americans. These racial and ethnic groups are outgrowing their historical minority status, especially as their numbers continue to grow in the overall population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

Impact of Population Shifts on Workplace

Addressing the racial and ethnic underrepresentation of employees becomes even more important as the U.S. demographics continue to shift. In the past, the U.S. population has consisted of a majority of people categorized as White (non-Hispanic). However, over time a shift has occurred in the population. Whites have experienced a slow decline in total population percentage, while representation by other racial and ethnic groups (African American, Asian American, Latina/os and Native American) has steadily grown.

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Census data from 2013 demonstrate this shift in population demographics. The White population made up 78% of the 316 million total in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau Population Division [U.S. Census Bureau], 2014), which was a 7% decline from the 85% make-up in 1960 (Passel & Cohn, 2008). This decline was due to a decrease in birth rates. Other racial groups either maintained or experienced birth rate growth and therefore had increases in their overall population percentages (Passel & Cohn, 2008; Ortman & Guarneri, 2009). For instance, African Americans grew from 19 million in the 1960's to 41 million and they compose 13% of the current population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Native Americans continued to compose 1% of the population. Asian Americans grew from 1.1 million in the 1960's (Passel & Cohn, 2008) to 16 million and made up 5% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Finally, Latina/os totaled 6.3 million in the 1960's (Passel & Cohn, 2008) and grew to 54 million or 17% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The steady overall population growth of Asian Americans and Latina/os was also due in part to increases in immigration rates (Passel & Cohn, 2008).

Immigration does not always explain changes in population demographics. During the next four decades, Asian Americans and Latina/os populations will triple due to expected increases in both of their American-born birth rates. This will account for their populations tripling by 2050 to 9% and 29% of the total population respectively (Passel & Cohn, 2008). According to population estimates, the African American population is expected to double, but will continue to maintain 13% of the total population, which reflects the growth in other ethnic/racial groups. During this same period, the country will transition to a majority-minority country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) as predictions for the White total population continue to decrease to 47% by 2050 (Passel & Cohn, 2008).

As racial demographics continue to shift, there is a direct impact on the labor force. The labor force is defined as the civilian non-institutionalized U.S. population and includes those above the ages of 16, regardless of employment status, who are also not in the armed forces, or confined to an institution (e.g. nursing home or prison) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Byars-Winston, Fouad, and Wen (2015) investigated how the growth in the U.S. demographics affected the labor force. Since 1970, Whites experienced steady increases and make up the largest proportion of the labor force. Aligning with shifts in the population, in 2000, Whites experienced a decline in their labor force participation rates. African Americans, Asian

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Americans, and Latina/os also experienced labor force growth, as their demographics continued to grow, while Native Americans maintained both their labor force participation and overall population.

By 2020, the total number of employees is expected to grow 5.9% (Burns et al., 2012) and labor force projections estimate the workforce will include 12.4% African Americans, 6.2% Asian Americans, and 19.1% Latina/os (Tossi, 2013). As the total White population continues to decrease, this will provide an opportunity for organization leaders to hire additional people of color to represent accurately the diversity of the U.S. population (Byars-Winston et al., 2015).

Changes in the Workforce Impact on the Workplace

Beyond the changing demographics, hiring diverse candidates makes the organization more competitive. The inclusion of people of color brings in diverse talents, skills, and thoughts, which lead to innovation within the workplace (Burns et al., 2012). The changing labor force and population demographics provide organizational leaders with the justification to focus on diversity to ensure the strongest organizational fit of employees (Collins, 2011).

Despite demographic changes and governmental interventions, many workplace leaders have failed to align their hiring practices with the changing demographics (Byars-Winston et al., 2015). For instance, between 1966 and 1971, 35% of workplaces employed no African American males, 61% did not employ Latino men, 53% did not employ African American women; 76% employed no Latina women, and 94% employed no Asian American workers regardless of gender in Employment Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) monitored workplaces (Tomaskovic-Devey & Stainback, 2007). To address and decrease discrimination in the workplace, Congress created Employment Equal Opportunity (EEO) policies in 1964.

After 1980, the number of workers of color plateaued, especially in workplaces monitored by EEOC (Tomaskovic-Devey & Stainback, 2007). Twenty-one percent of organizations did not employ African Americans; 28% did not employ Latino men or African American women, 35% did not employ Latina women, and 45% did not employ any Asian American workers. In addition, 5.4% of EEO monitored organizations did not employ any workers of color (Tomaskovic-Devey & Stainback, 2007). Although African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina/os experienced growth in their labor force participation after 1980. By 2002, employees, especially women of color, experienced racial segregation in the workplace at levels similar to those of the 1966 workplace (Tomaskovic-Devey & Stainback, 2007). Despite

the changing demographics and support from the EEOC, workplace leaders did not aggressively take steps necessary to maintain the representation of people of color within their organization.

Steps to Increase Workplace Diversity

As historical evidence shows, the workplace does not effortlessly transition to accommodate the increase in societal diversity. Therefore, institutional leaders must prepare for this demographic shift by developing new proactive strategies (Cook, 2013). Organizational leaders can take several steps to prepare for the shift. First, prior researchers conclude organizational leaders can rethink recruitment, hiring, and retention practices to attract and retain diverse professionals (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2009; Konrad, 2003). In particular, leaders who have a higher racial awareness are more likely to have employees that represent the country's demographics (Buttner et al., 2009). Racial awareness is the ability to recognize racial and ethnic identities and understand how they could potential influence interactions (Buttner et al., 2009). Rethinking recruitment, hiring, and retention is a way to increase racial awareness.

Second, prior researchers highlight a need for employers to recognize the historical implications of hiring and workplace policies and practices, which have excluded people of color (Bond & Haynes, 2014; Buttner et al., 2009). Continuing to ignore a history of these practices perpetuates the exclusion of certain groups of people, which in turn has a negative impact on a company's bottom line. As such, it is in the interest of organizations to adopt practices and policies of inclusivity. In a study of 1,002 U.S. corporations, companies with high levels (greater than 25%) of racial diversity had 35,000 customers compared to companies with low levels of diversity (less than 10%), which had 22,700 customers (Herring, 2009). These same high diversity organizations also had a mean of $761.3 million overall sales revenue compared to $51.9 million for those with lower levels of racial diversity (Herring, 2009). These correlational findings provide researchers with the impetus to understand qualitatively the relationship between the variables.

Third, leaders have the ability to set the institutional vision and take proactive steps to ensure the work environment is open and inclusive for employees of color (Victorino, Nylund-Gibson, & Conley, 2013). The definition of *work environment* is the geographic location, organizational culture, and the mission guiding the organization. The work environment plays a key role in diversity (Pompper, 2013), and organizational leaders are influential in changing their employees' racial perceptions (Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2006). Organizational leaders can

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harness this influence to impact "staff demographics, department climate for diversity, institutional commitment to diversity, and staff experiences with diversity" (Mayhew et al., 2006, p. 76).

Higher Education as a Workplace

Despite calls for changes in organizational behavior and workforce diversity, people of color remain underrepresented (Buttner et al., 2009). People of color are underrepresented especially within higher education workplaces (Buttner et al., 2009). Higher education leaders still struggle to overcome the historical past of exclusionary practices (Brown, 2004). For instance, prior to the Civil Rights movement, Predominately White Institutions (PWI) were segregated and had few or no faculty members or administrators of color (Wolfe & Freeman, 2013). Even today, many liberal arts institutions, especially those with a religious focus, have been slow and even resistant to increasing the number of underrepresented administrators of color (Yancey, 2010).

Like businesses, many higher education leaders understand the economic benefit of diversity. Many institutions are working to incorporate diversity-related terminology into their missions and strategic plans (Ahmed, 2012) to capture the changing student demographics that serve as revenue sources. This changing demographic can especially be seen as Whites made up 84.3% of the student population in 1976 while African Americans, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Americans made up 15.7% (Snyder & Dillow, 2013). By 2011, Whites decreased to 61.2% of the student population while African Americans, Asian Americans, Latina/os and Native Americans grew to 38.8% (Snyder & Dillow, 2013). Even with increased student diversity, these changes do not always translate to changes into the institutional climate or receptive environments for people of color (Ahmed, 2012; Brown, 2004).

Higher education leaders, who understand the positive impact of an inclusive racial climate, are more likely to employ people from diverse backgrounds (Buttner et al., 2009). These leaders have the ability to set the vision and take proactive steps to ensure the work environment is open to diversity (Victorino et al., 2013). However, higher education is slow to change (Birnbaum, 1988; Brown, 2004).

Currently, there are 238,718 administrators working in higher education (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014b). Of the total higher education administrators, 84,911 (35.6%) worked at public four-year institutions, while 118,268 (50%) worked at private four-year institutions

(Almanac of Higher Education, 2014b). Administrators of color made up 19.5% of the total number of administrators within higher education (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014b) even though people of color represent 35% of the U.S. population. There are two perspectives often provided to explain the under-representation of administrators of color.

First, some argue Blacks and Latina/os are employed at higher rates in positions that do not require a college education (Byars-Winston et al., 2015). Others argue the limited number of people of color who complete either bachelors or master's degrees, explains the low proportion of administrators of color by limiting the number of people of color eligible to work at colleges and universities (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014a). Despite these two perspectives, between 1990 and 2014, African Americans, Latina/os, and Asian Americans aged 25 to 29 increased in the number of bachelor's and master's degree holders. African Americans increased from 13% to 22% at the bachelor's degree level, and grew from 2% to 4% in the total number possessing a master's degree (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). The number of Latina/os with bachelor's degrees grew from 8% to 43% while increasing from 2% to 3% in the number of master's degrees (NCES, 2015). Asian Americans grew from 43% to 61% in possessing bachelor's degrees while master's degree recipients grew from 11% to 18% (NCES, 2015). However, these increases in degree recipients did not necessarily translate into increases in higher education professionals.

Between 2000 and 2012, administrators of color experienced minimal growth in their racial composition (Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014). Examining 2001, the overall higher education professional staff included 10% African Americans, 4.8% Asian Americans, 5.1% Latina/o, and 0.6% Native Americans (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2003). Just 10 years later, the overall professional staff decreased by 0.1% for both African Americans and Native Americans. During this same period, Asian Americans and Latina/os grew by 1% and .05% respectively (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2012). Despite the limited number of administrators of color, the higher education workforce increased by 28% between 2000 and 2012. This growth was 50% faster than any other period and mirrored the student body growth in public higher education (Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014).

This decline and minimal growth of employees of color is important, as educational researchers have called for an increase in hiring faculty members and administrators of color to

align with the growth of students from historically marginalized groups (Anderson, 2003; Flowers, 2003). Increasing faculty and staff diversity helps to ensure college and university administrators are meeting their institutional missions of preparing students to work in diverse settings by creating diverse learning environments (Hurtado, Ruiz Alvarado, & Guillermo-Wann, 2015), while providing the support mechanisms necessary for student retention (Flowers, 2003). Beyond educational benefits, the diversity of higher education professionals encourages the recruitment of new professionals of color and supports "institutional and societal transformation" (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen & Han, 2009, p. 539).

Administrators wanting to bring about change within higher education need to focus on hiring, institutional climate (Brown, 2004), and institutionalized behaviors and policies that are resistant to change (Victorino et al., 2013). As the United States continues to become more diverse and represent the changing demographics, higher education leaders must also rethink the racial and ethnic representation of administrators within their colleges and universities.

A Model for Examining Organizational Fit

Organizational fit is an approach to rethink and increase the diversity and retention of administrators of color. Traditionally, human resource officers and theorists used organizational fit to understand how and why some people are successful within their organizations, while not successfully hiring and/or retaining other employees (Chatman, 1991; Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). Cultural researchers view organizational fit through a global perspective and a combination of compatibility and diversity within the workplace (Chatman, 1991; Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1999). Through a cultural lens, questions can be raised about the compatibility of new employees and their interactions during the initial phases of employment (Chatman, 1991).

Compatibility is how employees interpret their goals and values to align, assimilate, and function within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Chatman, 1991; Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1999; Schalm, 2013). It also speaks to the responsiveness of workplace leaders to address the individual needs of the employee in respect to the employee's work desires (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Employers then select employees who enhance the institutional diversity while pushing and expanding the organization's central and peripheral values (Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1999). Compatibility and diversity work in partnership to ensure that both the employee and the organization benefit.

Compatibility, within the lens of higher education, focuses on the composition of the many individuals who lead and make critical decisions to enhance the operation of their institution. Prior research has focused on organizational fit of faculty (Absher, 2009; Butner & Burley, 2000; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Marston & Brunetti, 2009; Victorino et al., 2013) or academic administrators (Jackson, 2000, 2003a, 2004b). However, limited research has focused on non-academic administrators. At public and private institutions, non-academic administrators include individuals serving on both the academic and non-academic sides of campus (Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014). Academic administrators include academic department heads, academic deans (associate/assistant) and provosts. Non-academic administrators include professionals such as student affairs officers, academic support professionals, business office staff members, registrars, admissions and financial aid officers.

Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model

Jackson (2004a) developed the Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model to conceptualize organizational fit for administrators of color (Jackson, 2004a) and to understand their compatibility within higher education. The model focuses on how the organizational fit experiences of African American administrators at research-intensive institutions either facilitated or impeded their Engagement, Retention, and Advancement within higher education. The model breaks down the three larger themes of Engagement, Retention, and Advancement into four domains necessary to understand the organizational fit of African American administrators while they professionally develop in their respective fields within higher education. The domains include Pre-engagement, Engagement, Advancement, and Outcomes, which show the institutions commitment to the greater community and acceptance of general "principles of diversity and affirmative action" (Jackson, 2004a, p. 216).

Pre-engagement is the foundational phase, which focuses on institutional activities to recruit, orient, and provide adequate incentive packages for new administrators (Jackson, 2004a). The recruitment process entails the overt public strategies the institution engages in to bring qualified African American applicants into the candidate pool. Orientation is two-fold and connects the administrator on the community and campus level. The community level orientation links the administrator with the larger African American community outside of the higher education institution via religious organizations and social networks. The campus level orientation introduces them to the campus community and culture. Institutional leaders then

need to provide comparable and competitive incentive packages. The goal of the pre-engagement phase is to support African Americans' early retention within the institution.

The second phase, Engagement, addresses the support provided to administrators that enables them to function daily in their position. There are four components of this phase: empowerment, leadership opportunities, mentoring, and in-service professional development (Jackson, 2004a). Empowerment focuses on supervisors and colleagues trusting the administrator as a qualified professional to complete assigned job roles and responsibilities. Second, African American administrators need to be provided with opportunities to take part in leadership roles within the organization and professional community. However, institutional leaders need to balance these opportunities to ensure administrators can accomplish their assigned job responsibilities.

Formal and informal mentoring provides African American administrators with professional connections to veteran administrators, who can help navigate the institutional culture and overall professional trajectory. In-service development aids the administrator in acquiring the necessary competences to stay up-to-date on the position. Jackson (2004a) suggests the in-service workshop should pay special attention to the needs of African Americans working in the position.

The third phrase, Advancement, centers on the retention of African American administrators. There are three components: professional release time, professional development funds, and experiences beyond the diversity mission of the institution (Jackson, 2004a). Professional release time focuses on the institutional support for administrators to engage in professional development activities and support services for African American students. Release time serves as a substitution for time spent on these activities with other work hours. Professional development funds provide institutional resources provided to allow African American administrators to engage in professional development. Third, African American administrators need time to participate in non-diversity related activities. This provides them with the opportunity to develop expertise necessary to advance within their professional field.

The final domain is Outcomes, which addresses retention and career advancement. Retention addresses the administrator's tenure within the institution with the goal being to maintain African Americans at the same rate as their White counterparts (Jackson, 2004a).

Career advancement is the preservation and advancement of administrators within their institution and/or the overall profession of higher education administration.

Jackson's (2004a) ERA model is helpful when examining the organizational fit of administrators of color. I designed this research study to expand the model and increase the organizational fit literature. Initially, the model used a sample of African American administrators employed at large research institutions. I used Jackson's (2004a) ERA model to examine administrators of color working at small liberal arts institutions. This allowed for the model to be examined on an additional institutional type, while also expanding it beyond just African American administrators. This study also included Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander administrators. This was important as prior research focused solely on the organizational fit of administrators without regard to race or ethnicity (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005; Forward, Czech, & Allen, 2007; Marston & Brunetti, 2009; Schroder, 2008; Webb, 2009) or solely African Americans (Butner & Burley, 2000; Flowers, 2003; Gardner, Barrett, & Pearson, 2014; Jackson, 2003b; Jackson & Flowers, 2003). This study also contributed to the literature by using a utilizing a phenomenological design to interview and analyze the data. This qualitative approach expands Jackson's (2004a) ERA model beyond the Delphi technique, which relies on expert panelists (Jackson, 2001, 2002, 2004a; Jackson & Flowers, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Diversity has moved to a central organizational goal within the workplace. Agreement on a single definition of diversity is difficult to achieve (Herring, 2009) but organizational leaders often expand the definition to include the multiple social identities (race, gender, sexual orientation, age, geographic region, language, etc.), which make up each employee. However, this expanded focus on diversity does not adequately address the historical and current under-representation of people of color within the workplace (Ahmed, 2012; Bond & Haynes, 2014; Collins, 2009).

The U.S. population is undergoing racial demographic shifts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Historically, Whites made up the greatest proportion of the population (Passel & Cohn, 2008). In 2014, Whites' overall percentage of the population decreased from prior years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). At the same time, African American, Asian American, and Latina/o groups increased in the percentage of the population, they represent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The population will continue to shift, as African American, Asian American, and Latina/o

populations continue to grow. The changes in the country's demographics have had a direct impact on the workforce. In 2012, people of color made up 36% of the workforce (Burns et al., 2012). In addition, employment projections show an increase of people of color by 2020 (Tossi, 2013).

Changes in the workforce should lead to changes in the workplace. The workplace has been slow to adjust to the shifting demographics. Organizational leaders need to take proactive steps to increase the diversity within the workplace (Cook, 2013). Steps include rethinking recruitment and hiring practices (Buttner et al., 2009; Konrad, 2003) while also being cognizant of their history of excluding people of color within the workplace (Buttner et al., 2009). By improving the organization's climate, leaders may reduce costs related to absenteeism and turnover (Robinson & Dechant, 1997) to ensure employee retention.

Despite the call for change, there continues to be an underrepresentation of people of color in the workforce, especially within higher education (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014b; Buttner et al., 2009). This is due in part to how slowly higher education changes (Birnbaum, 1988; Brown, 2004) and institutional climates (Ahmed, 2012; Brown, 2004). Organizational leaders can examine the organizational fit of administrators of color to help increase the diversity of their institution. Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) is a model that can be used to examine the experiences of administrators of color fit within higher education.

Prior research exists on the organizational fit of African American faculty members and academic administrators at large research institutions. However, there is a dearth of literature on other racial groups. In addition, little research exists viewing organizational fit outside of large research institutions. Additional research is needed to focus on expanding the literature to include other institutional types (for example, community colleges, comprehensive, religious institutions, and small liberal arts institutions). Finally, there is a need to expand the higher education literature on organizational fit to non-academic administrators of color. To address these issues, the lived experiences of non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions were examined through the lens of organizational fit.

Purpose of the Study

This study was about organizational fit. Specifically, I was interested in how administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions experience fit within their organizational

setting. Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model served as the foundation for the understanding organizational fit.

The sample included administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. For this study, administrators include non-academic professionals at any level within the institution (Hirt, Kirk, McGuire, Mount, & Nelson-Hensley, 2003). Non-academic administrators held positions in student affairs, academic support, business office, registrar, admissions and financial aid offices, and similar departments. Administrators of color included those who identified from a racial/ethnic group traditionally underrepresented within higher education, such as Blacks/African Americans, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Americans. Small liberal arts institutions included colleges and universities with a focus on undergraduate education and a total enrollment of less than 2,500 students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching [Carnegie Foundation], 2010; U.S. News and World Report, 2014). Using a phenomenological design, I interviewed selected administrators to understand their experiences with organizational fit.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the design of this study:

What is the nature of lived experiences of organizational fit among non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions?

Significance of the Study

This study was significant for three campus constituencies. First, findings from this study may inform human resource (HR) administrators about recruitment, hiring, and orientation experiences of people of color. HR staff members may be able to use the findings to review their institutions' recruiting and hiring practices to advance diversity and inclusion.

Administrators of color might also find the findings beneficial. Findings of this study provided data on professional development and steps that lead to career advancement both within institutions and within higher education administrative ranks. Administrators of color might use the findings to determine their professional development plan to progress within their profession.

Third, diversity officers might benefit from the findings of this study. Findings described the organizational fit experiences of administrators of color. Diversity officers might use this information to develop programs and services to ensure the institution is a receptive environment for administrators of color.

The study also held significance institutional policy makers. First, findings provided insights into the advancement experiences of non-academic administrators of color. Policymakers might use this information to evaluate policies on the allocation of diversity-related responsibilities and resources. Second, findings provided institutional budget committees with information about professional development funds necessary to support non-academic administrators of color. Policymakers might use this information when considering budget increases for departments to support the engagement of non-academic administrators of color. Third, human resource policymakers might find the findings beneficial. The findings provided them with data about the retention and advancement of non-academic administrators of color. Policymakers might use this information to evaluate their employee performance review policies.

The present study also had significance for future research. I examined the organizational fit of administrators of color from African American, Asian American, Latina/o, and Native American racial and ethnic groups. Future research might compare organizational fit between non-academic White administrators and non-academic administrators of color. In addition, a comparison could be made between groups of administrators of color or with other minoritized groups, such as LGBT administrators. Such a study would expand what is known about organizational fit among non-academic administrators across ethnic, racial, and other minoritized groups.

This study also focused on organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions. Future studies might focus on examining the organizational fit of non-academic administrators at additional institutional types. Potential institutional types include comprehensive universities, religious colleges, large private institutions, or community colleges. Such a study would expand on the literature available about organizational fit among non-academic administrators serving at different institutional types.

Finally, this study focused on the experience of non-academic administrators. Future research might examine the experiences of supervising administrators working with non-academic administrators or the experiences of academic administrators. Such a study would expand the research to view organizational fit from the viewpoint of the supervisor and provide supervisors with tools to use when working with their staff. It would also increase the literature

on academic administrators, who work on the faculty side of institutions and often serve in a different capacity than non-academic administrators.

Delimitations

Like all research projects, this study had delimitations. The first dealt with the sample. All respondents volunteered to participate in this study. People who self-selected to participate in the study may have differed in some important ways from people who did not opt to participate. This could have influenced the findings in some unforeseen manner.

A second delimitation involved the method. I used a qualitative research method. The goal of qualitative research is to understand how participants make sense of their experience with the phenomenon studied (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). This limits the findings of the study to the actual participants of the study and constrains the transferability and generalizability to a large group. However, the phenomenological method allowed for the advancing transferability to the maximum extent possible.

A final delimitation was data collection. Participants reflected on previous experiences with Engagement, Retention, and Advancement. As a researcher, I relied on the recall of the participants. There is a potential for participants to have difficulty recalling events as they occurred due to the passing of time (Patton, 2015). Interviewing participants as they advanced through each stage may have provided a clearer understanding of their experiences. This would allow for a longitudinal, real-time study.

This study was worthwhile despite the delimitations. There is a lack of scholarship that details the experiences of non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. This study examined the lived experiences of such administrators.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized around five chapters. Chapter One is an introduction of the topic and purpose of the study, the research questions and significance of the study. Chapter Two contains a review of the literature relevant to the study. Chapter Three includes an explanation of the methodology of the study, including the sample, interview protocol, and the procedures for collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter Four comprises a description of the findings. Chapter Five includes a discussion of the findings with respect to how it might raise questions and provide explanations about the ongoing problem of underrepresentation of non-academic administrators of color within higher education.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter is a review of the literature on organizational fit in relation to non-academic administrators of color. I organized the discussion around the three components of Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) model. This literature review is organized around these three major categories and their respective subtopics.

First, I describe the literature on Engagement as defined in the ERA model. Engagement encompasses both the institutional activities to recruit, hire, and initially engage administrators of color within their respective institutions (Jackson, 2004a). Three groups of studies emerged in the review: studies on recruitment; studies on representation of people of color in higher education; and studies on the academic pipeline. Next, I explored the literature on retention in higher education. Retention addresses the factors that maintain faculty members and administrators within higher education (Jackson, 2004a). I found three groups of studies: studies on satisfaction; studies on campus climate; and studies on salary and incentive packages. Third, I examined the literature on advancement in higher education. Advancement represents the techniques employed to professionally prepare and promote faculty members and administrators within higher education (Jackson, 2004a). Three groups of studies emerged: studies on career advancement; those on mentoring; and studies on professional development.

Engagement in Higher Education

Jackson (2004a) conceptualized Engagement in higher education as the factors that go into recruiting, hiring, and initially engaging professionals of color within higher education. Within the ERA model, the Engagement phase is divided in two parts labeled as the Pre-engagement and Engagement domains (Jackson, 2004a). Within the literature, the nucleus of Engagement centers on the recruitment of administrators within higher education. In addition, the literature on the representation of people of color and the academic pipeline were part of the recruiting process, which affects higher education administrators during the Engagement phase. This study focused on the Engagement process and these three components, recruitment, representation, and the pipeline were foundational elements in understanding how employees initially engage within their institutions.

Recruitment

Recruiting new employees of color within higher education is important for institutional leaders aspiring to increase the diversity of their workforce. Much of the prior research on recruitment has focused on the recruitment of faculty and then academic administrators. Addressed in the literature are techniques to increase employee diversity, the need for a critical mass, and factors that attract professionals of color.

Increasing diversity is an institutional goal for many higher education leaders; however, the implementation of this goal is not always an institution-wide responsibility (Ahmed, 2012). The recruitment of candidates of color often falls to faculty members and senior leaders of color who are committed to increasing the institution's diversity (Gasman, Kim, & Nguyen, 2011).   In addition, higher education leaders who recruit administrators of color often do not construct unique recruitment strategies intentionally designed to recruit people of color or determine candidate-centered recruitment priorities for administrators of color (Gasman et al., 2011). While studying one private institution, Gasman et al. (2011) found more than 50% of faculty members were unclear about the actual procedures to increase or recruit diverse candidates due to the lack of a formalized process. Instead, leaders at this institution relied on an affirmative action officer to ensure the candidate pool and search committee were diverse (Gasman et al., 2011).

Although additional work is needed to extend the research beyond a single institution, Gasman et al.'s (2011) study does bring to light the benefits and importance of having a critical mass of employees of color. A critical mass is a "…significant group of faculty members of color; its presence can lead to an institutional climate that replaces an institution's legacy of exclusion" (Gasman et al., 2011, p. 217). The critical mass of employees of color was a key factor that influenced the decision of participants to either accept or reject position offered during the recruitment process (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Gasman et al., 2011). However, researchers fail to provide an exact number or ratio to determine critical mass.

Beyond employing a critical mass of employees of color, there are several other techniques discussed in the literature that are helpful when recruiting professionals of color. These techniques include targeted marketing and advertisements (Gasman et al., 2011; Jackson, 2001); opportunities for mentoring (Barrett & Smith, 2008); and targeting specific candidates from diverse backgrounds throughout the recruitment process (Gasman et al., 2011). In addition,

transparent and consistent hiring and recruitment practices make it easier for potential candidates to understand the process (Cornileus, 2013; Jackson, 2001).

Employers of color make decisions to work at higher education institutions for a variety of reasons. Barrett and Smith (2008) sought to determine if Matier's (1990) tangible and intangible internal factors, and non-work related external factors influenced the decision of 12 African American faculty members to work at a private research intensive institution. Using semi-structured interviews, they found several of the Matier's 33 variables to be very important in the decision-making process (Barrett & Smith, 2008).

Of the 12 intangible variables, career advancement opportunities, congeniality of associates, influences in department, institutional reputation, rapport with department leaders, reputation of associates, research opportunities, and teaching and assignment opportunities were influential in the participants' decision-making process (Barrett & Smith, 2008). Participants identified research-funding, teaching and research load, and sabbatical, leave, and travel as three key tangible variables (Barrett & Smith, 2008). Participants were asked also about non-work related variables that the institution had limited or no control (Matier, 1990). Of the nine non-work related variables, participants identified climate of region, cultural recreational or social opportunities, geographic considerations, and housing cost as important factors in their selection process (Barrett & Smith, 2008).

Even though research identified several factors and techniques that helped recruit faculty members and administrators of color, researchers also sought to explain why the recruitment of candidates of color is difficult. Prestige within higher education institutions is one specific concern around the recruitment of faculty and administrators of color. Higher education leaders often place a higher value and seek to employ distinguished scholars or faculty members researching prestigious subject areas (Gasman et al., 2011). Often, academics of color, especially those researching topics related to race, are not included in the prestigious classification, which hinders their recruitment. In particular, doctoral students of color, who focused on non-race related topics, had higher rates of employment at research-intensive institutions (Spalter-Roth, Mayorova, Shin, & White, 2011). This finding suggests there is potential for increased recruitment of academics of color when they focus on research deemed important within higher education.

Second, institutions with a critical mass of persons of color (Gasman et al., 2011; Queneau & Zoogah, 2002) or institutions with competitive salaries (Gasman et al., 2011; Jackson, 2004a) are more attractive to administrators of color looking for jobs. This has created a recruitment challenge for institutional leaders who have a low percentage of people of color and/or are not able to offer competitive salaries. Instead, these leaders should focus on offering competitive salaries and aligning their faculty/staff demographics to their peer institutions to attract more academics of color (Gasman et al., 2011). Finally, other researchers have suggested recruiting academics of color is difficult due to the representation of people of color in higher education (Flowers, 2003; Jackson, 2006) or related to the academic pipeline (Jackson, 2000; Sethna, 2011).

Representation of People of Color in Higher Education

There are two central arguments within the literature as to why there are limited numbers of people of color hired and working within higher education. Some scholars suggest certain racial groups were not represented at the same proportion as they are in the general population (Flowers, 2003; Jackson, 2006). This research focuses on the assumption of a normal distribution of employees across professions and does not account for employee work preferences. Other scholars suggest the low numbers are related to the academic pipeline (Jackson, 2000, 2003b, 2006; Sethna, 2011; Shaw & Stanton, 2012).

In examining the question of the limited hiring and recruiting of administrators of color, Flowers (2003) used a representation ratio to determine if there was an underrepresentation of African American student affairs administrators in relation to the number of African American students within higher education. Representation ratios provided a representation quotient, with the goal of having 1.0. Quotients greater than 1.0 represent an overrepresentation of a group while quotients less than 1.0 represent an underrepresentation between the two groups (Flowers, 2003). The African American administrators' representation ratios were 0.70 (Flowers, 2003). The main finding addressed the limited number of African American administrators hired within higher education in relation to the number of students in attendance (Flower, 2003). This ratio provides an initial prompt to encourage higher education leaders to think through how they can increase their employees of color to align with their growing students of color population.

An impact ratio was also used to investigate the limited hiring of male academic administrators of color (Jackson, 2006). To create impact ratios, the selection rate of each group

was divided by the selection rate of the highest group (Jackson, 2006). Whites served as the highest group for comparison. This formula was based on the EEOC'S Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Criteria. Between 1993 and 1999, the overall percentage of men in higher education leadership positions decreased by 0.38%, although men continued to hold the majority of leadership positions (Jackson, 2006). Specifically, African Americans and Asian Americans men decreased in leadership positions by 11.2% and 14.6% respectively, while Latino men had a positive change of 7.9%. African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans administrators had impact ratios of 6.2%, 2.7%, 3.2% respectively in 1993 and 5.5%, 2.9%, 2.7% respectively in 1999 in comparison to White male administrators (Jackson, 2006).

At two-year and four-year institutions, all three racial groups of men continued to be underrepresented within higher education administration between 1993 and 1999. However, African Americans men increased in academic administration by 29.1% at two-year institutions, while declining 13.6% in leadership positions at four-year institutions (Jackson, 2006). Latino academic administrators grew by 18.7% at four-year institutions, but declined 2.8% at two-year institutions. Asian Americans administrators experienced a decline in administrative positions by 68.0% and 12.4% at both two-year and four-year institutions (Jackson, 2006). While this study shows impact ratios among male administrators of color, a limitation of this study concerns Jackson's (2006) assumption of an equal distribution of races across professional groups. Employees do not evenly distribute themselves across professions and provide a balance of racial groups in relation to the overall population. That said, these impact ratios do point to specific trends in employment that should be of concern to those who are trying to build a diverse workforce.

The focus of much of the research around the limited hiring of administrators of color has focused on African Americans or men. In addition, the research centers on quantitative data, which does little to explain qualitatively why higher education leaders do not hire administrators of color at higher rates. Additional research on current administrators of color can shed light on their recruitment and hiring experiences and provide policy makers and institutional leaders with additional guidance to influence their current practices. Research on the academic pipeline also illuminates the limited representation of people of color employed within higher education.

Academic Pipeline

The academic pipeline is another explanation of the limited number of higher education professionals of color and addresses the recruitment of people of color working within higher education (Jackson, 2000; Sethna, 2011). The academic pipeline is a metaphor for the linear educational system by which students advance towards educational and professional goals (Jackson, 2003b; Sethna, 2011; Shaw & Stanton, 2012). The retained students are eligible to enter and advance to positions within higher education and the general workforce. Some people exit the academic pipeline at earlier phases, which reduces the potential number of professionals available at advanced stages of the pipeline (Sethna, 2011). These advanced stages include the baccalaureate, master's degree completion, and doctoral degree completion, which are necessary for many advanced careers within higher education.

Four factors influence the academic pipeline for potential faculty members and administrators of color: low graduate school participation, small pools of candidates, lack of professional role models, and the environment within higher education (Jackson, 2000). Graduate degree completion is often a prerequisite for many academic and non-academic higher education positions.

The low percentage of people of color in the academic pipeline for higher education positions was examined to determine if there was a connection to the low number of students participating in graduate school and then capable of advancing to tenure-track teaching positions (Sethna, 2011). To follow the progress made by institutions to advance each racial group along the academic pipeline in comparison to Whites, Sethna, (2011) used conversions rates or the rates at which each group advances from one level to the next. Racial groups that exhibited a positive percentage were determined to be progressing better than White academics are, while racial groups with negative percentages were determined to be progressing worse than White academics (Sethna, 2011).

The participation rates of people of color attending graduate school were significantly lower than their White counterparts (Sethna, 2011). African American (-18%) and Native Americans (-14%) had the lowest conversion rates for those completing bachelor's degrees. Both groups struggled with navigating the educational system, which limited the potential number from each racial group capable of entering the graduate school pipeline (Sethna, 2011). African Americans were the only racial group to exhibit positive conversion rates for those who did advance to master's degree programs. Instead, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native

Americans had negative conversion rates of -10%, -18% and -18% respectively from bachelor's programs to a master's program. Finally, Asian Americans had the highest conversion rate from master's to doctoral program of 41% (Sethna, 2011).

The second explanation associated with the academic pipeline is the small pool of eligible candidates to accept positions within higher education. This small pool is a direct result of the low number of students of color matriculating and completing graduate programs (Jackson, 2000). To address this concern, higher education leaders and researchers must examine the factors that limit the number of students of color from pursuing advanced degrees. In addition, the pipeline issue does not speak to the quality of academic programs, or the process to support the advancement of people of color (Sethna, 2011).

Third, professional role models are necessary to assist people of color with navigating various phases of the academic pipeline. In particular, Asian Americans received 6.3% of the total undergraduate degrees, 5.2% of master's degrees, and 9.5% of doctoral degrees in 2011-2012 (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014a). In relation to their White counterparts, Asian Americans had conversion rates of -21% in moving from assistant professors to associate professors and -60% from full professors to academic administrators (Sethna, 2011). After Asian Americans enter faculty positions, they do not connect to institutional and professional support to advance and navigate the higher education institutional culture and transition through the faculty ranks and enter academic administrative positions (Sethna, 2011).

The higher education environment is the final explanation for the pipeline issue. I explore this topic in more detail at the retention level as it affects both recruitment and retention of professionals of color within higher education.

Retention in Higher Education

The second part of Jackson's (2004a) ERA model is Retention, which addresses the retention of employees within the organization (Jackson, 2001, 2004a, 2006; Jackson & Flowers, 2003). Retention is the ongoing process of maintaining employees in their current position and the overall profession over time (Jackson, 2004a). The retention process starts as early as the recruitment of new employees to ensure the engagement of professionals within the institutional culture (Jackson, 2004a). The focus in higher education is typically on retention as a general practice, with literature in this area centered on the satisfaction of administrators within higher education. Additional literature addresses the role of campus climate (Hermsen & Rosser, 2008;

Ryan, Healy, & Sullivan, 2012; Turner, Gonzalez, & Wong, 2011) and how salary and incentive packages (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Donnelly, 2009; Jayakumar et al., 2009) impact retention. A final component of retention addresses the tension higher education leaders have with finding ways to support and retain administrators of color (Jackson, 2004a, 2004b; Jackson & Flowers, 2003). These components are important to understand the factors that affect the retention of administrators of color within higher education.

Satisfaction of Administrators within Higher Education

Within organizational fit literature, workplace satisfaction is a major component of organizational fit to understand the retention of professionals. Researchers use various constructs to conceptualize satisfaction (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Jayakumar et al., 2009). Some researchers have used variables such as salary and benefits (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Brewer & Clippard, 2002; Card, Mas, Moretti, & Saez, 2012; Donaldson & Rosser, 2007; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Victorino et al., 2013), research opportunities, teaching load (Jayakumar et al., 2009; Victorino et al., 2013), and interactions with colleagues and supervisors (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Tull, 2006; Victorino et al., 2013). Other researchers' conceptualized satisfaction using an index based on wage satisfaction, job satisfaction, and wage fairness (Card et al., 2012).

Researchers also view satisfaction as a combination of intrinsic satisfaction, organizational satisfaction, and salary and promotion (Brewer & Clippard, 2002). For Student Support Service Professionals (SSSP), the variables of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments explained 25% of variance in total job satisfaction (Brewer & Clippard, 2002). There was an inverse correlation with both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Emotional exhaustion was significant and negatively correlated to total job satisfaction. On the other hand, the researchers found personal accomplishment was significant and positively correlated with satisfaction (Brewer & Clippard, 2002).

Comparing the burnout and job satisfaction of the SSSP professionals to national data on other helping professionals, the SSSP sample "had a lower rate of burnout and higher rate of job satisfaction" (Brewer & Clippard, 2002, p. 182). The national data included teachers, postsecondary educators, social service workers, and those in the medicine or mental health field. This finding supports earlier research on burnout and job satisfaction but leaves room for qualitative explorations to understand the relationship job satisfaction has on employee retention.

Of interest is the fact that 52% percent of the SSSP sample racially or ethnically identified as African American, Asian American, Latina/o, or Native American (Brewer & Clippard, 2002). However, similar to other job satisfaction research, the demographic variables did not correlate with total job satisfaction.

In a study of 33,451 faculty members, Jayakumar et al. (2009) sought to examine the relationship between satisfaction, campus climate, and retention, especially for racial subgroups. Using factorial composites, they defined overall satisfaction as participants' "satisfaction with salary and fringe benefits, opportunity for scholarly pursuit, teaching load, and overall job satisfaction" (Jayakumar et al., 2009, p. 547). Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, and Allen (1999) developed the campus climate variable from an inversed institutional index of racial climate. Finally, the retention variable was developed from two areas of inquiry: participants' desire to depart current position in the last two years, and participant's reselection of a faculty career if given a chance to select a career again (Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Overall, researchers found faculty members' satisfaction and retention to have a strong and positive relationship (Jayakumar et al., 2009). Participant felt having their work valued or having greater autonomy within the workplace was essential to their retention, but findings varied by ethnicity. African Americans faculty members especially valued their autonomy while Asian American faculty members reported a desire to have their colleagues' value their research (Jayakumar et al., 2009). In addition, there was an association found between administrators of color with a higher desire to leave their institution and those who perceived their institution to have a hostile work climate. Other factors, with a significant relationship to satisfaction included the "perceptions of career support, recognition for competence, perceptions of discrimination, working condition, and bureaucratic review and intervention" (Donaldson & Rosser, 2007, p. 7), which explained 58% of the variance in satisfaction. Each of the variables had a positive relationship with satisfaction except for perception of discrimination.

In a study of 1,754 STEM faculty members, *collegial relationships*, was the most important predictor of satisfaction, with the model explaining 25% of variance (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2009). Teaching undergraduate courses led to less satisfaction while neither research nor grant writing had an impact on satisfaction. Demographic factors also affected satisfaction. For instance, men, tenured, and married faculty members were more satisfied than women, untenured, and single faculty members (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2009). This finding is noteworthy

for two reasons. First, faculty members are married at higher rates than the general public and marriage is associated with job satisfaction and retention (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2009; Jayakumar et al., 2009). Second, women and men are not equitably represented in all fields within higher education, which has implications for recruitment and retention (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014b).

Research on work place satisfaction provides an understanding into the factors that lead to retention of administrators within higher education. In particular, higher education leaders need to focus on supporting employees' personal accomplishments (Brewer & Clippard, 2002), autonomy in their work (Jayakumar et al., 2009) and career support (Donaldson & Rosser, 2007). At the same time, they must be cognizant that emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (Brewer & Clippard, 2002) and perception of discrimination (Donaldson & Rosser, 2007) negatively affect their retention efforts. Most workplace satisfaction research is quantitative, and additional qualitative research is necessary to understand the relationship between workplace satisfaction and race.

Issue around race and satisfaction.   Researchers have not found statistical differences in job satisfaction based on race (Absher, 2009; Donaldson & Rosser, 2007). Absher (2009), for example, rejected her hypotheses that there was a significant difference between people of color and Whites in relation to retention. However, this same research shows there was a difference in satisfaction between individual racial groups on "all the work and career factors" (Absher, 2009, p. 170). This calls into question the impact of using small sample sizes for individual racial groups, which potentially accounts for the difference between each of the racial groups. It is also further evidence of the need for qualitative research on the role between race and satisfaction.

Although race was not a significant predictor of satisfaction, one race-related variable, "perception of discrimination" (Donaldson & Rosser, 2007, p.7) accounted for satisfaction with a negative coefficient ($p = .02$). This result raises the question of whether there is a connection between race and workplace satisfaction, as race is typically one component connected with discrimination (Donaldson & Rosser, 2007). In prior research, there was also a connection "between racial and gender stereotypes and how [the two] may combine to create unsupportive work environments for women of color" (Blackhurst, 2000, p. 411). Using post hoc analysis, Blackhurst, (2000) found that Asian American and Latina professionals perceived sexual discrimination at significantly higher levels than other racial groups of women; while women of

color perceived gender discrimination to affect their work more than White women. This perception of gender discrimination provides evidence for researchers to explore the connection between satisfaction and race.

An additional connection between race and job satisfaction is shown in how institutional types affect the satisfaction of faculty members of color (Jayakumar et al., 2009). Doctoral students of color whose research did not focus on race-related topics were more likely to be hired at research-intensive universities (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011). However, earlier research highlighted that faculty members of color were less satisfied at research-intensive universities due to the intense pressures associated with the tenure process (Jayakumar et al., 2009). Additional research is needed to understand if the higher levels of satisfaction relate to the ability to focus on topics more connected to their personal interest or the ability to focus on teaching and service. In addition, research is needed to better understand the dynamics of each institutional type that may support or inhibit retention. In addition, this research focuses on the connection between race and satisfaction for faculty members of color. Faculty and administrators are quite different and additional research is needed to understand the unique relationship between race and satisfaction for administrators of color.

Campus Climate

Campus climate is the environment in which employees work and accomplish their day-to-day responsibilities. It also can serve as a conduit for diversity in which to support retention decisions of faculty and administrators of color (Mayhew et al., 2006). Campus climate is often associated with diversity elements, which may or may not support retention. The higher education environment may be viewed as chilly for women and people of color. "A chilly climate," coined by Hall and Sandler (1982, p. 3), is an uncomfortable environment in which subtle attitudes and behaviors inform women and people of color that they are not fully valued or welcomed.

Higher education leaders retain professionals when the campus climate is open and receptive to diversity (Mayhew et al., 2009). Using a modified HERI Diversity Climate Survey, 34.7% of variance was predicted in a campus climate score (Mayhew et al., 2009). There are variables, which help explain how staff perceived the campus climate. These variables include staff demographics, department climate for diversity, institutional commitment to diversity, and staff experiences with diversity (Mayhew et al., 2009). In particular, staff members perceived a

lower campus climate for diversity, when they were from higher educational levels or from ethnic minority groups.

In a qualitative study, researchers used focus groups to examine the impact of campus climate on faculty of color (Turner et al., 2011). Participants recounted experiences of their campuses not being welcoming and being held to different standards than other faculty members in relation to pregnancy and stop the clock policies. These experiences along with "encountering White superiority" (Turner et al., 2011, p. 205) influenced their perceptions of their institutions. Encountering White superiority addressed the participants' belief that as women of color, they may have been passed over for professional advancement solely based on their race and not their gender (Turner et al., 2011).

The role of the campus climate is important as higher education leaders seek to retain administrators of color. However, other research shows a negative racial climate alone may not be detrimental to retention, as it became insignificant when holding institutional characteristics constant (Jayakumar et al., 2009). This finding suggests that faculty members of color who have honed the skills to persist and advance may do so despite a negative campus climate (Jayakumar et al., 2009; Lutz, Hassouneh, Akeroyd, & Beckett, 2013). On the other hand, a more positive campus climate appeared to have a direct impact on satisfaction among faculty members of color by reducing position and/or profession departure (Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Salary and Incentive Packages

Salary and incentive packages are often used to not only attract but also retain administrators. This comes despite research that shows employees in general are less satisfied with their overall salaries (Donnelly, 2009). In a study of 1,913 academic advisors, both benefits and salary had low correlations to satisfaction within the workplace. Although salary had a low correlation to satisfaction, dissatisfaction occurred when respondents perceived their salaries as low (Donnelly, 2009; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

Other researchers suggest salary is moderately important to retention within the workplace (Hirt, Schneiter, & Amelink, 2005; Houston, Meyer, & Paewai, 2006). This may serve as one explanation for the low correlation between salary and satisfaction. Instead, employees valued intrinsic rewards such as "meaningful work" and "positive work environment" (Hirt et al., 2005, p. 13) more than extrinsic rewards. In another study, participants rated extrinsic factors neutral in determining job satisfaction (Houston et al., 2006). Salary had the

lowest mean of 3.61 in 2002 and second lowest mean in 2003. Participants agreed that intrinsic factors, such as work freedom, responsibility, and work variety, were more important to their satisfaction (Houston et al., 2006).

Two studies focused on the salary as a variable impacting workplace satisfaction (Buttner et al., 2009; Walker, Reason, & Robinson, 2003). The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Salary Survey was used to determine the predictors of salary for 419 senior-level student affairs administrators at both public and private institutions (Walker et al., 2003). Age and gender predicted salary while ethnicity and highest degree earned were not strong predictors of salary. Walker et al. (2003) questioned if the small sample size of administrators of color might account for why ethnicity was not a strong predictor of salary. Using a larger sample size, Buttner et al. (2009) focused on ethnicity to hypothesize if institutions with higher salaries would employ higher numbers of people of color "after controlling for school type" (Buttner et al., 2009, p. 782). Salary was a significant predictor, but with negative directionality as people of color in the sample worked at lower-paying institutions. The research concerning salary is mixed and inconsistent, which makes it difficult to determine the importance of salary in relation to satisfaction for employees in the workplace.

In summary, researchers often use quantitative studies with small sample sizes of people of color to determine satisfaction (Blackhurst, 2000; Donaldson & Rosser, 2007; Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011; Walker et al., 2003). This could potentially affect why race was not significant component in understanding satisfaction. Satisfaction is an important component to understand the retention of administrators of color. The use of qualitative research methods provides the opportunity to focus in-depth on the experiences of people of color in ways not afforded in quantitative research. Further research in this area will help understand people of color experiences with job satisfaction, campus climate and salary in the workplace. Qualitative research is also beneficial to explain how and why a phenomenon is occurring (Creswell, 2014), which will help higher education leaders and policy leaders desiring to keep pace and align the racial composition of the administrators they employ with changing student racial demographics.

Advancement in Higher Education

The final part of Jackson's (2004a) ERA model is Advancement, which is the final step after the engagement and retention of administrators of color within higher education. Advancement is an ongoing process within higher education for faculty members and

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administrators of color. Career advancement, mentoring, and professional development are three key areas in the literature to address the advancement of higher education professionals.

Career Advancement

Career advancement differs from retention as retention only addresses the organizational goal of retaining workers within the institution (Jackson, 2004a). Career advancement is the "promotion within or outside the home institution with the ultimate goal of retention in the field of administration" (Jackson, 2004a, p. 218). This extends the institutional outcome of retention to include everyone's professional outcomes.

Using the Delphi technique, factors were examined that led to professional growth and development for African American higher education administrators (Jackson, 2002). The Delphi technique relies on the consensus of experts, who were all African Americans higher education leaders with personal and professional experience with the advancement of administrators of color in higher education (Jackson, 2002).

In the first round, a panel of 10 experts individually created a list of 43 strategies necessary for professional development. Seven of the strategies were consistent across the group. In the second round, the 10 experts arranged the seven strategies in the order of importance. The seven strategies included: decision making authority within assigned position, seasoned mentors for professional development, release time and funding for research and scholarship or professional development, opportunity for institutional involvement beyond diversity-related activities, leadership opportunities at various institutional levels, additional release time for working with students of color, and positive rewards for partnering with local community of color (Jackson, 2002). The experts suggested these strategies are tools to assist African American administrators as they advanced within higher education (Jackson, 2002).

A concern with using the Delphi Technique is the heavy reliance on experts, which may leave out the experiences not encountered by these experts. In addition, research is needed to determine if the strategies are consistent for administrators from other ethnic groups. However, mentoring and professional development opportunities are two support mechanisms found within the literature to assist administrators of color as they navigate career advancement.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a prominent factor for some administrators, which affects their retention and advancement within higher education. Mentors are individuals "who provided leadership and

career guidance … [and] psychosocial support" (Patton, 2009, p. 521). In addition, mentors need to be experienced, trustworthy, and have career development connections, especially for those in same race mentor relationships (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011). The opportunity to participate in a mentoring program not only assists in the retention of current employees but also serves as a recruitment tool (Barrett & Smith, 2008). Mentoring programs assist people of color in assimilating to the institution and can be established initially as a formal technique and then evolve into informal relationships (Barrett & Smith, 2008). Mentoring can also serve as a buffer to assist participants to navigate their departments, institution, and profession overall (Lutz et al., 2013). Other leaders within the institution also can assist participants navigate outside of the mentoring role. Participants can learn to "balance survival and resistance" (Lutz et al., 2013, p. 133) to overcome hostile work environments.

The Kinnersley Mentoring Survey helped to understand the experiences of women administrators, who were mentored (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011). Fourteen percent of the participants identified as African American or Latino and 7% had a mentor from the same racial group. Having a mentor of the same gender was perceived as important (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011; Patton, 2009). There was no difference in effectiveness or features for those with a male mentor; however, women of color felt the mentor's race impacted the effectiveness of the relationship (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011; Montas-Hunter, 2012).

In a second study exploring the relationship between eight graduate students and their mentors, Patton (2009) found a desire for African American mentors. African American mentors carried the role of mother or friend, who helped the participants navigate the institutional culture, academic program, and career support. White mentors also provided career support; however, the graduate students did not view them as trustworthy (Patton, 2009). Overall, same-race mentors were beneficial to understand how African American navigate the academic administrative environment (Montas-Hunter, 2012) and advance professionally (Gardner et al., 2014).

Spalter-Roth et al. (2011) investigated the impact of cross-race mentoring by examining the experiences of 532 Ph.D. graduates. The study included 108 Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) fellows, 266 National Science Foundation (NSF) dissertation award recipients, and 158 randomly selected graduates, who served as the control group (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011, p.3). All of the MFP fellows, 15.6% of NSF award recipients, and 22.2% of the control group were

graduates of color (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011, p. 5). Despite the limited number of mentors of color, there was a connection between having a mentor of color and focusing on race-related research topics. For instance, all the 13.9% MFP fellows with a male mentor of color did their research on a race related topic; while only 57.1% of the 38.9 % of MFP fellows with a White male mentor focused on race-related topics (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011, p. 8). However, using logistic regression, graduate students of color with a White mentor were more likely to obtain employment at a research-intensive university (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011). This finding challenges the benefit of having a same-race mentor, who may support race-related research interest but may not have the connection to help the professional trajectory of their mentees. Mentors of color allowed for the exploration of race as research topics however prior research shows that race-related topics were not deemed prestigious within higher education and impact the hiring of faculty members of color (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011).

In particular, African American men benefit from mentor relationships to advance professionally (Cornileus, 2013). However, mentoring is not limited to same-race mentoring but also include cross-race mentors (Cornileus, 2013; Spalter-Roth et al., 2011).   African American men live biculturally and often their Black identity is in contradiction with an organization's White culture (Cornileus, 2013). To live *biculturally* is to develop coping skills to navigate between two cultures, while at times downplaying one culture to advance within the other culture (Cornileus, 2013). This ability is beneficial to organizational culture as bicultural people can readjust their behavior to adopt and downplay cultural features that are unacceptable to the dominant culture.   Students used cross-racial mentoring to learn the skills necessary to balance between two cultures to navigate the organizational identity with the goal of advancing professionally.

Existing biculturally was not limited to African American men; Latina women also spoke of living in balance of two cultural worlds when navigating their institutions (Montas-Hunter, 2012) and mentoring was central to the preparation of women of color to enter faculty positions (Ortega-Liston & Rodriquez Soto, 2014). In a qualitative study of six tenured faculty members serving in academic administrative positions, participants said they had a strong sense of their identity and believed a strong family support system undergirded their pursuit of leadership positions, and half of the participants had a role model who assisted with professional

development (Montas-Hunter, 2012). Support networks were a common theme among the six participants and they actively worked to cultivate these networks.

In another qualitative study, key emerging themes addressed living biculturally, working at hostile campuses, and "feelings of isolation" as the only person of color working at the institution (Gardner et al., 2014, p. 7). Twelve of the 14 participants spoke of having both faculty members and administrators who served as mentors to help them navigate the institution. One participant said, "[Learning] to negotiate – politically negotiate – a place in a predominately White institution [is important] because learning how to negotiate that environment becomes extremely vital to one's success…" (Gardner et al., 2014, p. 8).

Prior research has highlighted a need for mentoring among administrators of color. Additional qualitative research is needed to understand how mentors have assisted administrators of color to successfully navigate various institutional types. In addition, understanding the concept of bicultural living can further be explored using qualitative research to understand the experiences of administrators of color, specifically, how administrators of color navigate bicultural environments to advance within higher education.

Professional Development

Professional development serves as a technique to assist all administrators to develop necessary skills, and provides tools to perform their current position or advance within their career. When examining the work and career factors of 1,212 faculty members at 102 Christian higher education institutions, Absher (2009) found 39.6% of faculty members viewed institutional support professional development as very important; however, only 15.1% were satisfied with their opportunities for professional development. There was a gap between importance and satisfaction of more than 40% for professional development, although both faculty members of color and women rated higher the importance and satisfaction with professional development higher than White men (Absher, 2009).

Absher (2009) did not specify the components of professional development. However, Rosser (2005) viewed professional development to include "travel, release time, and sabbatical leave" (p. 102). Comparing data from 1993 and 1999, Rosser (2005) found over time faculty members perceived an increase in professional development, which was a component of work life. Professional development "contributes significantly to the quality of faculty members' work life (Rosser, 2005, p. 102).

Sermersheim & Keim (2005) studied 269 mid-level student affairs professionals of which 13% identified as people of color.   Mid-level professionals desired to have professional training on fiscal management (61%), research and evaluation (56%) and leadership (56%). Sixty-eight percent desired to change positions and advance within their profession and these participants felt they needed more skills to advance. In addition to professional development trainings, 34% believed mentoring relationships were essential to improve professional skills (Sermersheim & Keim, 2005). The research on professional development did not address the availability or access to funds necessary for professional development.

Conclusion

In summary, there are three bodies of work related to Engagement in higher education as defined in Jackson's (2004a) model. The research on recruitment has focused primarily on faculty of color (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Brown, 2004; Gasman et al., 2011). Scholars have examined attitudes of recruiters (Cornileus, 2013) and recruitment techniques (Gasman et al., 2011; Jackson, 2001). Finally, higher education leaders suggested issues with the academic pipeline explains the low number of professionals of color within higher education (Jackson, 2000, 2003b; Sethna, 2011; Shaw & Stanton, 2012).

Retention in higher education covers three bodies of literature. The literature on satisfaction within the workplace addresses typically addresses faculty members (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Card et al., 2012; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Victorino et al., 2013). However, much of the research is quantitative with small sample sizes for people of color (Blackhurst, 2000; Donaldson & Rosser, 2007; Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011; Walker et al., 2003), which potentially impacts the role race places in satisfaction. Campus climate addresses two concerns within the literature: actual work environment (Mayhew et al., 2006; Ryan et al., 2012; Hermsen & Rosser, 2008) and impact of diversity onto the environment (Jayakumar et al., 2009). The literature on salary and incentive packages is mixed and in consistent in relation to the impact it has on attracting administrators (Donnelly, 2009; Hirt et al., 2005; Walker et al., 2003) and faculty members of color (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Buttner et al., 2009; Card et al., 2012; Jayakumar et al., 2009).

The literature on Advancement and administrators of color discusses three bodies of literature. Career advancement is the process in which higher education professionals use to advance within higher education (Jackson, 2004a) and includes professional growth factors

(Jackson, 2002), and survival and protection techniques to protect oneself to advance (Lutz et al., 2013). Mentoring helps professionals of color navigate their institution (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Lutz et al., 2013). Researchers have viewed mentoring through the perspective of women (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011; Montas-Hunter, 2012). They have also examined the impact of cross-racial mentoring (Spalter-Roth et al., 2011), and bi-cultural mentoring (Cornileus, 2013; Montas-Hunter, 2012; Ortega-Liston & Rodriquez Soto, 2014) on people of color employed within higher education. Professional development is the process by which high education professional develop, enhance and advance their skills within higher education. Researchers address the importance and satisfaction with professional development (Absher, 2009; Sermersheim & Keim, 2005) but researchers do not address the institutional budgetary support for professional development.

In conclusion, research on organizational fit and faculty of color exists, (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Jackson, 2003b; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Ortega-Liston & Rodriguez Soto, 2014; Victorino et al., 2013) but the research on administrators of color in relation to organizational fit is limited. These studies have focused on either academic administrators (Jackson, 2004b, 2006) or student affairs administrators (Flowers, 2003; Jackson, 2003b; Jackson & Flowers, 2003; Tull, 2006), and small departmental divisions (Brewer & Clippard, 2002). Researchers have conducted additional studies on administrators at research universities (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Gasman et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2012; Turner et al., 2011) but not on other types of institutions.

In addition, Jackson (2003b, 2004b, 2006) often situates his research in the quantitative methodology or uses the Delphi technique, which relies on expert panelists (Jackson, 2001, 2002, 2004a; Jackson & Flowers, 2003). Previous research does not address how African American administrators experience engagement, retention, and advancement at small liberal arts institutions. The research on African Americans provides a foundation to advance the literature in this area while also extending the research using additional techniques, employee types, and racial and ethnic groups. This study seeks to address this paucity in scholarly knowledge by exploring how non-academic administrators experience organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions using a phenomenological approach.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This study was about organizational fit. Specifically, I was interested in how administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions experience fit within their organizational setting. Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model served as the foundation for the understanding organizational fit.

The sample included administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. For this study, administrators included non-academic professionals at any level within the institution (Hirt, Kirk, McGuire, Mount, & Nelson-Hensley, 2003). Non-academic administrators held positions in student affairs, academic support, business office, registrar, admissions and financial aid offices, and similar departments. Administrators of color included those who identified from a racial/ethnic group traditionally underrepresented within higher education, such as Blacks/African Americans, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Small liberal arts institutions included colleges and universities with a focus on undergraduate education and a total enrollment of less than 2,500 students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching [Carnegie Foundation], 2010; U.S. News and World Report, 2014). Using a phenomenological design, I interviewed selected administrators to understand their experiences with organizational fit.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the design of this study:

What is the nature of lived experiences of organizational fit among non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions?

In this chapter, I explain the methodology that guided the study. First, I describe my positionality to acknowledge any bias I have as a researcher. Then, I discuss the sample selection, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. I conclude with the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the research process.

Researcher's Positionality

In qualitative research, it is essential to understand the researcher's experiences and beliefs that might have influenced the design of the study and analysis of the data (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). I am an African American woman with six years of professional administrator

experience and five and a half years as a graduate assistant within higher education. I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education program at a large research university.

When reflecting on the nature of organizational fit of non-academic administrators of color, I examined my own experience with organizational fit. I spent six years working at a small, private, religiously affiliated liberal arts institution. For four of the six years, I was the only African American administrator on campus. During my first year, there were two other African American women administrators; one worked in residence life and the other worked in the campus print shop. In addition, a Colombian woman joined the staff during my third year and served as the director of Hispanic programs. She described her ethnicity as Hispanic, but her race as White. During my final year, an African-Mexican American woman joined the library staff.

During my time at the institution, I hosted a panel discussion on "Does Racism Still Exist." An African American male student questioned why there was only one person of color working at the institution. The university president sitting in the audience responded, "Just like White people don't want to live in Africa, Black people don't want to live here." His response was stated so matter-of-factly that I wondered if there was any truth to his comment. After the panel discussion, a desire grew in me to study administrative fit and investigate why there were not more administrators of color serving at small higher education institutions at all levels.

Throughout this study, I situated myself as a field researcher and made use of a phenomenological design. This allowed me to focus on describing participants' own personal experiences while developing a universal understanding of organizational fit for non-academic administrators of color (Adams & van Manen, 2008; Groenewald, 2004; Lester, 1999; Moustakas, 1994). Caution was taken to ensure the findings were not extended beyond the individual cases to the greater population (Lester, 1999). The ERA Model was the framework used to explain the experiences of Black/African American, Asian Americans, Latina/os, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander participants at the institutions studied.

I hold several beliefs and assumptions about various aspects of organizational fit of non-academic administrators of color. First, I believe small liberal arts institutions tend to employ smaller percentages of administrators of color than large research institutions. These administrators may not encounter other professionals of color within the institution (Gardner et al., 2014). For support networks, they may seek support from others outside of the institution via

the local community, membership in professional organizations, or professionals at nearby institutions (Jackson, 2002; Jackson & Flowers, 2003). I believe that administrators of color who develop support systems consistent with their cultural identity are more likely to be retained at their institutions.

Second, administrators of color often take on other duties outside of their assigned job responsibilities. These other duties often relate to working with students of color as their mentors or advisors (Gardner et al., 2014; Jackson, 2002). From my experience, some administrators of color make one of two choices in determining the role they will play in the support of students of color. They either consciously or subconsciously make it their mission to serve students of color by taking on the responsibility of becoming role models, or they consciously or subconsciously disengage in activities outside of their job description connected to students of color (Lutz et al., 2013).

Third, professional development tends not to be a high institutional priority at small liberal arts institutions. Therefore, administrators of color are not often provided institutional financial and professional resources to develop necessary skills or support their attendance at professional conferences, trainings or workshops, which are necessary to advance within their profession. Professional development is a necessary component of developing job-related training as well as building a network within the profession (Sermersheim & Keim, 2005; Tull, 2006).

Fourth, some administrators of color self-select to work in more diverse communities diverse when the option presents itself (Gardner et al., 2014; Lutz et al., 2013). They seek to work at institutions where they will have a support network consistent with their cultural identity (Queneau & Zoogah, 2002) or opportunities to have a social life outside of work. This self-selection limits the number of administrators of color serving at rural or small colleges and universities.

There are also two beliefs I hold about the more general phenomenon of organizational fit that apply to most administrators working in academic institutions. These beliefs underlie and inform the nature of the organizational fit of non-academic administrators of color. First, most administrators tend to accept positions where they believe they have an initial feeling of acceptance (Chatman, 1991). The interactions during the hiring and interview processes are the

foundation for how administrators determine whether they will fit within the college or university.

Second, most employees seek employment at institutions where they believe their values and belief system will align with the institution's mission (Chatman, 1991). Employees are willing to put in extra work or thrive in a difficult environment when they are passionate about the work they are doing. They flourish when they can find techniques and resources to support their passions within the work place. I believe these two statements to be consistent with administrators of color as well as the larger administrative population in institutions of higher education.

Along with naming these assumptions, after data collection and prior to beginning the formal data analysis, I used "bracketing and phenomenological reduction" (Hycner, 1985, p. 280) to reflect on my own assumptions about the data. Bracketing is my attempt as the researcher to withhold interpretation of the data while waiting to allow the participants' words to elicit an understanding of the phenomenon (Hycner, 1985). To bracket my opinions, I recorded my feelings concerning the organizational fit of non-academic administrators of color. The researcher was also conscious not to force the data to fit any preconceived notions, theory, or personal perspective to create meaning.

Sample Selection

Purposeful sampling was used to select participants capable of providing data to answer my research question. Purposeful sampling involves providing a specific rationale for any decisions made during the selection process (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Participants were purposefully selected by identifying professional organizations in higher education whose membership might include a group of potential respondents for my study. The five organizations included: ACPA – College Student Educators International (ACPA), NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA), the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals (NASAP), National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC); and American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACROA). Each of the professional organizations was selected because individuals who join them are likely to have an affinity either for an ethnic group or to the functional area of administration in which they work (Janosik, 2009). In addition, the five organizations had the potential to provide a sample of professionals from a wide-range of professional function areas.

ACPA, NASPA, and NASAP were selected because all three are large umbrella professional organizations for student affairs practitioners (ACPA - College Student Educators International [ACPA], 2013; National Association of Student Affairs [NASAP], 2014; NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education [NASPA], 2015a). ACPA has the Standing Committee for Multicultural Affairs (CMA) which encompasses the Asian Pacific American, Latin@, Native American, and Pan African cultural networks (ACPA - College Student Educators International [ACPA], 2015). NASAP's membership consists of student affairs professionals serving students of color at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and additional institutions with similar missions (NASAP, 2014). Within NASPA, there are affinity groups for African Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, Indigenous Peoples, and Latinos/as (NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education [NASPA], 2015b).

NACAC and AACROA were selected because both are function based professional organizations (NACAC, 2014a; AACROA, n.d.b). NACAC has Special Interest Groups (SIG) for African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino/Hispanic, and Native Indigenous Peoples (NACAC, 2014b). AACROA membership consist of 4% African Americans, less than 1% American Indians, 1% Asian Americans, 3% Latinas/os and an additional 53% of their members serve at institutions enrolling fewer than 2,499 students (AACROA, n.d.a).

A snowball sample was also used to increase the number of participants via connections from "information-rich key informants" (Patton, 2015, p. 298). With this in mind, I contacted leadership from each of professional organizations either by phone or email to locate potential participants who are currently part of their organization (see Appendix A). After receiving potential participants' names, I contacted individuals by phone or email to determine their interest in the study (see Appendix B). If the professional organization's leader suggested the use of their electronic mailing lists or social media outlets to gain access to participants, a "Call for Participants" was posted on the organization's electronic mailing list or social media outlets (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) (see Appendix B). I asked these potential participants to contact me via email. After, speaking with the potential participants about the study, I asked them to recommend additional participants using the snowball sampling technique.

When contacting potential participants, I made a 10-minute phone call to determine eligibility using a pre-screening questionnaire (see Appendix C). The pre-screening call ensured potential participants met the selection criteria for the study (Moustakas, 1994). The pre-

screening questionnaire used a criterion sampling technique to ensure I received rich data from selected participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

Four criteria were used to select participants for this study. First, potential participants needed to self-identify racially or ethically with a traditionally U.S. underrepresented group (such as Black or African American, Asian American, Latina/o, or Native American). The second criterion was potential participants needed to serve currently as a non-academic administrator. Some of the functional areas included student affairs, academic support, admissions and financial aid, registrar, human resources, and business office. Third, potential participants needed to work currently at a small liberal arts institution with a student enrollment of less than 2,500. Finally, potential participants needed to have worked three or more years as a non-academic administrator in the higher education field.

During the pre-screening phone call, I used a questionnaire to determine potential participants' eligibility (see Appendix C). The four selection criteria served as the basis for the checklist questions. One question asked potential participants about their current institution. This question helped to determine if the institution was public or private and its enrollment size. The institution's enrollment size was essential because the study was limited to administrators working at institutions with a student body of less than 2,500. A second question addressed the potential participant's functional area to ensure participants were from diverse areas. The conversation ended with one of three responses to let the potential participants know their participation status. If potential participants met all the selection criteria, at the end of the conversation I invited them to participate in the study. I ensured they had access to Skype and scheduled a time to conduct the interview. For those who did not meet all the criteria, I informed them that they did not meet the criteria necessary to participate in the study. A professor with expertise in qualitative methods evaluated the pre-screening protocol to confirm it would assist with selecting eligible participants based on the selected criteria. Based on her suggestions, I modified the survey.

In qualitative research, there is an ongoing debate about how many participants are necessary to have sufficient data to effectively represent the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2006; Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014; Mason, 2010; Morse, 1995; Seidman, 2013) and the feasibility of an open-ended number to account for saturation (Creswell, 2013; Mason, 2010). The general rule is a combination of saturation of information and sufficiency (Seidman, 2013). Researchers

reach saturation when participants are no longer introducing new ideas or experiences relevant to the phenomenon. Saturation goes beyond hearing no new information but ensures there is data with detail and depth on all the research questions (Cleary et al., 2014). Sufficiency addresses the question of whether the number of participants reflects the variety of the population (Seidman, 2013). To ensure sufficiency, I sought to identify a diversity of participants based on ethnic/racial groups and an array of professional job responsibilities (e.g., career services, student activities, admissions, alumni affairs). I modified Seidman's (2013) three-interview technique to two interviews while maintaining the three-life history structure. Throughout the interview process, I reflected on the data emerging from the participants and added additional participants to ensure I had rich data to address the research question, and to ensure both saturation and sufficiency.

Interview Protocols

Two interview protocols were designed to collect data (see Appendices D and E). The protocol was semi-structured and centered on Seidman's (2013) the three interview sections, which included focused life history, the details of experience, and reflections on meaning. Each of the interview questions aligned with one of the three constructs (Engagement, Retention, and Advancement). In the final section, the interview concluded with a question to verify all potential areas concerning their organizational fit were covered.

In the first interview, the first section focused on the life history of the participants (Seidman, 2013) and asked them to reflect on their experiences that led them to careers in higher education. For example, participants were asked to share about themselves and what led them to a career in higher education. This question prompted responses about their background, educational and professional experiences that helped to develop the participants into administrators. Participants were also asked to think back to the hiring process and to talk about what stood out in the recruitment process that attracted them to their current institution. This question prompted responses about the approaches institutional leaders used to attract and hire the participants.

The second section, details of experience was divided into two sections, with the first set asked during the first interview and the second set asked during the second interview. The first half of the section concentrated on the actual experiences of the participants (Seidman, 2013) as non-academic administrators at small liberal arts institutions. Questions in this section enabled

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an understanding of the day-to-day experiences of the participants. For example, participants were asked to describe how they developed credibility on campus. In addition, they were asked about the strategies used to facilitate their professional success. These questions helped me to understand how participants engaged in professional development and established support systems.

In the second interview, I asked participants, the second half of the details of experience questions (Seidman, 2013). These questions focused on the participants' racial identity within their institutions. For example, participants were asked to share about how their ethnicity or race intersected with their professional identity. This section of questioning helped to understand the role their racial or ethnic identity impacted their day-to-day work life.

The final section of the second interview had three questions centered on understanding how the participants created meaning around their experiences (Seidman, 2013). Participants were asked to reflect on our conversation and share about how an administrator assimilates within a college or university. This question helped to understand how participants made sense of themselves as administrators within their institution. Another question asked the participants to reflect on where they see themselves professionally in the future based on our conversation. Responses from this question intend to elicit responses about their plans to remain at the institution, goals for professional advancement, as well as lessons they learned that would influence their professional trajectory.

Finally, participants were provided an opportunity to add anything more about their experiences not previously discussed during the two interviews. The interview concluded with an explanation about how I would transcribe the interviews and then send to them for review. Once the participants received the transcripts, they had five business days to provide feedback. If participants did not return the transcripts, I assumed there were no additional corrections.

Throughout the interview, generic prompts were employed to have participants think deeper or make connections to their race or ethnic background or experiences at a small liberal arts institution. Examples of these generic prompts include "you mentioned (insert thought they discussed), can you tell me more about that;" "what else happened;" or "what were your feelings about that" (Bates, Droste, Cuba, & Swingle, 2008, p. 5).

Three professors with expertise in organizational fit and/or qualitative methods reviewed the two interview protocols. Revisions to the protocols were made based on their feedback.

Then I piloted the interview protocols on four non-academic administrators who were not eligible to participate in the study but who were willing to offer feedback.

After piloting the study, the interview protocols were revised based on feedback from the pilot participants. First, I rearranged the questions to allow for the natural flow of conversation. Second, pilot participants suggested waiting until the second interview before asking in depth ethnic/racial questions. This allowed rapport to be developed and time for participants to become comfortable with the interview approach. Third, I added potential follow-up questions under each main interview question, to ensure I captured rich, thick data during the interviews. Finally, I piloted the study again on a fourth participant to ensure the changes made captured the data I hoped to receive.

Data Collection Procedures

First, I sought and obtained approval to conduct this study from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Tech (see Appendices F and G). I then initiated data collection for the study after soliciting participants. Within a day of completing the phone pre-screening call, I sent a follow-up email to selected participants with a note reminding them of their scheduled interview time, the IRB consent form, and Skype directions (see Appendix H). Additionally, directions were included on how to use Skype and my Skype username. Two days prior to the scheduled interview, I sent a Skype invitation to each of the participants' Skype accounts.

The interviews were semi-structured and the questions centered on the conceptual framework. I interviewed participants twice for 75-90 minutes, using a modified Seidman's (2013) three-stage interview approach (Moustakas, 1994). The interviews were conducted during the spring of 2016.

The use of Skype is a recent technology enabling researchers to interview participants across the country and around the world without losing the face-to-face communication often lost in telephone interviews (Cater, 2011; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Hamilton, 2014; Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014). There is minimal to no difference in the research experience between in-person and online synchronous interviews (Hamilton, 2014). Participants used their personal computers in a location that was quiet and comfortable for them.

The interviews were recorded with the permission of each respondent using Ecamm Voice Recorder. *Ecamm* is an add-on program that works with Skype to record audio and video (Ecamm Network, LLC, 2014). The recordings are saved as mp3 files allowing for easy

transcription. Throughout the interviews, I wrote an audit trail; and field notes after the interviews. The audit trail was a collection of changes, modifications, and decision made throughout the pilot and interview process (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Field notes included observations during the interview, questions that emerged, and any initial thoughts for analysis (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011).

Each interview opened with casual, introductory conversation to build rapport and to ensure the participant was comfortable using Skype. Next, I confirmed receipt of the IRB consent form (see Appendix F) and asked participants if they had any additional questions about the consent form or their participation in the study. I then recorded verbal consent of their willingness to participate in the study. After the interview, I transcribed the interviews and emailed copies to participants for revisions and verification of the transcripts' accuracy and completeness (see Appendices I and J). Participants emailed their corrections to the transcripts within five business days.

After the interviews, I recorded my observations and reflections as field notes. This allowed me to confirm and record additional insights that developed during the analysis process. In keeping with the phenomenological tradition, non-verbal observations were captured during the process to aid in analysis and enhance the transcripts with non-verbal data that is often overlooked in traditional transcription (Emerson et al., 2011; Hycner, 1985).

Data Analysis Procedures

The purpose of analyzing is "to bring meaning, structure, and order to data" (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002, p. 31). The analysis of data within a qualitative study is an ongoing process (Creswell, 2014; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). After collecting data, I read the data several times to become familiar with the transcripts. To analyze the interview data, I labeled the participants with an identification code that included two components. The first component was a pseudonym, which each participant selected and I used during the write up of the findings. Second, I assigned each participant with an alphanumerical code to distinguish him or her from other participants, to quickly aid in the analysis process. The code listed the participants' race (A – Asian American, B – Black, L – Latina/o, and NHPI – Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander) and number of years within the profession (i.e. 5 – 5 years, 10 – 10 years, etc.). For example, if the third participant interviewed was Latina and had served for 8 years, their code was Felecia-3L8.

After reading through each individual transcript in its entirety, I paid attention to material relevant to the research questions while reflecting on potential new concepts. Next, I created memos on my initial reflections and then I compared these memos with the interview field notes. On the second reading of the transcripts, I used whole text analysis to select excerpts of text for coding that connected to the research question (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A code is a label that provides meaning for the grouping together of text (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Excerpts were the unit of analysis. An excerpt was defined as a sentence or consecutive set of sentences from one transcript on one specific topic.

After reading the transcripts, I marked and numbered each excerpt and later transferred the excerpts to an Excel sheet. I then labeled nine columns: "participant," "ERA model," "first code," "secondary code," "third code," "fourth code," "connections," "paragraph," and "excerpt." In the "participant' column, I placed the participant's alphanumerical code for each excerpt. In the "ERA model" column, I placed a label for each excerpt listing one of the three constructs, Engagement, Retention, or Advancement, along with any new emerging themes. Next, using open coding, I placed a code for each excerpt in the "first code" column and followed this process for each iteration for second, third, and fourth code columns. I used constant comparison throughout the coding process to ensure accuracy of the codes. In the "connections" column, I marked any connections I noticed during my reading of the data and while engaging in the constant comparative process. This allowed me to continually compare the data to ensure I made accurately coded and categorized the (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This also helped to ensure the accuracy of the analysis process and findings.

The "paragraph" column listed the original page number to allow for easy connection to the word document. The "excerpt" column contained the actual excerpt from the original transcripts. Finally, I created an Excel spreadsheet page for each interview.

During the analysis process, I created four new Excel pages and labeled each with the three constructs (Engagement, Retention, and Advancement) and one for miscellaneous items. After reviewing each of the excerpts, they were organized and assigned to the Excel document that best aligned with the excerpt. This enabled all excerpts from the same construct to be compiled into one document.

Participants' direct quotations were used to describe the categories I identified in the data. For example, participants were asked to share their experiences with the hiring process for their

current position. One person might have responded, "My initial thought about this institution was it was a warm environment. The search committee was honest about the position and the responsibilities involved." Another person might have said, "I sensed this was a learning environment, where I could grow. I felt this position would challenge me as a professional." These responses or similar excerpts would be assigned to the Engagement file.

Participants were then questioned about how their compensation/benefits package changed over time. A potential response might state, "When I first started in Admissions, my starting salary was $36,500 with health and dental and a matching 401K of 2%. Each year, I receive a 3% merit increase and last year the president decided to increase the 401K contributions to 5%." Another excerpt in this category might include, "When I started in Residence Life, I was making $29,000 with housing, meal plan, cellphone, all utilities and a really nice health care package. I also had a 401k with 3% matching contribution and $2000 for professional development. Now 7 years later, my salary has increased to $36,000, the 401K contributions have increased to 5% and every four years my apartment, furniture and office were upgraded. Oh, I love working at a private institution. However, my salary was impacted by several salary freezes throughout the years." These excerpts or similar ones were placed in the Retention file.

Next, participants were asked to share where they saw themselves professionally in the future. One potential response might be, "I really enjoy working at this institution. I enjoy how small it is and the opportunity to know the majority of the student body. However, I would love to move up professionally into a Dean position, but no one ever leaves here. So either I will search for a new job in the next 2-3 years or wait for someone to retire." A second response might be, "I have been working in higher education for the last 40 years and I am exhausted. I love what I am doing but honestly, I am ready to retire and sit back and enjoy my grandkids grow up." These or similar excerpts were categorized in the Advancement file.

Finally, I examined all excerpts that did not directly connect to one of the three constructs to determine emergent themes and then categorized them together. An example of a new emerging theme might include an excerpt might develop from the question "share a little about yourself." One response might include, "I am a mother of four and have lived in West Virginia since I graduated from my master's program. Currently I am responsible for the coordination of the research conference. I carry out the daily responsibilities of making sure the conference

curriculum is up-to-date and accurate. I make sure the various conference schedules are available and presenters have their necessary materials." A second participant might say, "I have been at my institution for the last 10 years and love working with students. I have always desired to have a family so this college has become like a family for me." This process was repeated until all excerpts from all transcripts were reassigned to one of the Word documents.

Next, the excerpts of data within each of the Excel documents were analyzed to sort the data into smaller subcategories. Finding patterns and placing similar excerpts together created the subcategories, which allowed smaller visual pictures of connection between the participants. For example, using the Engagement file, the excerpts "My initial thought about this institution was it was a warm environment. The search committee was honest about the position and the responsibilities involved;" "I sensed this was a learning environment, where I could grow. I felt this position would challenge me as a professional;" and "I was graduating with my Master's degree and this was the only position I received an interview for, so once they offered I accepted the position. I really only remember being excited to have a job and not caring about where" might be categorized together. Each of these excerpts would then be classified under the subcategory of Recruitment in my second sort of the data because the participants spoke of their initial feeling about and experiences with the institution.

While reading the data, caution was taken to allow new categories to emerge and to not allow Jackson's (2004a) constructs to guide the analysis process. A new category formed after three excerpts by three different participants were identified on the same topic. After creating subcategories, overarching themes developed linked the categories together. An example of an overarching theme might be called "compatibility" since the language in all four reflects how participants had an initial sense that they would be compatible with their institutions. Using this process, the themes described within each category painted a picture of the Engagement process for administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions.

The same steps were followed to analyze the data in the other Excel documents. A sample of transcripts was coded and then three members of my community of practice examined the same set of transcripts and my coding scheme. A discussion about any inconsistences in the coding was had to ensure consistency across the remainder of the transcripts.

A narrative of the findings was created that emerged from the data analysis to provide a rich description of the general organizational fit of administrators of color at small liberal arts

institutions. Although the above description appears prescriptive, attention was spent to ensure the essence of the participants' experiences with organization fit at small liberal arts institutions was captured.   I was extremely careful to ensure the theoretical framework did not guide the development of themes or overall analysis process.

Accuracy of the Data

In qualitative research, it is important to ensure the accuracy of the data (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). To advance accuracy, trustworthiness and authenticity criteria were employed. Trustworthiness addresses the researcher's ability to ensure the findings were done in a consistent manner (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Trustworthiness also addresses the rigor of the study (Given & Saumure, 2008; Patton, 2015) and ensures the findings are worth paying attention to because of the ethical standards employed (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

First, a clear conceptual framework to document the steps guiding the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2012) ensured trustworthiness. Next, reflexivity was used to bring to the forefront biases, beliefs, and worldviews that might affect the design and implementation of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Memos were written to discuss the researcher's position and opinions about organizational fit and administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. Field notes were written on interview observations, questions that emerged during the interviews, and initial thoughts about the data. Field notes and memoing are mechanisms that enhance trustworthiness (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Patton, 2015).

Each interview was transcribed verbatim and member checked by participants (Creswell, 2014; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Member checking allowed participants to verify that I accurately captured their lived experiences during the transcription process (Anfara et al., 2002; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Moustakas, 1994). Finally, thick, rich descriptions provided the reader with clear pictures of the experiences of the participants (Carlson, 2010; Creswell & Miller, 2000). All four steps confirmed transparency in the research design while being conscious of potential biases that could influence the findings (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

Authenticity addresses the researcher's goal to ensure the data from the study was connected to the research questions and speaks to a greater societal issue (James, 2008). I established authenticity by using a panel of experts to review the pre-screening questionnaire, interview protocol, and the coding scheme. Four non-academic administrators, who were not eligible to participate in the full study, piloted the interview protocols. Their feedback assisted in

the modification of the interview protocol. Each of these steps ensured the authenticity of the study.

In summary, the study design used a phenomenological methodological approach to describe the fit of non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts colleges. Using the phenomenological design, I interviewed non-academic administrators to understand their lived experiences serving at small liberal arts institutions. The method enabled me to answer the research questions posed in the study.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine how administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions experience fit within their organizational setting. Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) Model served as the foundation for the analysis of their understanding their organizational fit. I interviewed participants twice via Skype, the interviews transcribed, and then participants reviewed the transcripts before analysis for accuracy. This provided member checking and ensured the transcripts accurately captured the participants' words and thoughts (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Moustakas, 1994). After analyzing the interviews, six themes emerged from the data.

The next section covers participant demographic information and provides a profile of each of the participants. The proceeding sections describe the themes critical to this study, which emerged from the interview data. These sections are arranged using the headings from Jackson's (2004a) Engagement, Retention, and Advancement Model, as the model distinguishes time-periods in the careers of administrators. I then present evidence to support the themes along with participants' quotation to illustrate the themes' significance.

Participant Profiles

For this study, nine non-academic administrators were interviewed. Six were females and three were males. The racial make-up of the participants included one Asian, six Blacks/African Americans, one Latina, and one Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The functional areas of the participants included academic support, enrollment management, multicultural affairs, residence life, and student affairs. Several of the participants identified two functional areas that aligned with their work at small liberal arts institutions. These functional areas included academic support/registrar and academic support/multicultural affairs. Table 1 provides additional demographic information including: (a) age, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity/race, (d) functional area, (e) current number of years in the field, and (f) total number of years within the higher education profession. I interviewed participants via Skype and used an ECamm Recorder. A phone conferencing service was used on occasion during Internet outages.

The following section includes profiles of each of the participants. These profiles are short vignettes to provide background information about each of the respondents. Pseudonyms

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 9)

Participant	Age	Gender	Ethnicity /Race	Functional Area	Current # of Years	Total # of Years	Educational Level	Participant Code
Elena	30	Female	Latina	Multicultural Affairs	4	7	Master's degree	1L7
Tuesday	43	Female	African American	Academic Support/Registrar	7	10	Master's degree	2B10
Charles	48	Male	African American (proudly)	Enrollment Management/ Multicultural Affairs	10.5	10.5	Master's degree	3B10.5
Gwen	39	Female	Black	Academic Support/ Multicultural Affairs	5	17	Doctoral degree	4B17
Blayne	30	Male	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Enrollment Management	4	10	Master's degree	5NH/PI10
Gabrielle	50	Female	Black	Multicultural Affairs	2	15	Master's degree	6B15
Desta	39	Female	Black	Student Affairs	3	15	Doctoral degree	7B15
Megan	33	Female	Asian	Enrollment Management	5.5	9	Master's degree	8A9
Bryan	37	Male	Black	Residence Life	3	10	Bachelor's degree	9B10

*Names listed above are pseudonyms selected by participants

were used for both the participants and their current institutions. In addition, I used regions in place of actual state locations as another layer of confidentiality protection for the participants, who often work as one of few administrators of color at their small liberal arts institutions in their geographic area. These regions were based on geographic regions as established by HigherEdJobs (2016), a leading recruiting website for employment postings within higher education. The regions included East Central with one institution, Mid-Atlantic with four institutions, New England with one institution, Pacific Coast with one institution, and Southwest with one institution.   Table 2 provides a list of the institutional characteristics, including institutional type and location.

Table 2

Institutional Characteristics (N = 8)

Current Institution	Institutional Type	Location
Filmore University	Private	Mid-Atlantic
Giles University	Private	Mid-Atlantic
Harris University	Private	New England
Linwood University	Private	Mid-Atlantic
McCray College	Public	East Central
Pennbrook University	Private	Pacific Coast
Porter University	Private	Mid-Atlantic
Roux Christian College	Private	Southwest

* Institutional names listed above are pseudonyms

Elena

Elena, who was born and raised in New York to immigrant parents from the Dominican Republic, is 30 years old and identifies as Latina. She is bilingual and speaks both Spanish and English. As a first-generation college student, she was actively involved as an undergraduate in coordinating program for students of color but did not realize she could make a career in higher education. She found her path into higher education after

graduating with her master's degree. Her aunt saw an opportunity for a bilingual college recruiter position and passed the information along to Elena.

Elena has worked as the Associate Director of Diversity Initiatives at Giles University for the last four years. Giles University is a small liberal arts university located in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. Previously, she worked in various capacities at Porter University and has a total of seven years of higher education experience. Currently, she is pregnant and says it affects her ability to give her all to her work.

Tuesday

Tuesday is a 43-year-old African American woman with 10 years of higher education experience. Currently, she lives in the south after moving from a major metropolitan city in the northeast to complete her undergraduate degree. After completing her master's degree, Tuesday took a teaching position in a small city, 45 minutes outside a southern state capital. For five years, Tuesday worked as a high school teacher but transitioned to higher education after interacting with a dual enrollment instructor from a local community college. Tuesday initially started in an adjunct teaching position and eventually transitioned to a full-time academic advisor. Desiring to advance for both professional and personal reasons, Tuesday embarked on a job search that led her two hours away to McCray University. For the last seven years, Tuesday has worked as the Associate Registrar for Advising Support.

McCray University is a military institution with employees who are either commissioned U.S. military officials or non-commissioned state employees. The university is in the East Central region of the U.S. Although Tuesday is a non-commissioned state employee, she wears a military uniform while in the office. She also works as the only African American woman at her institution.

Charles

Charles is a 48-year-old single father of two daughters, a college freshman and a 14-year-old. Previously, he worked as a high school guidance counselor and in various county governmental positions. Desiring more time with his daughters and more professional autonomy and flexibility, he transitioned to a position at Linwood University. The institution is a small private liberal arts university located in the Mid-

Atlantic region of the U.S. and a short drive from his hometown. Charles has been at the same institution for the last 10 1/2 years.

Charles is an historical Black college and university (HBCU) alumnus and holds a master's degree in Educational Psychology. Charles considers himself as "proudly" African American, which influences the work he does as the Associate Director of Admissions and Coordinator of Multicultural Recruitment at Linwood University.

Gwen

Gwen's journey into higher education started while active in student affairs as an undergraduate student. By her junior year, she decided to pursue higher education as a full-time career. After working for a year, she pursued a master's degree in College Student Personnel before transitioning to Adams College, her first small private liberal arts institution. During her time at Adams College, she realized she wanted to advance to a vice president of student affairs role and decided to pursue a doctoral degree.

During her final year of her doctoral program, Gwen accepted a position at Harris University, which is a private institution located in the New England region. Gwen is 39 years old, identifies as Black, as a first-generation college student, is active in ACPA-College Student Educators International (ACPA), and has a combined 17 years of higher education work experience. For the last five years, she has worked as the Associate Dean of Intercultural Education at Harris University.

Blayne

After growing up in Hawaii, Blayne transferred during his junior year of college to Porter University based on a suggestion from his then girlfriend, now wife. Porter University is located in the Mid-Atlantic region, almost 5,000 miles from his home island. While at Porter, Blayne was an active member of the undergraduate Admission Ambassador program, which helped him to realize his passion for undergraduate admissions. Right after graduation, he started in a position as an admission counselor. Ten years later, Blayne is still working at Porter University. He advanced to Assistant Director of Admissions, four years ago.

Racially, Blayne identifies as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, although he also has Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino ancestry. He is 30 years old, and a two-time alumnus of Porter University after receiving a Master's degree in Education. In addition, he

continues to be quite active in the university community even serving as the advisor to the Couponing Club on campus.

Gabrielle

Gabrielle is a 50-year-old, wife, and mother of three sons and one daughter. She identifies as Black and a first-generation college graduate. She earned both her undergraduate and master's degree from a historical Black university. She is enrolled in a doctoral program studying Higher Education at a small liberal arts institution. Prior to transitioning to higher education, she spent the first part of her career working in corporate America. In addition, Gabrielle has work experience at both HBCUs and community colleges.

Currently, Gabrielle works as the Assistant Dean of Students for Multicultural Student Initiatives and Director, Filmore Scholars Program at Filmore University. The university is a small private religious institution located in the Mid-Atlantic region. Although Gwen has worked at Filmore University for the last 15 years, two years ago she became the founding director of the Filmore Scholars Program.

Desta

Thirty-nine-year-old Desta holds a doctoral degree in Higher Education and has worked at Roux Christian University for the last three years. The university is in the Southwest region and is a small private religious institution. Her position at Roux University recently transitioned to the Title IX Coordinator. However, with advice from her mentors, she negotiated to retain her title as Associate Dean of Student Life and Learning.

As the fifth child in her family, Desta believes birth order affects how she interacts with others especially within the workplace. She identifies as Black, an activist, wife, and mother. After several professional transitions for her husband's career, Desta now serves as the primary breadwinner for her family. Her husband is a professor and caregiver for their children. She is a member of NASPA and has 15 years of higher education experience. Working at small liberal arts institutions is Desta's passion.

Megan

Originally from Hawaii, Megan is 33 years old and racially identifies as Asian American. Specifically, she is both 2nd and 4th generation Japanese American. Initially

she thought she would be a Buddhist priest, but while in her undergraduate years, she became active in NASPA and found her calling to work in higher education.

Megan moved to the mainland for graduate school and although her passion is in student affairs, she has spent the last nine years of her professional career working in enrollment management. Currently, she works as the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Pennbrook University. The university is in the Pacific Coast region. Megan has been in her position for the last five and a half years. Most recently, her focus has turned to her physical health and dating life, which affects her work in the competitive field of enrollment management.

Bryan

After his roommate convinced him to apply for a residence assistant position, Bryan became an active member of the residence life community and Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) as an undergraduate. His involvement in both programs helped him to realize how much he enjoys working with college-age students. After graduation, he held professional positions at his alma mater in both residence life and TRIO. Three years ago, after taking time off to serve as a caregiver for his parents, he returned to residence life as an area coordinator. This position is a live-in role at Roux Christian University. The university is in the southwest region.

Bryan is 37 years old and racially identifies as Black. He has 10 years of higher education experience and has worked in his current position for the last three years. Bryan is a coach at heart and hopes to return one day to coaching as a profession.

The nine participants were willing to talk with me and shared their life stories. They provided personal stories and examples of their experiences as administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. The following section covers the findings, which emerged from the data analysis of the participant interviews.

Findings of Interview Analysis

This research was focused on the lived experiences of administrators of color at small liberal art institutions. Specifically, I examined how these administrators experienced their fit within their higher education organizations at various institutions throughout the United States. The findings from this chapter are arranged around Jackson's (2004a) ERA model of Engagement, Retention, and Advancement from the themes that emerged from data analysis. I present a synopsis of each of the model's

constructs, along with their related themes. Next, I defined the themes and used participants' quotes from the interviews to illustrate the significance of the theme. Finally, I summarized the themes.

The first two themes to emerge pertained to the Engagement construct. These themes included: (a) pathways into higher education and (b) attraction to small liberal arts institutions. Three themes emerged under the Retention construct, which included: (a) institutional culture, (b) position empowerment, and (c) multiple hats/roles. Under the Advancement construct, a final theme of (a) professional success emerged. In the following sections, I described each of themes and provided examples from participants to substantiate each theme.

Engagement

During initial open coding, I identified 33 codes under the Engagement construct. Next, I analyzed these codes and sorted similar codes into like categories. Five categories emerged included: (a) active as undergraduate students, (b) professional career transition, (c) quick paced, holistic hiring process, (d) fit determination, and (e) salary and benefits. I then continued to analyze these categories and collapsed the categories into themes. After analyzing and collapsing the categories, two themes emerged: (a) pathways into higher education and (b) attraction to small liberal arts institutions. I created the first theme from the first two categories and the final three categories developed into the second theme. Table 3 provides a summary of the data analysis iterations for the Engagement construct. This table and the subsequent two tables should be read from bottom to top.

Pathways into Higher Education

The first theme is *pathways into higher education*. This theme addresses how participants first enter higher education as a profession. All nine of the participants engaged in vibrant discussions about their journey into higher education and the factors that contributed to their decisions to select a career in higher education. Based on the responses from these participants, two distinct paths led them to their career decisions. Participants were active as undergraduate students and decided to start working in higher education shortly after graduation, or they made a career transition after working in another profession.

The first pathway into higher education occurred directly after completing an undergraduate program. Six of the participants recounted their respective undergraduate college experiences functioned as their gateway into professional careers. Blayne, Bryan, Desta, Elena, Gwen, and Megan were all active student leaders during their undergraduate years. They were involved as student campus leaders, Greek leaders, or admissions ambassadors. Each felt it was a natural evolution for them to transition into higher education positions, as they regularly interacted with higher education administrators prior to becoming professionals. For instance, one participant captured the sentiment:

> While a student here at Porter, I was an admissions ambassador and that's really what kind of sealed the deal for me. I really enjoyed that job. I ended up becoming an admissions counselor as soon as I graduated from college. (Blayne)

In addition to being active on campus, some participants became involved in professional organizations at the student level. In particular, NASPA functioned as a pathway for Megan and Desta during their undergraduate years. This professional organization provided undergraduate students with leadership opportunities to learn about various careers within student affairs. The organization also serves as a pipeline program to prepare undergraduate students for a career in higher education (NASPA, 2016).

Although these participants were active as undergraduate students, some of these participants pursued other professions after completing their undergraduate education. This was due in part to their lack of knowledge that there were opportunities or mentorship about higher education as a career. For example, although Desta and Elena were both involved in student leadership activities, they both commented they did not realize higher education was a potential option for full-time work. They did not have access to administrators, who could have told them about the possibility of having a career in higher education. Desta explained,

> I didn't know this was the path to take, I just knew I liked college a lot and I didn't want to leave college… Also, I was just seeing everybody at the college, but again no one ever said, "You know this is a profession, right?" Like, no one. (Desta)

Similarly, Elena did not realize higher education was a potential option until her aunt told her about a bilingual recruiter opportunity. This position combined the skills she developed as an undergraduate and opened higher education as a career option.

Table 3

Code Mapping for ERA Model: Engagement

RQ: What is the nature of lived experiences of organizational fit among non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions? (Engagement)

Third Iteration: Themes

E1.   Pathways into Higher Education

E2.   Attraction to Small Liberal Arts Institutions

Second Iteration: Categories

E1.A.   Active as Undergraduate Students

E1.B.   Professional Career Transition

E2.A.   Quick Paced, Holistic Hiring Process

E2.B.   Fit Determination

E2.C.   Salary and Benefits

First Iteration: Codes

E1a.	Created Position	E2a.	Benefits During Hiring
E1b.	Disappointment with Previous Position	E2b.	Cared about Whole Person
E1c.	Experience as Undergraduate	E2c.	Desire to Connect with Familiar
E1d.	How Found Position	E2d.	Factors Impacting Hiring Decision
E1e.	Journey into Higher Education	E2e.	Family and Community Connection
E1f.	Influence from Undergraduate Mentor(s)	E2f.	Fast Paced Hiring Process
E1g.	Previous Position Lay-off	E2g.	Geographic Location
E1h.	Support to Find Career Path	E2h.	Hiring Environment
E1i.	Transition from Corporate Position	E2i.	In-depth Interviews
E1j.	Unaware of Higher Education as a Profession	E2j.	Institution Historical Background
E1k.	Using Transferable Skills	E2k.	Institution Surrounding Culture

E1l.	Why Higher Education	E2l.	Interested in whole person
E1m.	Career Journey Influences	E2m.	Need to Belong
E1n.	Undergraduate Experiences in Professional Organizations	E2n.	Negotiations During Hiring
E1o.	Position Selection	E2o.	Salary During Hiring
		E2p.	Selling the Institution
		E2q.	Culture Impacts Applying
		E2r.	Salary: Balance with Cost of Living

The second pathway into higher education came after a change in professional careers. Three participants, Charles, Gabrielle, and Tuesday, used this pathway to begin their higher education careers. This transition can be due to dissatisfaction with the current profession or laid off due to downsizing from another career. Two participants experienced dissatisfaction with the workplace and decided to change career paths. Charles "stumbled upon higher education after receiving [his] master's degree," and after he was disappointed with his position as a high school guidance counselor. Similarly, Tuesday was dissatisfied with working as a Spanish high school teacher. She was encouraged to use her transferable skills and teach as a bilingual education support specialist at a local community college. She eventually transitioned into a full time academic advising position. They both recognized their strengths of working with college students and used their skillsets around their strengths to shift careers.

Dissatisfaction was not the only reason why participants selected a career in higher education. One participant, Gabrielle, had gone back and forth between working in higher education and corporate America throughout her professional career. It was always a desire for Gabrielle to return to higher education but the salary connected to working in corporate America made it difficult for her to return to higher education, as the pay scales were different. She returned to higher education after her corporate company laid her off. Initially, she was motivated by tuition incentives, but when her college-aged son selected another institution, she found her mission in life was giving back to students of color.

Two pathways led the participants of this study into careers in higher education. The two pathways were based on either their active involvement as undergraduate

students or transitioning later in life. After starting careers in the larger field of higher education, each of them eventually found their path to small liberal arts institutions. The next section covers the findings around the second theme, attraction to small liberal arts institutions.

Attraction to Small Liberal Arts Institutions

The second theme to emerge from the data is *attraction to small liberal art institutions*. This theme was defined as the factors that influenced participants' decisions to work for a small liberal arts institution. These factors included the quick paced, holistic hiring process, fit, institutional environment, and hiring salary and benefits.

The hiring process was one factor that attracted these participants to small liberal art institution. Four participants mentioned the fast pace, in-depth interviews and the hiring committees' concern for the whole person. Charles, Megan, and Tuesday used the word "fast pace" to comment on the speed with which they experienced the hiring process at their respective institutions. Megan provided an illustration of the fast pace of the interview process:

> My hiring process was a little fast. I found out about the job a little bit late. I submitted an application. Within a day, I got asked to fill out some supplemental questions and was requested to do a phone interview. I think maybe a week later; I was on a phone interview. (Megan)

The participants also reflected on the in-depth nature of their interview process. At their small liberal arts institutions, the processes were new and different from their previous interview experiences.   This was especially true for Charles, Gabrielle, and Tuesday, who transitioned into higher education from other positions.

The factors that made the interviews more in-depth for the participants were the length of the interview, meeting with various campus constituents, and the holistic approach of the hiring process. In their opinions, the hiring committee members were looking to determine the fit for both the institution and the candidate. Reflecting on this experience, Bryan mentioned his overall impression, "…it wasn't like they were just trying to get the process done, get somebody in … they really, really want to hire the perfect fit to come in and fit in the family atmosphere that they have already created."

During the interview, study participants used the term "fit" when talking about the hiring process to determine if working at a small liberal arts institution would align with

their personal, social, and professional goals. For many of the participants, they were not able to describe "fit" directly, but instead used words like, "gut feeling," or provided characteristics that I classified as "fit." Megan illustrated an example of this "gut feeling:"

> Actually, the day I accepted Pennbrook's offer was supposed to be the day of my phone interview for [another institution] and I had to very nicely say no, but I just knew it. It's that gut feeling that I think some of our students have when they're college searching that I knew that if I got the offer from Pennbrook that I would go.

The other characteristics I used to develop a definition of fit include the need to belong, environmental factors, feelings of being sold the institution, and overcoming internal institutional factors.

Some participants spoke of their need to belong during the hiring process. This need was associated with their desire to fit into the campus community. Five participants desired for this need to be met at their new institution during their hiring processes. They used phrases such as "just see [myself] working here" (Tuesday), "felt very comfortable" (Blayne), or "the friendliest campus" (Bryan). Others emphasized their need to be close to social connections, which they thought would help with their "fit." Tuesday, Blayne, Desta, and Megan shared that they each had opportunities to work for other institutional types, but they selected their small liberal arts institutions, because they were near family and friends.

Institutional environment was another way participants explained their "fit" working for small liberal arts institutions. Four participants shared their experiences of questioning if the environment was receptive to administrators of color. For example, three female participants articulated experiencing hostile incidents during their interview process. Gwen shared an example of one of these interactions:

> When my former supervisor called to offer me the position, … I was just so amazed that she called me back. I was amazed because when I interviewed, those students were so hostile. Oh my gosh, they were mean. I was questioning whether or not I needed to call her back first and just withdraw my candidacy, because I was thinking I'm probably not the best person for this position.

These participants' attraction to their respective institutions was influenced by their experiences with their institutional environments.

Charles was another participant who questioned his initial attraction to working at his small liberal arts institution. He grew up approximately 30 minutes from the institution and knew it had a history of being hostile towards people of color. Historically, the institution was in a *sundown town*, which are racially segregated towns or cities, where Blacks and others from underrepresented groups were not allowed to reside in certain parts of town, and had to be out of the town prior to the sun going down (Loewen, 2005). Prior to accepting the position, Charles knew of the town's reputation and questioned whether the university would be open and receptive to him working for the institution.

Salary and benefits were other components that affected fit and overall attraction to these small liberal arts institutions. Overall, participants in this study realized that salary was not a major contributor to their attraction and decision to work for a small liberal arts institution. In fact, Bryan, Charles, Desta, and Gabrielle took pay cuts, while two other participants received higher salaries. Bryan captured the reason many decided to accept lower salaries: "Being a smaller, private institution, I understand the pay was going to maybe not be what I expected…." Instead, he, like other participants, selected their institutions because of other factors. These factors included the opportunity do what they loved, tuition remission for graduate level courses, cost of living, autonomy and flexibility with work hours, or opportunities to give back to students.

Not all participants took salary cuts. Both Gwen and Megan were offered positions with higher salaries than they originally expected. Gwen stated the salary range was not advertised and assumed that was connected to the institutional type. She explained the experience, "I didn't have to negotiate, because they gave me what I asked for…. I felt like I was being greedy to ask, even if it was like $1,000 more. I thought, 'Wow, this is pretty cool'" (Gwen).

Attraction to small liberal art institutions was a component of the engagement of these administrators of color. Although this was not the first time working at small liberal arts institutions for many of these participants, they continued to be attracted to this institutional type. The components that influenced their decisions were the quick paced, holistic hiring process, fit, institutional environment, and salary and benefits.

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Each factor also affected their engagement as administrator of color at small liberal arts institutions.

Retention

The majority of the data for this study were analyzed and fit under the second construct, Retention, after open coding. After additional analysis, I sorted these 62 codes into eight categories. These categories were: (a) departmental and office culture, (b) institutional commitment to diversity, (c) campus-wide credibility, (d) budgets at small liberal arts institutions, (e) support networks, (f) cultural guides/spokespersons, (g) feeling/being one's race, and (h) assimilation. These eight categories were then collapsed into three themes: (a) institutional culture, (b) position empowerment, and (c) multiple hats/roles. The data analysis iterations for the Retention construct are summarized on Table 4.

Institutional Culture

The third theme to emerge from the data was *institutional culture*, which addressed the culture these participants experience while working at their respective small liberal arts college or university. The culture was established by the interactions and relationships developed among employees and leaders. This reinforced a family business-like environment. However, the institutional culture was also affected by traditions, which guided behaviors, practices, and at times, made change difficult. In addition, institutional culture was influenced by participants' experiences around diversity and the limited number of administrators of color employed at their small liberal arts institutions.

For many participants, the culture at their institution was similar to a "family business" (Blayne). Some of the emergent components were the institutional size, social gatherings, visibility of president, and relaxed structure of departments. Both the institutional and departmental sizes allowed for personal interactions between coworkers to be more frequent and authentic. For example, Megan noted, "I think it's a very comfortable place. It's a very homey place. The people here are amazing. I really can't say enough about the people here." This welcoming environment made it easy for participants to transition into their positions and feel like they were a part of the institution. Bryan remarked, "The family atmosphere, they really welcome you here,

Table 4

Code Mapping for ERA Model: Retention

RQ: What is the nature of lived experiences of organizational fit among non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions? (Retention)

Third Iteration: Themes

R1.   Institutional Culture

R2.   Position Empowerment

R3.   Multiple Hats/Roles

Second Iteration: Categories

R1.A.   Departmental and Office Culture

R1.B.   Institutional Commitment to Diversity

R2.A.   Campus-wide Credibility

R2.B.   Budgets at Small Liberal Arts Institutions

R2.C.   Support Networks

R3.A.   Cultural Guides/Spokesperson

R3.B.   Feeling/Being One's Race

R3.C.   Assimilation

First Iteration: Codes

R1a.	Busyness of Work	R2a.	Balance with Cost of Living
R1b.	Competitive Culture	R2b.	Budget Negotiations
R1c.	Critical Incidents	R2c.	Building Trust with Coworkers
R1d.	Critical Mass Developed on Campus	R2d.	Building Trust with Students
R1e.	Defining Word = Power	R2e.	Campus Decision Making
R1f.	Department = Family	R2f.	Campus Involvement
R1g.	Departmental Restructuring	R2g.	Departmental Restructuring
R1h.	Departmental Structure	R2h.	Developing Campus Partners
R1i.	Evolution of Position	R2i.	Factors Influencing Budget Decisions

R1j.	Flexibility/Autonomy	R2j.	Finding Community
R1k.	Interaction with Leaders: Diversity	R2k.	Impacting Institutional Change
R1l.	Office Culture	R2l.	Institution Benefits from Him/Her
R1m.	Resistance to Structural Change	R2m.	Job Satisfaction
R1n.	Role in Changing culture	R2n	Lack of Office Manpower
R1o.	Role in Making Institutional Change	R2o.	Leaders Trust Them to Do Position
R1p.	Tradition Leads to Blindness	R2p.	Learning Culture
		R2q.	Learning Position/Field
R3a.	Assimilation	R2r.	Living the Mission
R3b.	"Being Your Race"	R2s.	Mentors
R3c.	"Bring Race to the Table"	R2t.	Networking
R3d.	"Buffer for Students of Color"	R2u.	Outside Networks
R3e.	Busyness of Work	R2v.	Position High Turnover
R3f.	Code-Switching	R2w.	Resistance to Inst. Structural Change
R3g.	Comfortable with Racial Issues	R2x.	Responsibilities changing
R3h.	Commitment to Community of Color	R2y.	Responsible for Students of Color
	Conflict Professional & Racial		
R3i.	Identities	R2z.	Role redefined
R3j.	Cultural Spokesperson	R2aa.	Salary Negotiations
R3k.	Intersection of Race and Position	R2ab.	Supervisor Support
R3l.	Lose of Identity	R2ac.	Support: Mentoring Others
R3m.	Need to Assimilate	R2ad.	Transition from Student to Professional
R3n.	People of Color as Guides	R2ae.	Transition into Position
		R2af.	Us vs. Them

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they really make you feel at home, they really make you feel like, hey you're new to our family, let me introduce you to everybody."

Social gatherings were another aspect that helped to shape the institutional culture at several small liberal arts institutions. Participants shared stories about how there were regular campus-wide gatherings, socials, and holiday parties, which provided opportunities to welcome new members and encouraged interdepartmental fellowship. These interactions existed beyond the campus and during non-business hours. For

example, Blayne, Bryan, Tuesday, and Charles joined their work colleagues for dinners, birthday celebrations, bar socials, family barbeques, and other social events.

Another way participants experienced the family atmosphere of their institutions was through the visibility and accessibility of the president and other senior level administrators. Interacting regularly with senior level administrators was a regular occurrence at several small liberal arts institutions. Participants shared how there was not a high degree of professional separation between senior level administrators and the rest of the campus community. For example, it was a regular occurrence for Bryan to "see the president just about every day." Blayne also explained that he not only interacted daily with the president but also "a lot of our families that come in for on-campus visits will stop in at [the president's] office." At these small liberal arts institutions, regular interactions with senior level administrators were a normal part of the campus culture.

A final component of the family business-like institutional culture was the relaxed structure of departments. Four participants shared one factor that supported their retention at small liberal arts institutions was the flexibility in office hours and workloads. One participant mentioned:

> [The institution] really has a family sense to it in the sense that if you have things
> to do with your kids, … or if you have any major family issues going on, or
> parent/student conferences. Anything of that nature, it really is a very proactive
> environment as it relates to addressing those family issues first. (Charles)

This flexibility allowed participants to feel valued as employees and participate in how and when their work gets done.

Institutional culture was connected to the history and traditions of small liberal arts institutions. Participants spoke about working for "old institutions" (Tuesday) with good and bad traditions that governed the culture, how things were done, and impacted the ability to bring about change. The traditions were well established and difficult for participants to bring fresh, new ideas into an environment where the mindset was "we've never done it that way" (Gwen) or "well we've never done it this way" (Tuesday).

Despite working for institutions steeped in traditions, all nine of the participants sought to impact their institution's culture. An example of one way several participants worked to change institutional culture was around the language used to talk about people of color. They emphasized it was necessary to redirect their colleagues when they heard

words such as "minority" (Charles) or "sassy" (Gwen) as catchall phrases for people of color. For example, Charles explained:

> … I don't verbally correct them overtly, but … I reframe the word and at that time I think if something goes off in their mind where I am interchanging their minority with under-represented or ALANA (African-American, Latino, Asian, Native American) student…

This made a small change in the culture of the institution, especially for students of color.

Another example of changing institutional culture was related to marketing activities. At Gabrielle's institution, the alumni office developed promotional materials for Homecoming using pictures of only White alumni. She questioned the tradition of advertising material focusing solely on one alumni population. She used her position to ensure marketing materials were inclusive of alumni of color. Similarly, a marketing intern, who claimed his diversity scholarship website was "too Black," challenged Charles. He used the experience as a teachable moment after he realized the intern "didn't de-compartmentalize the different ethnic groups in the photo… even though they were almost an equal distribution of white students in the photo."

Another component of the institutional culture was the diversity of employees at small liberal arts institutions. When talking about the diversity of their campuses, participants shared overall that their institutions have a limited number of administrators of color employed. Many of the participants could count on one hand the number of administrators of color. Others stated that they were the only person of their own racial/ethnic group or even the only administrator of color at their respective institutions. Three participants, Blayne, Elena, and Tuesday, spoke about being the only administrator of color from their racial or ethnic group. In particular, Tuesday was the only African American woman administrator at her institution. Reflecting on the limited diversity, Tuesday commented:

> So there are times where I wonder is it seriously true that when you're hiring teaching faculty that you can only find someone that's Caucasian or that you can only find Asians … but it just seems odd when you have only one African American woman…. When I think of diverse, I think of more than what I see here.

Participants at institutions with more than one administrator of color often commented there were only a few other administrators of color. Many could count the exact number on two hands. For instance, when I asked Bryan how many African Americans worked at his institution, he responded, "(counting on hands) around six or seven. Which is really sad when you can count how many African Americans work at a university…."

Speaking about the limited number of administrators of color at their institution, many participants questioned the institutional culture around diversity. Blayne commented that being Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander was "definitely a unique experience," while Bryan agreed that being an African American also meant being "…part of a unique group." In addition, Charles spoke about how he felt welcomed on campus to those he was introduced, "but [he] kind of got a sense that people kind of looked at [him] a little funny, those who weren't really used to having a professional staff person of color on campus."

Along with Charles, each of the participants shared numerous stories about their experiences as administrator of color at small liberal arts institutions. The institutional culture around diversity at times made participants question if they belonged. However, these same participants emphasized their life experiences had helped them to develop "strong cultural identities" (Charles), which helped them to endure in the workplace despite these incidents.

Institutional culture set the stage for the retention of these administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. Participants repeatedly spoke about how their office and departmental culture played a role in whether they felt welcomed at their institutions. However, many small liberal arts institutions had low numbers of administrators of color to show for their commitment to diversity. The next section covers the fourth theme. This theme addresses how administrators of color experienced position empowerment at small liberal arts institution, as well as how institutional resources affected these participants' ability to feel empowered in their positions.

Position Empowerment

Position empowerment was the fourth theme to emerge from the data. This theme was defined by the learning process and credibility building these participants used to gain the skills and relationships necessary to do their job on campus. It also included the support networks these administrators of color developed through mentors, professional

organizations, and supervisors to navigate their institutions and higher education in general.

Participants reflected that becoming empowered to do their job responsibilities is an on-going learning process. Position empowerment enabled them to both adjust to their new position and their new institutions. They also spoke about the role of departmental restructuring and how it affected their ability to do their jobs. Learning was one aspect of the transition process and ongoing success of these participants to be able to do their respective jobs. It was critical for not only understanding the various components of their positions, but also the higher education profession overall.

Learning occurred in three forms for these participants. First, five participants learned to repurpose their transferrable skills acquired from their previous positions to understand and grow into their new positions. For example, Gabrielle commented, "I learned by trial and error. I had already worked in career services so I had some career services experience." Next, three participants sought out best practices to stay up to date with current trends. Bryan, Blayne, and Gabrielle talked about how they used online websites and articles, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, collaborations with peers at other institutions, and conferences to network, develop new skills, and learn about how to incorporate ideas from other campuses.

Learning to adjust during departmental restructuring was the third way participants experienced position empowerment. Five of the nine participants spoke about experiencing departmental structural changes, which influenced their work within their institutions. This led to title changes and additional workload. Two participants experienced personal resistance to the structural changes because they did not foresee the changes occurring after initially accepting their positions. Gwen explained, "When I interviewed for the position, I knew about an initiative that had taken place in 2009. I did not know that the recommendations of that initiative would have implications for me and my position." Both participants also resisted the restructuring because they were no longer in the positions for which they were originally hired.

A second way these participants experienced position empowerment was through building credibility with coworkers and students. Each of the nine participants spoke about the importance of credibility to do their position at their respective small liberal arts institutions. In particular, six of the participants described building trust with co-workers

was one way they build their credibility on campus. Participants emphasized that to build trust, it was necessary to get to know and collaborate with other faculty and staff members on campus for programming:

> I email faculty and colleagues and try to work with them with regard to co-curricular activities. If I am hosting … I will ask faculty [members] for suggestions of people that they would like us to reach out to - to either speak, participate, present.... I invite the faculty to come and speak and to participate. (Gabrielle)

Building trust with co-workers was not a fast or easy process at small liberal arts institutions for two of these participants. Elena and Tuesday said they both worked hard and put in a year or more to build credibility.

Building trust with students was another way participants built their credibility and experienced position empowerment. All nine of the participants spoke about how their credibility supported the development of all students; however, five participants felt a special responsibility for students of color and first generation students. To build credibility, participants worked to impact campus change that benefited students, served as a resource for students of color, supported both professional and leadership development of students, and assisted students through position turnover.

The three participants working in enrollment management also emphasized a need to not only build credibility not only with students, but also their families. They contributed this responsibility to their role to both recruit new students, while also supporting current students. Charles and Megan both stressed "a lot more of those relationships get built at a small private liberal arts university" (Megan).

Support networks were another component these participants used for position empowerment. Participants spoke about several people and groups that made up their support networks including mentors, professional organizations, and supervisors. Five participants stated they had mentors, who ranged from former co-workers, supervisors, and senior level colleagues. These mentors also had a different race or gender from three of the participants. Gwen defined mentors as:

> Just being able to have people that I can call on and feel like it's a judgment free zone. I can pretty much say what I want to say. They can give me advice. I can

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take the advice if I choose. If I don't take the advice, it's not going to be that they

don't care about me anymore. (Gwen)

Whether formal or informal, these mentors listened, provided career guidance, and provided general support for their professional careers. Participants experienced a continuum of mentor support, but most of them agreed that the presence of a mentor to lean on for support and to learn from made a difference.

All nine of the participants experienced position empowerment from their involvement with professional organizations. These professional groups provided trainings, leadership and networking opportunities, and access to mentors and friends. Five participants were actively involved in ethnic-based groups within these organizations.   Megan credited her involvement in an ethnic-based professional organization with showing her how to navigate the politics of higher education. They "completely embraced me. Its members knew … I didn't know what I was doing. They really took me under their wing."

Supervisor support was another form of assistance that all nine of the participants spoke about that empowered them to do their jobs. When reflecting on their supervisors, participants used words such as "so amazing (Elena)," "good listener" (Desta), "great supervisor" (Tuesday), "pretty supportive" (Charles), "definitely been my mentor" (Blayne), "he gets it" (Gabrielle), and "best one I've had so far" (Desta). Three black female participants emphasized that their supervisors possessed cultural capital to connect with them. *Cultural capital* is "the accumulation of knowledge, behaviors and skills that one can tap into to demonstrate one's cultural competence, and thus one's social status or standing in society" (Cole, 2016, para. 2). These supervisors possessed skills to listen to determine the best ways to supervise and connect participants to the correct support mechanisms.

Resources at small liberal arts institutions were often limited and at times affected the work of these administrators of color. These resources include budgets to provide for or increase the number of staff members, financial aid resources for low-income students, and fundraising opportunities. For example, four female participants worked in departments of one and were responsible for entire departments without any support staff assistance. Gabrielle commented, "…honestly there's only me in the office, I really don't

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have the manpower. My office is run off of student workers. I am it." These participants explained that their institutions' budgets were limited, which affected their resources.

Although the institutions represented in this study had limited institutional resources, many participants said salary and yearly raises were neither dominant nor determinant factors in the decision to continue to work at a small liberal arts institution. Instead, they spoke about their greater mission and purpose of helping with students, or working at small liberal arts institutions. Participants felt this greater mission gave much more than their financial resources. For example, one participant explained:

When I came into higher [education] at that point in my life, it wasn't about finances for me, it was about this is my mission, this is what I'm passionate about. I know I'm not going to make a lot of money, but it's okay. (Gabrielle)

Working at a small liberal arts institution connected these participants to their missions and passions. Participants also recognized the financial dynamics of small liberal arts institutions. Blayne, Bryan, Charles, Desta, Elena, Gabrielle, and Gwen shared how they understand their institutional type and that it comes with a limited salary and opportunities for negotiations.

The fourth theme of the study to emerge was *position empowerment*. Participants used it to explain how they used transferable skills, best practices, and adjusted to department restructuring to navigate their small liberal arts institutions. It also addressed how the participants could build credibility with co-workers and students. Support networks of mentors, professional organizations, and supervisors were techniques these participants used to experience position empowerment. Finally, participants emphasized how limited institutional resources and compensation influenced their retention at small liberal arts institutions.

Multiple Hats/Roles

The fifth theme to emerge from the data was *multiple hats/roles*. Initially it was a concept that developed from participants sharing how they were hired to do one position, but over time, acquired responsibilities that covered several other positions, as well. After analyzing the data, the term multiple hats/roles came to symbolize how these participants took on multiple roles and the personal level of change and accommodation these participants made in their professional lives to make it happen. It also addressed how their racial identities become more salient in the workplace to address particular issues.

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The first component of multiple hats/roles was how participants took on the role of cultural guides or spokesperson in the workplace. They were responsible for "being a mentor, a nurturer, sometimes a surrogate mother, an advocate, a counselor, a case manager, [or] a life skills instructor" (Gabrielle). The desire to take on the nurturer role was only connected to female participants. There was not a distinction between those with or without children but participants, Elena, Gwen, and Gabrielle, who worked in multicultural affairs related positions, said they often took on this role.

The participants had two approaches when dealing with being a cultural spokesperson, depending on conditions. First, participants consciously served as the cultural spokesperson and were aware of their position. For example, Blayne, Charles, and Elena believed they could use their positions to ensure the voice of people of color were part of the conversation on campus. Second, participants were either unconscious of or resisted their role as cultural spokesperson this role. Several participants spoke about how their coworkers and institutional leaders placed the responsibility on them that was solely connected to their race and not to their professional expertise. Gwen captured this concept:

> It's this idea that … Black people are a monolithic group and I understand all
> Black issues and it's very short sighted actually. It makes me feel as if my
> expertise as a colleague isn't really valued…. It's that feeling like I'm only being
> called into this meeting because I'm a Black face and this is a "Black issue." It
> doesn't make me feel good about the situation. (Gwen)

The monolithic view was not solely connected to blackness but to other racial groups.

Another component of multiple hats/roles was the concept that these participants served as cultural buffers. As critical racial incidents in the United States occurred outside of the institution's walls, participants Gabrielle and Gwen spoke about needing to balance their own emotional health and wellbeing while also supporting their students of color after the murders of two young African American men, Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown. Gwen shared her own struggles to balance her responsibility to her students with her own struggle to handle the current events:

> I'm used to saying [to my students], "You've got this. You can do whatever it is
> you want to do in this world…." In that particular moment, I just felt like I don't
> know what to tell them, I don't know if things are going to get better. Maybe that

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was a moment where there was that intersection of my identity and the work …
that I do…. You try to be professional and emotionless in those types of
situations, you couldn't help, but really connect and understand.... but I can't say
that with confidence right now because of the state of the Black community and
the assault against Black and Brown bodies. (Gwen)

The role of cultural spokesperson did not always come easy for these two participants.
They represented not only themselves, but were also the voice of their students.

When participants were asked about what it meant to be their race at small liberal
arts institutions, participants shared it meant to "straddle two identities" (Megan), "you
stand out" (Elena), "unique experience" (Blayne), "unique group" (Bryan), and the need
to "make sure that I hold onto my identity" (Charles). Gwen shared that to be an
administrator of color at small liberal arts institutions "takes on different meanings
depending on the setting." Other participants said they felt aware of their race when
working on initiatives that were not directly related to their position. In addition, Desta,
Elena, and Tuesday did not want to be perceived as not working hard enough or that they
were unsatisfied with their positions. Tuesday joked she did not want people to think she
was "…just shucking and jiving" while Elena said she struggled with feeling like she had
"to work twice as hard and cover all [her] bases so that it would never come back to
[her]."

Another aspect of multiple hats/roles involved participants adjusting to their
institutions' cultures though assimilation and code switching. *Workplace assimilation* is
an unspoken requirement of employees to modify behaviors (language, dress, or attitude)
to align with the institutional culture and goals of an organization (Green, 2008).
Participants learned quickly that assimilation was "a mode of survival" (Gabrielle). This
process included "spend[ing] time with people who had been there for some time"
(Tuesday). Others saw it as "adopting the values of the environment … [or] doing as you
are told and not ruffling any feathers" (Gwen).

Although seven participants believed assimilation was a part of the adjustment
process, three participants viewed their process as administrators of color differed from
their White counterparts at their institutions. For example, one participant explained the
assimilation process changed based on race: "Some White people, they don't dress like
we dress and they don't have to…. They're not fighting the social construction of what is

Black and what Black is not...." (Desta). Other participants used *code switching*, or adjusting one's behaviors to adapt to the different norms and expectations of each group (Morton, 2014) to assimilate.

Four female participants, Desta, Elena, Gabrielle, and Gwen, provided examples of how they modified their voice, tone, body language, facial expressions, dress, or used a different dialect when their race intersected with their ability to accomplish their work responsibilities. "In the workplace I need to code switch because it's just work. It's a professional environment. My reaction or the language I use here ... it's not the same language and conversation that I use when I'm not here" (Gabrielle). These participants realized they needed to be successful in their position; however, at times, they felt as if they were accommodating more and losing a part of themselves to be successful in the workplace.

Multiple hats/roles was the fifth theme to emerge in the study. It helped to understand how these administrators of color experienced fit at institutions. The theme also addressed how participants consciously or unconsciously served as cultural spokesperson; while two participants also took on the role of cultural buffers to help their students handle issues outside of the institution. In particular, race was salient for each of the participants with some modifying their personal behaviors by code switching and assimilating.

Advancement

Thirty-four codes were labeled under the Advancement construct after initial open coding was completed. Next, I sorted the common codes into categories, which include: (a) professional career growth, (b) professional development, and (c) career sacrifices. I then collapsed these categories and produced one theme: (a) professional success. The data analysis iterations for the Advancement construct were summarized on Table 5. The following sections discussed the one theme that emerged around Advancement.

Professional Success

The sixth and final theme to emerge from the data was *professional success.* This theme addressed how participants experienced advancement throughout their careers at small liberal arts institutions. Their experiences were both positive and negative in

Table 5

Code Mapping for ERA Model: Advancement

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RQ: What is the nature of lived experiences of organizational fit among non-academic administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions? (Advancement)

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Third Iteration: Themes

A1.   Professional Success

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Second Iteration: Categories and Subcategories

A1.A.   Professional Career Growth

A1.B.   Professional Development

A1.C.   Career Sacrifices

_____

First Iteration: Codes

A1a.	Ability to Transition Institutions	A1r.	Networking
A1b.	Always Looking	A1s.	Not Balancing the Sacrifice
A1c.	Burnout	A1t.	Poaching Opportunities (Factors Promoting)
A1d.	Career Transition	A1u.	Poaching Opportunities (Factors Against)
A1e.	Commitment to Family	A1v.	Position Growth
A1f.	Conflict with Institutional Goals	A1w.	Professional Career Growth
A1g.	Departure: Leaving the Field	A1x.	Professional Development: Institutional Support
A1h.	Desire for Personal Growth	A1y.	Professional Development: Money
A1i.	Glass Ceiling: Not Moving Forward	A1z.	Professional Development: Self-Advocate
A1j.	Glass Ceiling: Salary	A1aa.	Professional Organizations
A1k.	Growing Personally	A1ab.	Professional Sacrifices Related to Family
A1l.	Institutional Departure	A1ac.	Professional Sacrifices Related to Time
A1m.	Knowing It's Time	A1ad.	Professional Transition
A1n	Lack of Family	A1ae.	Promotion
A1o.	Lack of Prof. Development	A1af.	Questioning If Time to Leave

A1p.	Learning	A1ag.	Role in Changing Higher Education
A1q.	Mission Accomplished	A1ah.	Time for Development

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nature. Professional success was a combination of career growth, professional development and career sacrifices these participants endured to advance professionally.

The professional success of these participants was tied to their professional career goals. Three participants were interested in growing professional and recognized they need advanced degrees to achieve their goals. For example, Bryan stated he needed a master's degree to progress in student affairs and eventually transition into a director of residence life or dean of students role. Elena aspired to teach multicultural/global education or work as a director of study abroad.   She had already started applying to doctoral programs and Gwen was currently enrolled in a doctoral program. Professional success for other participants involved potentially transitioning to a new institution. Blayne stated he "would love to be a director of guidance at a public school with a low college enrollment rate" in the future. Although Gwen loved working for small liberal arts institutions, she could also see herself transitioning to a faculty position at a "mid to large size state public institution."

Five of the participants shared how they had already experienced poaching offers from competitive institutions. Participants used the term *poaching* to explain the phenomenon of having leaders from other competitive institutions or companies approach them to recruiting them to a position. Gabrielle explained, "It's interesting, early on, I was being poached a lot. Oh you should come to work for me. You should consider this position." I was like, "No, I love my job. I'm staying where I am."   These poaching offers often came from the participants' vast professional networks and relationships with colleagues at competitive institutions. Although the participants contemplated leaving their current institution in the future, these poaching offers were not seen as beneficial to their professional success. Blayne, Charles, and Gabrielle spoke about how they had each turned down opportunities to work at larger institutions or higher paying salaries. They turned down these positions because they were not actively seeking a career change, the workload was more, the new work environment was not better, or they would need to relocate to a new region. Blayne went on to emphasize:

...Even though a lot of [colleagues at competitive institutions] made more money than I did, they worked a lot more hours; they made a lot more visits. They had a lot more calls to make. A lot of other factors that I thought, nights and weekends that I have to work if I go there for the money. I don't know if that's worth it to me…. (Blayne)

These participants instead valued the quality of life they had at their current institution over changing positions for a higher salary.

The second reason these participants contemplated departing their institution for professional success was connected to the feeling of professional burned out. *Burnou*t occurs when the employee's motivation for working or reason for employment no longer aligns with the mission of their institution (Taylor & Millear, 2016). Five participants provided examples in their interviews of how professional burnout influenced their professional success.

According to the participants, multicultural affairs and enrollment management were two functional areas where burnout affected professional success. Charles, Elena, and Gabrielle, each worked in the multicultural affairs. They connected their burnout to the lack of support by senior level administrators. They explained there was pushback from leaders, especially when it comes to diversity related work responsibilities. Charles reiterated that, "You wear thin of talking about things that in my opinion would almost be common sense in 2016." Elena explained how her professional success was influenced by burnout:

I think the burning out [comes from] the constant push back from upper administration. They say they want something, then you ask for the resources, they don't give it to you but they still want you to do the same outcome with less resources and you're like, "Are you kidding me?" (Elena)

This constant pushback sent nonverbal and verbal messages to these participants that they did not have institutional support for their work, thus contributing to their sense of burnout.

Enrollment management was another functional area where participants said they started to feel burned out. Although Blayne, Charles, and Megan had worked between nine to 10.5 years each, they realized the lifestyle connected with the profession was not sustainable long-term. They had transient lifestyles, which is not "sustainable long term"

(Megan). Blayne also noted, "that it is important to be goal oriented in this [profession], because if you don't have that you can burn out pretty quickly."

Professional success was also tied to professional development. All nine of the participants provided data about how professional development opportunities helped them to gain new skills and knowledge, grow professionally, and network within the general higher education field. Many found it helpful as they transitioned from one position to another or as their responsibilities increased to new areas.

Involvement in professional development was not solely about attending conferences, drive-ins, and workshops. These participants also presented, volunteered, and networked with colleagues at other institutions. Desta explained how professional organization involvement helped her stay relevant in the profession:

> I stay up with NASPA and I present a lot because one of my mentors said you want to stay relevant…. My work with the [African American women's group in a professional association] is keeping me relevant and just keeping my name out there. (Desta)

Charles and Blayne also found they could stay relevant by getting involved in regional leadership opportunities.

Although all nine participants engaged in professional development activities, their institutions covered these expenses at different levels. Bryan, Desta, Elena, Gwen, and Tuesday each had allocated budgets to cover professional development. Bryan stated he was cognizant that he worked for a small institution with a limited general budget. He took this and the overall cost into account when deciding on which conferences to attend. However, Gwen negotiated her professional development during the hiring process.

Other administrators of color had to decide if an opportunity was worthy of the cost associated. Charles, Gabrielle, and Megan spoke about the need to advocate attending professional development activities. At Charles' institution, the ability to attend professional development "…is a very fluid process...," but his vice president makes it a priority for the entire department to attend a regional conference for admissions counselors. At Gabrielle and Megan's institutions, there was no funding set aside for professional development. Reflecting on the role of professional development in their professional success, Gabrielle commented why she continued to pursue involvement in professional organizations:

When you're in a situation like this, you can't stop investing in yourself. If you

don't invest in yourself, who will? I can't let that stop me even at times when I'm

given extra responsibilities and duties and don't get compensated….

Participants' investment in their own professional development not only helped them do

their job, but also affected their professional success.

The final component of professional success was connected to career sacrifices.

Each of the participants made several sacrifices to achieve professional success. Some of

these sacrifices were connected to their career while other sacrifices were personal. Time

and family compromises were two examples provided by participants.

Time was one sacrifice that several participants made in their professional careers.

These sacrifices dealt either with spending additional time at work trying to accomplish

more work or with commitments to students. Tuesday and Bryan found they missed

other opportunities because they spent extra time at work helping students. Bryan

recognized that he felt an extra accountability for his students:

I never want something to happen to a student to the point where they were

crying/calling for help from me and I didn't make myself available to them …

because I wouldn't forgive myself…. So if they need me, they know I'm available

for them. (Bryan)

Similarly, Gwen and Gabrielle also spent additional time on campus in connection to

their students. They both enjoyed working with students of color but found this

required a time commitment beyond the normal workday. Although all four

acknowledged this extra time with students was a sacrifice, none of them expressed a

desire to change this aspect of their positions.

Professional success for these participants was also connected to their family

compromises. Blayne stated his position often requires him to work weekends, which

took him away from home. Desta shared how her husband's career took precedence in

her early career and led to her own career sacrifices. Elena, Megan, and Gwen shared

about how they sacrificed starting a family for their careers and professional success.

The amount of time associated with ensuring their careers were on track left less time to

focus on their personal lives. For example, Gwen made the sacrifice to put her personal

life on hold to focus on pursing her doctoral degree and building her career. She was

almost 40 years old and had just realized some consequences of her choices:

I don't know if this is because I'm a Black woman, but I've sacrificed

relationships, I've sacrificed children, I've sacrificed a lot of things for purposes of

my attempt to cultivate my career…. (Gwen)

The sacrifices these participants made for their professional success often came without thinking about the choices in the moment. It was not until they reflected that they realized how their choices affected their personal lives.

Professional success was the only theme to emerge from the data around the Advancement construct. The success of administrators of color in this study was tied to their retention and advancement within small liberal arts colleges. Study participants shared how their professional career goals, professional development, and career sacrifices affected their advancement at small liberal arts institutions and the professional overall.

Conclusion

The participants in this study shared about their experiences as administrators of color working at small liberal colleges and universities. I arranged the findings around Jackson's (2004a) ERA model to highlight the three stages of employment within higher education. The first stage was Engagement, which occurred when these administrators of color were hired and initially began their career at a new institution. The second stage was Retention, which helped to retain and support these administrators of color as they grew in their positions. The final stage was Advancement, which addressed how these administrators of color were promoted within their position or the higher education overall profession.

Two themes emerged in the first stage of Engagement: pathways into higher education and attraction to small liberal arts institutions. Participants shared the two ways they entered higher education profession. Some were active undergraduates or encouraged by mentors, while others transitioned after working in another career. Several factors attracted these participants to work at small liberal arts institutions. These factors include the quick paced, holistic hiring process, their sense of fit with the institution, their attraction to the institutional environment, and salary and benefits.

There were three themes at the second stage of Retention. The first two included institutional culture and position empowerment, which were factors that helped to retain these participants. The third theme, multiple hats/roles, highlighted the concerns of these

participants as they took on additional responsibilities related to their racial/ethnic background. These additional responsibilities affected their experience as administrators at small liberal arts institutions.

Advancement was the final stage of experience for these administrators of color. Professional success was the only theme to emerge for this area. From this theme, participants shared their experiences around their own career goals, professional development, and career sacrifices. Each of these factors influenced their success as administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Implications

In this chapter, I offer study limitations. I then provide a discussion of the findings from this study. I also review the connections between the findings from these nine participants in relation to prior research findings. Next I discuss the implications for future practice, research, and policy in connection to the study findings. Finally, I offer concluding remarks.

Limitations

This study had limitations that were similar to other qualitative research projects. First, I attempted to bracket and reflect on my experiences as an administrator of color. This helped to decrease the influences of my own biases throughout the study. It is not fully possible to bracket all biases as a human. These biases may have influenced the analysis process and affected my decisions, which ultimately led to the development of certain themes. In addition, my identities as an African American, woman, and administrator of color might have influenced how I collected or analyzed data. My identities could also have influenced the details that participants decided to share or withheld information because of one of my identities. Another researcher with different identities might examine the same data and extract different or additional themes based on their own biases or experiences.

Second, the study focused on the lived experiences of these nine participants and relied on their memory recall. These participants could have selected to recall certain memories, influenced by their current personal life or work experiences. These same participants, if asked the same questions at a different time, might select to recall different memories.

The third limitation of the study deals with the sample. Nine administrators of color selected to participate and share their lived experiences at small liberal arts institutions. Administrators of color are quite diverse in and of themselves and these nine participants do not represent the entire population of administrators of color. As such, the findings from this study are limited to these nine participants and one must refrain from generalizing about the general population of administrators of color.

Discussion of Study Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of the lived experience of organizational fit among administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions. The study design used the Engagement, Retention, and Advancement (ERA) model (Jackson, 2004a) as a framework to examine these lived experiences. The model's framework allowed for the examination of the evolutionary process of administrators of color as they transitioned through their careers. Six themes emerged from the data, which include pathways into higher education, attraction to small liberal arts institutions, institutional culture, position empowerment, multiple hats/roles, and professional success. I connected the first two themes to Engagement, the next three to Retention, and the final themes to Advancement in accordance to the ERA model. The following section provides a discussion of these six themes.

Engagement

The first two themes, pathways into higher education and attraction to small liberal arts institutions, captured the experiences of the study participants related to Engagement. This included the institutional activities of recruiting, hiring, and initially engaging administrators of color within their respective institutions (Jackson, 2004a). This construct is the foundational phase of the model and set the stage for the incorporation of these administrators of color into their respective institutions (Jackson 2004a).

The administrators of color who participated in this study emphasized there were two pathways into a higher education careers. They either entered higher education professions after involvement as a student leader or transitioned later in their professional career. Two components influenced their journey. First, regardless of when they started their careers, their undergraduate years served as a catalyst for careers in higher education. These administrators of color reflected on their own college experiences and sought ways to give back professionally. In addition, their student involvement in professional organizations or with college administrators aided them into the administration career pipeline.

Four factors attracted these administrators of color to work at small liberal arts institutions. These factors included the holistic hiring process, fit, racially receptive institutional environment, and hiring salary and benefits. For these administrators of

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color, they defined fit as a "gut feeling" (Megan), which lead them to believe their respective small liberal arts institution was a good fit. In addition, salary and benefits at hiring was not a primary reason these administrators' decision to work at a small liberal arts institution. Four administrators accepted lower salaries because they understood smaller liberal arts institutions might not have the financial resources to pay higher salaries. They supplemented their salaries by taking advantage of graduate school tuition remission, lower cost of living, work autonomy and flexibility. Their motivation to work at a small liberal arts institution was the same as their decision to work in higher education, the opportunity to give back. This finding added to the research on the employment expectations of administrators of color and highlighted how their salary expectations differed from faculty members of color (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Donnelly, 2009; Gasman et al., 2011).

Retention

The next three themes, institutional culture, position empowerment, and multiple hats/roles encompassed these administrators of color experiences with Retention. Retention addressed the support and mechanisms used to hold on to administrators of color in their respective institutions (Jackson, 2004a). While retention exists in every organizational setting, in the context of my research, it ensured administrators transitioned into the institutional setting and remained there. By understanding their institutional cultures and providing support mechanisms necessary to accomplish their job responsibilities, these administrators of color better understood how their actions impact their own retention within higher education.

Institutional culture addressed the customs and social interactions at small liberal arts institutions. Study participants highlighted three areas of the culture: family-like environment, ability to impact change, and the number of other administrators of color on campus. Overall, they experienced positive institutional cultures and felt their institutions had a small family business feel. This was due in part to their institutional size, regular social gatherings, visibility of senior level administrators, and the departmental flexibility, which allowed for personal, frequent, and authentic interactions. Long-standing traditions influenced the culture at each institution and all nine participants sought ways to affect change at their institution. They worked to influence

the institution's use of language and marketing that directly impacted students and employees from traditionally underrepresented groups.

These administrators of color also questioned their institutions' commitment to hiring and retaining administrators of color. Some even pondered if they as administrators of color belonged at their institutions since they were one of few or the only person of color at their small liberal arts institution. However, they persevered and were retained despite these questions. Their resilience was connected to their strong cultural identity developed throughout their lives.

Position empowerment was the next component of their experiences with organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions. This involved the tools of learning, building credibility, and support networks, which these administrators of color used to navigate their positions and overall institutions. Learning was accomplished through transferrable skills and by seeking out best practices for the profession. They also connected with students, other administrators, and faculty members to build credibility on their campus. From these administrators' experiences, building credibility was a slow and on-going process, but all nine participants emphasized the importance of focusing on students to achieve success in their positions. Five of the nine administrators of color also felt a special responsibility to build credibility with students of color and first generation students. This was important, as these two groups were part of their identity and the main reason they pursued higher education careers.

Support networks were another way these administrators of color used to build credibility and succeed professionally. Supervisors, mentors, and involvement in professional organizations helped these administrators of color to develop and grow their professional competences and empowered them professionally. The race or gender of their supervisors or mentors did not affect the administrators' ability to feel empowered. However, five administrators of color were actively engaged in race/ethnic-based professional organizations, which they credited with understanding how to support them, especially as new higher education administrators. These administrators sought a supportive community of color specifically to facilitate their retention.

In addition, the limited institutional resources or yearly salary raises did not influence position empowerment. This was consistent with their decision to accept a position at a small liberal arts institution. These administrators of color continued to

understand that resources available at this institutional type were often less than their counterparts at larger institutions were and instead focused on their mission/passion of giving back to students instead.

The last finding in Retention, Multiple Hats/Roles, was a combination of the additional responsibilities and personal accommodations these administrators of color felt they needed to take on to be retained at their institutions. This finding was unique as it directly highlighted the intersection of these administrators' positions and their racial identities. They had the responsibility of "fighting the social construct" (Desta) of what it meant to be an administrator of color at a small liberal arts institution. They served as cultural guides/spokesperson and cultural buffers, while assimilating and code switching as they "straddl[ed] two identities" (Megan).

Advancement

The finding, professional success, aligned with the Advancement construct in the ERA model. It examined how administrators of color experienced career advancement. Per the model, advancement was not limited to account solely for institutional retention, but encompassed any form of progression within the overall profession (Jackson, 2004a). This provided space for administrators to grow professionally either at their current institution or to transition to a new position within the broader higher education profession.

The administrators of color in this study discussed how their career goals, professional development, and career sacrifices lead to their professional success and motivated them to advance professionally. Although they sought advancement, they also placed a high value on their quality of life. Their commitment to quality of life can be seen in each phase of their careers, as they consistently spoke about being content at their small liberal arts institutions despite low initial salaries, minimum raises, or lack of additional human resources. Instead, their professional success was connected to their quality of life, which these administrators viewed as working at an institution where they could give back to students, especially students of color. The institutional cultures at each respective institution felt like small family businesses and provided workplace autonomy and flexibility.

Overall, many of the study participants were content at their small liberal arts institution. They sought professional development opportunities to grow and advance

within the overall profession.   However, five administrators also expressed burnout concerns. These concerns were derived from either a work culture that was not "sustainable long term" (Megan) or from the "constant push back from upper administration" (Elena). Although administrators of color may initially experience a good fit at their respective institutions, over time a mismatch can ensue leading to burnout, a misalignment between expectation of the administrator of color and the institution's mission (Taylor & Millear, 2016).

Relationship of the Findings to Prior Research

There is a dearth of literature on the organizational fit of administrators of color, especially when focused on those working at smaller liberal arts institutions. This study expands the knowledge available for this population. In addition, this study expands the research on the ERA model (Jackson, 2004a), which initially focused on African American administrators to include Asian, Latina, and Native American administrators. The following section provides a discussion on the relationship between the study findings and prior research. Since most organizational fit research in higher education is centered on faculty members of color (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Jackson, 2003b; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Ortega-Liston & Rodriguez Soto, 2014; Victorino et al., 2013), the connection to prior literature for the most part was made to this group.

Earlier Engagement research focused on the limited number of administrators of color currently working in higher education. Researchers examined the academic pipeline (Jackson, 2000, 2003b, 2006; Sethna, 2011; Shaw & Stanton, 2012) and the proportion of administrators of color to the general population (Flowers, 2003; Jackson, 2006). Data from this study aligned with the prior research as participants shared about their two pathways to careers in higher education. These two pathways served as entry points into the administrative pipeline. The findings also supported the need for higher education leaders to continue to monitor these critical entry points to ensure the mentoring and development of potential administrators of color, so they view higher education as a viable career option.

As administrators of color selected careers in higher education, some decided that working at a small liberal arts institution was the best fit for them. The question of fit and what attracts administrators of color to certain institutional types is a topic of ongoing research. There are several factors explaining why administrators select certain

institutional types (Barrett & Smith, 2008; Gasman et al., 2011; Hirt, 2006).   These factors include rapport with department leaders and flexibility in responsibilities (Barrett & Smith, 2008), which align with the findings from this study.

Salary and institutional environment were two factors that influenced the experiences of these participants. Some researchers have suggested salary was a factor that limited professionals of color from selecting to work at lower paying institutions (Gasman et al., 2011). Researchers have recommended that institutional leaders need to offer competitive salaries to attract administrators of color. However, data from this study suggested administrators of color who are attracted to small liberal arts institutions accept positions despite lower salary offers. These administrators instead focused on the opportunity do what they loved, tuition remission, cost of living, work autonomy and flexibility, or opportunities to give back to students, when making their employment decisions. Paying a premium in salary to attract administrators of color to an institution may not be the only measure of inducement.

Hirt (2006) found that small liberal arts institutions pay lower salaries with less extensive benefits packages but their administrators find their satisfaction in serving students. Working at a small liberal arts institution was a unique environment where administrators often work more closely with students than any other institutional type and helped to develop and influence students holistically (Hirt, 2006). This was an important attractor and may explain why many participants were satisfied with their institutions despite their salaries.   The study data continued to support prior research, as these same administrators of color consistently maintained that salary was not a dominant or determinant factor in their decision to work at their institutions.

Study participants also spoke about how they placed a higher value on the quality of life at their current institutions. These administrators turned down job offers with higher salaries or at institutions that were more prestigious because they were satisfied at their current institutions. Although this finding differed from the salary research, it aligned with research on satisfaction in the workplace. Previous research on satisfaction among faculty of color suggested there was a connection between having one's work valued, receiving greater working place autonomy, and satisfaction (Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Second, participants spoke about the need to account for the institutional environment during the hiring and recruitment phase. They viewed the receptiveness of the campus environment allowed for the hiring of additional people of color. Administrators of color not only have to consider the hiring process and their fit but also they need to determine if the environment will be inclusive of their skin color. This is an added dimension not faced by majority administrators. Researchers suggest the institutional environment is one component that often deters people of color at the pipeline stage from entering careers in higher education (Jackson, 2000). Other researchers label the institutional environment as a campus climate concern (Hermsen & Rosser, 2008; Ryan et al., 2012; Turner et al., 2011).

The engagement research focused on the need to have a critical mass of administrators of color to attract more administrators of color (Gasman et al., 2011; Queneau & Zoogah, 2002). Although there was not a specific number associated with critical mass, these researchers emphasized that professionals of color attracted other professionals of color. Study participants did not discuss the need for a critical mass until reflecting on their experiences around retention. Instead, they saw a disconnect between their institution's commitment to diversity and the number of administrators of color on campus. Many participants spoke about the limited number of administrators of color and three participants commented that they worked as the only person of color from their racial/ethnic background.

Although the topic of the need for a critical mass was delayed until the retention phase, both prior studies and this study provided data that institutional leaders need to critically reflect on the messages they send about the importance of employment diversity. Campuses with one or even a handful of administrators of color inadvertently send the message to administrators of color that diversity is not truly valued. However, increasing diversity when there are already low numbers of professionals of color is difficult (Flowers, 2003; Jackson, 2006). At their worst, small liberal arts institutions with limited numbers of administrators of color cause their current administrators of color to question their belonging or the institution's climate. Prior research on campus climate shows that administrators of color were retained when the culture is open and receptive to diversity (Ahmed, 2014; Mayhew et al., 2009).

The finding of Multiple Hats/Roles addressed the responsibility of administrators of color to not only cover additional work responsibilities but also the racial component of assimilation, code switching, and serving as cultural guides at small liberal arts institutions. This study highlighted the unique responsibility of administrators of color to change temporarily their attitude, behavior, dress, and language as a form of "shifting" for professional success.

The concept of shifting is a form of code switching or assimilation, where individuals switch between cultural acceptable behaviors to interact cross-culturally (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003; Morton, 2014; Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Most professional women of color shift cultures, which is temporary modification of behaviors for success in the workplace (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003). Other researchers refer to this concept as living biculturally, where individuals navigate between two cultures, while at times downplaying one culture to advance within the other culture (Cornileus, 2013; Gardner et al., 2014; Montas-Hunter, 2012).

The process of shifting or living biculturally was comparable to the data presented by the participants in this study. These administrators of color talked about how they regularly modified their voice, tone, body language, facial expressions, dress, or used a different dialect to be more acceptable to their colleagues. Interestingly, these participants perceived workplace assimilation was a requirement of all members of their institutions in regards to dress. As administrators of color, they engaged in codeswitching and modification of their body and language more often than their coworkers did. Although code switching occurred during cross-cultural interactions, the power and racial dynamics may lead those from historically minoritized groups to engage in codeswitching more often (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2013). Assimilation and code switching behaviors serves not only as a coping strategy (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003) but also can eventually lead to workplace stress, especially for women (Hall, Everett, & Hamilton-Mason, 2012), and thus may impact both retention and advancement of administrators of color.

Implications for Future Practice, Research and Policy

This study has several implications for future practice, research, and policy. In regards to practice, study participants spoke about "wearing multiple hats" and the assumption that they are responsible for all racial or ethnic related issues. This study

provides evidence that both current and entry-level higher education administrators of color need the skills and tools necessary to assist all students regardless of race or ethnicity. Higher education leaders need to incorporate trainings and standards to assist all higher education administrators to develop cultural competencies. These trainings and standards could be implemented into graduate level preparatory programs and as part of on-going higher education professional development. This would provide administrators regardless of race with tools to assist them to serve all students including students of color.

Second, administrators of color should be encouraged to engage actively in professional organizations. These organizations not only provide function area trainings but also provide administrators of color with opportunities for presenting, networking, and leadership development. In addition, study participants emphasized their involvement in professional organizations connected them to the larger professional population and to other administrators of color. These organizations can help to supplement the need for community and support that may not be available at some small liberal arts institutions.

Involvement in professional organizations may assist administrators of color working in enrollment management, who experience the natural burnout connected to their functional areas. These administrators of color may benefit from early professional development and mentorship to support their development. It may also help them to locate natural transition career pathways where their transferable admission skills could be used. This could potentially lead to the advancement of enrollment management administrators of color at their current institutions or the higher education profession.

This study also has implications for institutional policies. Study findings suggest small liberal arts institutions employ a limited or small number of administrators of color. Senior leaders should examine their institutional policies, practices, and mission statements to ensure they are attracting and retaining a diverse workforce to fulfill their commitment to institutional diversity. These policies should ensure search committees and department leaders have trainings and resources for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. Such policies and practices would address the need to increase the number of administrators of color to have a critical mass. These policies would also help

administrators of color working in multicultural affairs areas to verify if their expectations align with the institution's commitment level.

This study also suggests administrators of color wear multiple hats and are expected to take on race/ethnicity related responsibilities beyond their hired position. Campus policies are needed to protect administrators of color from the expectation that they are the only employees capable or responsible for race/ethnicity related responsibilities. These policies should ensure that institutional leaders train all administrators, regardless of race/ethnicity, to accomplish their job responsibilities and assist the institution on diversity related topics. In addition, these policies should provide additional compensation and/or compensatory time for these additional responsibilities or services when other administrators do not have the necessary skills. This would address the concern of these administrators of color that they wear multiple hats that are often unnecessary at their institution. Administrators of color require additional salary, benefits, time away, and relief time for these above and beyond services.

Finally, these study findings provided implications for future research. Study participants spoke about understanding their small liberal arts institutions possessed limited resources for salaries, raises, or additional employees. Additional research might focus on how the understanding of their institution's resources affect the motivations around engagement, retention, and advancement among administrators of color, especially when working at institutions without a scarcity of resources.

The focus of this study was on the racial identity of participants. Future studies might also focus on other components of administrators of color identities. Some of these identities include gender, sexual orientation, relationship between being an alumni and employee, or religious identity, and working at religious based institutions.

Conclusion

This study directly focused on administrators of color and their experiences with organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions. It provided a picture of their engagement, retention, and advancement, per Jackson's (2004a) ERA model. Overall, these administrators of color experienced similar engagement, retention, and advancement processes as other administrators. Some of these experiences included experiencing a "gut feeling" about fitting in at their institution, slow, on-going process of building trust with co-workers, and enjoying working at a small liberal arts institution

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because it was similar to a small family business. However, there were a few unique findings specific to their experiences.

First, salary was one unique factor mentioned at each stage of the employment process. Although prior research suggested competitive salaries were necessary, these administrators repeatedly reiterated that salary was not a determent or deterrent in their decisions to select or continue to work at small liberal arts institutions. Second, these administrators of color were satisfied overall with their institution's culture and support in their positions. However, they had a unique responsibility associated with their race to assimilate, code switch, and serve as cultural guides. Although these components did not appear to have a direct impact on their retention, they added additional workload to an already hard-working group. Third, these administrators of color shared that they valued their quality of life over opportunities to change positions, even with higher salaries presented to them. This provided higher education leaders with evidence that there is great importance in supporting these employees of color.

In conclusion, the goal of this study was to provide additional research on administrators of color and their experiences at small liberal arts institutions. It is my hope that study will assist both administrators of color and other institutional leaders to better understand how to engage, retain, and advance administrators of color, while increasing workplace diversity within higher education.

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Appendix A

Professional Organization "Call for Participants" Process Email/Phone Call

[Insert contact name]:

My name is Delight Yokley. I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Virginia Tech and am currently working on my dissertation in the Higher Education Program. I am interested in conducting interviews with administrators of color to understand their organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions.

Historically there has been a lack of administrators of color within higher education. This has especially impacted small liberal arts institutions. University and college leaders have been challenged to diversify their staff due to recent student movements like the ones at Mizzou, Yale, and other institutions. For small liberal arts colleges, there is limited research on administrators of color to guide these leaders that seek to change their campus representation. Participation in this study will assist in developing research on lived experiences of organizational fit of administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions.

I am hoping for one of two things: (1) If you could put me into contact with your members, who would be suitable for this study or (2) To submit a Call for Participants on your electronic mailing list or social media pages (Facebook or Twitter). If you could provide me with the protocol to submit a Call for Participants through your organization, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

Sincerely,

Delight B. Yokley

Doctoral Candidate in Higher Education

Virginia Tech

Appendix B

Participant Recruitment Email/Phone Call

My name is Delight Yokley. I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Virginia Tech and am currently working on my dissertation in the Higher Education program. I am interested in conducting interviews with administrators of color to understand their organizational fit at small liberal arts institutions.

Historically there has been a lack of administrators of color within higher education. This has especially impacted small liberal arts institutions. University and college leaders have been challenged to diversify their staff due to recent student movements like the ones at Mizzou, Yale, and other institutions.   For small liberal arts colleges, there is limited research on administrators of color to guide these leaders that seek to change their campus representation. Your participation in this study will assist in developing research on lived experiences of organizational fit of administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions.

I invite you to participate in this study if you meet the following criteria:

    a. Self-identify racially or ethically as a person from a traditional unrepresented group (such as African American, Asian American, Latina/o, or Native American);

    b. Currently serve as a non-academic administrator (functional areas may include student affairs, academic support, admissions and financial aid, registrar, human resources, and business office);

    c. Work at a small liberal arts institution with a student enrollment of less than 2,500; and

    d. Work for three or more years in the higher education field.

Your participation will require two Skype interviews lasting between 75-90 minutes each. The Skype interviews will be digitally recorded and you will also be asked to review the transcripts for accuracy.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me at 216-926-6837 or b18409y@vt.edu. I will arrange a time to talk with you via phone to explain the study, ask a few demographic questions, and arrange a time to interview you via Skype. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Delight B. Yokley

Doctoral Candidate in Higher Education

Virginia Tech

Appendix C

Pre-Screening Questionnaire

Date:_____

Name:_____

Phone No.: _____   Email:_____

Script for verbal consent:

Thank you [insert person's name] for your interest in my study. The purpose of this study is to understand and describe how administrators of color experience their fit at small liberal arts colleges and universities.

Participation in the study requires,

- Access to Skype and headphones,
- Two 75-90 minute interviews, and
- Review the transcripts developed from the interviews.

There are a few questions to determine your eligibility to participate in this study. These questions should only take a few minutes. You can stop at any time if you decide you no longer want to participate. Please feel welcome to ask questions at any time.   At the end of the pre-screening, I will inform you if you are eligible to participate in the study. If you agree to participate, I will arrange an interview via Skype, email you a formal consent form, and instructions for Skype.

Before we start, do I have your permission to conduct the pre-screening process?

❑ Yes _____

❑ No_____

1. Name of current institution:_____

   ❑ Public

   ❑ Private

2. Undergraduate Enrollment Size

   ❑ Small (2,500 or less)

   ❑ Medium (2,501-10,000)

   ❑ Large (10,001 or larger)

3. Number of years in current position:_____

4. Total number of years working in higher education:_____

5. Title of current position: _____

6. In what function area, does your position best fit:

❑ Academic Support   ❑ Multicultural Affairs

❑ Business Office   ❑ Registrar

❑ Enrollment Management   ❑ Student Affairs

❑ Human Resources   ❑ Other: _____

7. How old are you? _____

8. Do you identify ethnically as Hispanic or Latina/o?

     ❑ Yes

     ❑ No

9. Racially, how do you identify yourself? _____

10. (Response by Interviewer) How did you hear about the study?

     ❑ Professional Organization

     ❑ Snowball Sampling

     ❑ Other:_____

Thank you [insert person's name] for your time, at this time you are:

❑ Eligible for study

     ❑ 1st Interview Day/Time:_____

     ❑ Email address:_____

     ❑ Access to Skype:

         ❑ Yes - Skype Name:_____

         ❑ No

❑ Not Eligible to participate because _____

_____

❑ Hold on decision (why)_____

_____

Appendix D

Interview Protocol #1

Name:_____   Institution:_____

Date:_____   Time:_____

Pseudonym Name:_____Code:_____

Script for start of interview:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. As a reminder, the purpose of the study is to understand and describe how administrators of color experience their fit at small liberal arts colleges and universities.

Remember your participation is voluntary and you can decide at any time to no longer participate. Additionally, if you have any questions, feel free to ask at any time. Did you receive and have a chance to review the consent form? Do you have any questions about the consent form?

Before we begin, please verify that I have your verbal consent that you have read and agree to participate in the study as outlined in the consent form.

❑ Yes _____ (initial& date)

❑ No_____ (initial & date)

In writing up the research, I will protect your identity by using a pseudonym. Do you have a name that you would like me to refer to you as? _____

Part I: Focused life history

1. **Please share a little about yourself and your path/journey into higher education. (Engagement)** [I am interested in learning about your journey that led you into a career in higher education.]

   ❑ College background/educational experiences

      ❑ Interactions with higher education professionals as undergraduate

      ❑ How did you know this was path to take

   ❑ Previous positions/career path

   ❑ Who/what influenced you

   ❑ Professional development/career goals

2. Current position: **Thinking about the hiring process for your current position, what, if anything stood out to you**? **(Engagement)**

   ❑ Interviewing for other positions? How did the process compare?

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- ❏ In the recruitment process that attracted you to this job?
- ❏ After you were initially hired and started working?
- ❏ How did you become acclimated to position and institution?

3. **How did the compensation/benefits package of your current position compare with other positions you previously held or were applying for? (Engagement/Retention)**
   - ❏ Was it what you expected for your current position?
     - ❏ Factors used to determine
     - ❏ Compared to previous positions
   - ❏ Has it changed over time? How?
     - ❏ How did you negotiate

4. **You have worked at [institution] for [insert #] of years. How does this position compare to your previous positions? (Engagement)**
   - ❏ What was your experience like at your previous institution?
     - ❏ Relationship with supervisors and co-workers
     - ❏ How is institutional culture at current position compared to the culture at previous position?
   - ❏ What factors did you consider when you decided to apply for a new position?
     - ❏ Was this the change that you expected?
     - ❏ How did this position meet your expectations or not meet your expectations?

Part II: The Details of Experience

1. **What is it like to work for [insert institutional name]? (Engagement/Retention)**
   - ❏ Why did you select to work at a small liberal arts institution?
   - ❏ Tell me about a typical day as the [insert job title]?
   - ❏ How many people work in your department?
   - ❏ How do you interact with others in your department?
   - ❏ Do you supervise staff members? If so, how many? Tell me about your relationship with these individuals?

2. **How do/did you develop your credibility on campus? (Retention)**

- ❏ With co-worker, supervisor, other departments, and students
- ❏ Tell me about how you interact with your supervisor?
- ❏ Describe or share a story about a time that a major campus decision was made?
  - ❏ What was your role?
  - ❏ How did your role compare with those around you?
- ❏ What role do you play to facilitate change within your institution?

3. **What strategies do you use to facilitate your professional success? (Retention)**
   - ❏ How does working at a small liberal arts institution influence your experience as an administrator?
   - ❏ What strategies do you use to navigate your institution?

4. **How do you experience support in your position? In higher education? (Retention)**
   - ❏ How have you created support networks?
   - ❏ How supportive are the leaders in your development as a professional?
   - ❏ Do you have a mentor? Tell me a story about how your mentor has supported you.
   - ❏ Share about an opportunity that you felt supported or not supported in your development.

5. **How do you continue to stay current in your profession? (Advancement)** [Or an example of opportunities you had for professional development.]
   - ❏ How are decisions made concerning professional development?
     - ❏ Are there professional dollars associated with professional development?
     - ❏ How many conferences have/will you attend during this academic year?
     - ❏ What professional organizations are you a member?

Example of generic probes (Bates et al., 2008, p. 5):
1. "You mentioned _____, can you tell me more about that."
2. "You mentioned _____, what was that like for you?"
3. "You talked about _____, describe that experience in as much detail as possible."

4. "What else happened?"

5. "What were your feelings about that?"

6. "It sounds as though you had a pretty strong reaction."

Script for end of first interview:

Thank you for your time and participating in the first part of this study. Before our next conversation, I will transcribe this interview and send you a copy for your review. Please review the transcript and send it back with any changes within five business days after receiving the transcript. My goal is to ensure our conversation was captured correctly.

Next meeting: What day and time works best for you?

New time and date _____

Again thank you for your time. I look forward to talking with you again.

Appendix E

Interview Protocol #2

Name:_____   Institution:_____

Date:_____   Time:_____

Pseudonym Name:_____Code:_____

Script for start of interview:

It was good to talk with you on [insert date]. Thank you for again for agreeing to participate in my study. As a reminder, the research purpose is to understand and describe how administrators of color experience their fit at small liberal arts colleges and universities.

Before we start keep in mind, your participation is voluntary and you can decide at any time to no longer participate. I want to make sure I continue to have your verbal consent to participate in the study.

❑ Yes _____ (initial& date)

❑ No_____ (initial & date) [If no, have participant sign form and remind them to email a copy].

[Review any questions from the previous interview]. Do you have any questions about our last conversation? Additionally, if you have any questions, feel welcome to ask them at any time.

Part II: The Details of Experience (continued)

Today we are going to focus on your identity as an [insert race] and how it influences the work, you do within higher education.

1. **What does it mean to be an [insert race/ethnicity] at [insert institution name]? (Engagement/Retention)**

   ❑ How often do you interact with someone of your ethnic/racial background? (Engagement)

      ❑ In your professional life

      ❑ Outside of the workplace

   ❑ Tell me about your interactions with someone of different ethnic/racial background. (Engagement)

   ❑ What are some things you do that you consider "ethnic or race-related issues" in the workplace?

- ❑ In your position, are you seen as a spokesperson for "ethnic or race-related issues"?
- ❑ If you are involved with "ethnic or race-related issues", tell me how you feel about this aspect of your work.

2. **Tell me a story about a time when your ethnicity or race intersected your professional identity? (Retention)**

3. **How do you interact with the students of color on campus? (Retention)**
   - ❑ Do you feel an obligation to advise, counsel, mentor, and support students of color? If so…
     - ❑ Where does this obligation come from?
     - ❑ How do you respond to this feeling of obligation or desire?
     - ❑ Are other professionals under the same obligation?

4. **What sacrifices/compromises have you made in your professional career? (Retention)**
   - ❑ How do you navigate these sacrifices/compromises? (Retention)
   - ❑ Tell me a story about how someone at your institution of another race/ethnicity has dealt with their sacrifices they have made professionally? (Retention/Advancement)

Part III: Reflections on Meaning

1. **Based on our conversation about what lead you to a career in higher education and your current work, how does an administrator assimilate within your organization? (Retention)**
   - ❑ In your opinion does this process change based on ethnicity/race? If so, how?
   - ❑ If you were talking to another person of color about to enter a profession in higher education, what would you say to prepare him or her to work as an administrator?

2. **Based on what you shared so far, where do you see yourself professionally in the future? (Advancement)**
   - ❑ Tell me about what has motivated you to stay in [insert field] at this institution? (Advancement)
   - ❑ Have you ever considered changing career fields? If so, why?

- ❑ What are the factors that lead you to consider other professional opportunities?
- ❑ You have talked about your professional career aspirations/future plans - What types of opportunities have you had to advance within higher education?

3. **Based on our early conversation on race within higher education, to what do you attribute to the general absence of people of color in leadership positions within higher education? (Retention/Advancement)**

4. **Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experiences as an administrator of color at a small liberal arts institution that we have not talked about?**

Example of generic probes (Bates et al., 2008, p. 5):

1. "You mentioned _____, can you tell me more about that."
2. "You mentioned _____, what was that like for you?"
3. "You talked about _____, describe that experience in as much detail as possible."
4. "What else happened?"
5. "What were your feelings about that?"
6. "It sounds as though you had a pretty strong reaction."

Script for end of the second interview:

Thank you for your time and participation. I will transcribe this interview and again will send you a copy of the transcript for your review. Please review the transcript and send it back with any changes within next five business days after receiving the transcript. My goal is to ensure both conversations were accurately captured. After I receive your version of the modified transcript, I will spend time analyzing the data from both transcripts, compare it to the other participations, and write up the findings. Again thank you for your time.

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants

in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title: Organizational Fit of Non-Academic Administrators of Color at Small Liberal Arts

Institutions

Investigator: Delight Yokley

I. Purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this study is to understand how administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions perceive their fit within their organizational setting. The data from this research study will be used to develop a dissertation.

II. Procedures

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete two semi-structured interviews. Each interview will last between 75-90 minutes at a location and time convenient for you. The interview will occur via Skype and will be digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher. You will be asked to review the transcript of each interview and provide the researcher with feedback and corrections within five business days of receiving each interview transcript.

III. Risks

There are minimal risks for participating in this study. Some of the questions may cause some discomfort as you talk about how your race and/or ethnicity impacts your work environment.

IV. Benefits

There are no direct benefits for participating in this research. Potential indirect benefits are a deeper understanding of your experience as an administrator at a small liberal arts college or university and how it connects to future professional goals. The project may also help to advance the study of organizational fit of administrators of color. No promise or guarantee of benefits is made to encourage you to participate.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

The confidentiality of your responses will be maintained at all times during the study. To maintain confidentiality, you will be given a pseudonym to mask your identity. The name of each institution will also be changed. All forms, printed transcripts, and digital recordings will be stored in a secured location in the researcher's home.

It is possible that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Tech will view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for overseeing the protection of human subjects who are involved in research.

VI. Compensation

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

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Similarly, you are free to withdraw from this research at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the research, any data not already analyzed will be destroyed. You are free to choose not to answer any question, or to not complete any activity.

VIII. Participant's Responsibilities

You voluntarily agree to participate in this study and have the following responsibilities: to participate in two 75-90 minute Skype interviews and review the transcripts for accuracy as described in Section II above.
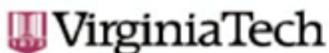
IX. Participant's Permission

I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

_____ Date_____

Participant's signature

_____

Printed Name

Should you have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, you may contact:

Investigators (Primary Contact):

Delight Yokley   b18409y@vt.edu   216-926-6837
Principal Investigator

Dr. Steve Janosik   sjanosik@vt.edu
Faculty Advisor

For questions or concerns related to human subject protection, please contact:

Chair, Virginia Tech IRB:

Dr. David M. Moore   moored@vt.edu

Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Office of Research Compliance

2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)

Blacksburg, VA 24060

(540) 231-4991

Appendix G

IRB Approval Letter

VirginiaTech

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 18, 2016

TO: Steven M Janosik, Delight Bena Yokley

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)

PROTOCOL TITLE: Organizational Fit of Non-Academic Administrators of Color at Small Liberal Arts Institutions

IRB NUMBER: 15-1176

Effective March 18, 2016, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the Amendment request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	**Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 6,7**
Protocol Approval Date:	**January 11, 2016**
Protocol Expiration Date:	**January 10, 2017**
Continuing Review Due Date*:	**December 27, 2016**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

Date*	OSP Number	Sponsor	Grant Comparison Conducted?

* Date this proposal number was compared, assessed as not requiring comparison, or comparison information was revised.

If this IRB protocol is to cover any other grant proposals, please contact the IRB office (irbadmin@vt.edu) immediately.

Appendix H

Follow-up Email

[Participant's Name]:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation research study. I have your first interview scheduled for **[insert date] at [insert time with time zone].**

Please read the attached Informed Consent form and the following instructions before we begin. I will explain the informed consent form and how to sign it when we talk. Preparing to talk:

   1. Have your computer ready and log in to Skype. **My Skype name is b18409y.**

   2. Find a quiet, uninterrupted place that you can be in for 75+ minutes

   3. Have headphones plugged in

   4. Before our Skype begins, please ensure that all other browsers, email programs and other internet-dependent programs are closed. This helps our video Skype work best.

I have also attached a copy of both of my interview protocol. However, I am using a semi-structured format so I may not stick strictly to the questions outlined or ask all questions listed.

If you have any question or need to reschedule your appointment, feel free to either call me at 216-926-6837 or email at b18409y@vt.edu.

Thanks again for your willingness to assist with my dissertation research study!
-Delight

Study Topic:
Organizational Fit of Administrators of Color at Small Liberal Arts Institutions
Background:
Historically there has been a lack of administrators of color within higher education. This has especially impacted small liberal arts institutions. University and college leaders have been challenged to diversify their staff due to recent student movements like

the ones at Mizzou, Yale, and other institutions.   For small liberal arts colleges, there is limited research on administrators of color to guide these leaders that seek to change their campus representation. Your participation in this study will assist in developing research on lived experiences of organizational fit of administrators of color at small liberal arts institutions.

Participant Criteria:

    a. Self-identify racially or ethically as a person from a traditional unrepresented group (such as African American, Asian American, Latina/o, or Native American);

    b. Currently serve as a non-academic administrator (functional areas may include student affairs, academic support, admissions and financial aid, registrar, human resources, and business office);

    c. Work at a small liberal arts institution with a student enrollment of less than 2,500; and

    d. Work for three or more years in the higher education field.

Requirements:

Participation in the study requires a pre-screening questionnaire, two Skype interviews lasting between 75-90 minutes and an opportunity to review the transcripts developed from the interviews

Participant Member Check Email – 1st Transcript

[Participant's Name]:

Please find attached the transcript from our first interview. Review the transcript and send it back with any changes within five business days after receiving the transcript. My goal is to ensure our conversation was captured correctly.

Again thank you for your time. I look forward to talking with you again. Our next Skype interview is schedule for [insert day and date] at [insert time with time zone.]

Please let me know if you need to reschedule.

Best,

Delight

Appendix J

Participant Member Check Email – 2nd Transcript

[Participant's Name]:

Thank you again for your participation in my dissertation research study. Please find attached the transcript from our second interview. Review the transcript and send it back with any changes within five business days after receiving the transcript. My goal is to ensure our conversation was captured correctly. After I receive your version of the modified transcript, I will spend time analyzing the data from both transcripts, compare it to the other participants, and write up the findings.

If you are interested, I will share the final write up after I have defended my dissertation. Please let me know if you are interested in this document.

Again, thank you for your time. I greatly appreciate the time you spent sharing your story with me.

Best,

Delight