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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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Faculty of Color Viewpoints Regarding Recruitment, Retention, and Academic Climate at Texas
Community Colleges

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Caitlin Alexa Graves

April 2021

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the most important people in my life—my wonderful parents and my darling wife.

First, my parents, J. Mark Graves and Marcy D. Graves. I am only here because I stand on your shoulders. Thank you for being my first teachers, for your never-ending belief in me, and for always encouraging me to work towards my dreams. You have shown me what passion and hard work can give rise to, and I submit this dissertation as a testament to that. No title, degree, or award could come close to the honor of being your daughter.

Next, to my wife, Kathryn R. Meyer. My dearest heart, thank you for your support and encouragement during this process and always. This degree was the best thing I have done, next to marrying my best friend. Thank you for being by my side while I have done both. I am excited to continue building our life and working towards our dreams, together. Ich liebe Dich für immer bis in alle Ewigkeit.

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Abstract

The recruitment and retention of faculty of color is a critical issue within higher education institutions, however, the research is lacking within community colleges. Community colleges enroll over half of all non-White students in higher education, more than any other type of higher education institution; however, the faculty do not reflect the student population. Faculty of color face potential suppression, omission, isolation, and lack of belonging. This study illuminated faculty of color's experience at community colleges and the culture at community college for these faculty. In this qualitative, interpretative phenomenological study, the researcher explored the viewpoints of faculty of color regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges, utilizing the first tenant of critical race theory, counter-storytelling, as the theoretical framework. Eight full-time faculty of color from Texas community colleges participated in this research, engaging in a semistructured interview of 18 open questions and five demographic questions. Each interview was then transcribed and coded to determine the reoccurring themes. The overall theme that was determined was a lack of intentionality, including a lack of follow-through and purposefully differentiating faculty of color for engagement, recruitment, hiring, and retention practices. Faculty of color are instead often homogenized and omitted within practices at community colleges.

Keywords: recruitment, retention, faculty of color, community colleges, Critical Race Theory

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Retaining faculty of color is a longstanding issue for higher education institutions (Perna et al., 2007; Whittaker et al., 2015). Faculty of color are disproportionately underrepresented across the nation, particularly within predominately White institutions (PWIs; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Kena et al., 2014; Whittaker et al., 2015). One specific place where faculty of color recruitment and retention is critical is within community colleges.

Research suggests that community colleges should recruit and retain a faculty population that reflects the communities and student populations that they serve; however, this is not the reality (Vega et al., 2010). While faculty of color are underrepresented at community colleges, it appears that this does not reflect the student population for students of color. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, enrollment of students of color has surpassed that of White students (AACC, 2018). Approximately 75% of faculty at community colleges identify as White, compared with 46% of White students (AACC, 2018; AACC, 2019).

The presence of faculty of color has many benefits, including mentoring students of color and junior faculty members, and adding to feelings of belonging for other employees of color (Whittaker et al., 2015; Zambrana et al., 2015). A sense of belonging connected to organizational commitment, critical for retention (Buchanan & Settles, 2018). Cultivating belonging in individuals can then increase institutional commitment and retention.

This unequal representation has further implications for promoting and sustaining diversity at institutions (Whittaker et al., 2015). While their numbers are not comparable with their White counterparts, little research around the experience of faculty of color at community colleges (Levin et al., 2014). There is a need to fill in a gap in the literature on faculty of color's experience at community colleges to create a better scholarly understanding of their experience and the culture at community college for these faculty. Currently, literature and studies are

lacking in that literature on faculty of color is primarily focused on four-year institutions, and faculty in general at community colleges are not studied in the same way as their four-year university counterparts (Levin et al., 2014; Vitullo & Spalter-Roth, 2013).

At PWIs, faculty of color experience suppression, invisibility, and identity conflicts (Levin et al., 2014). The academy emphasizes individualism and isolationism, which threatens the collective and personal identities of faculty of color (Garrison-Wade et al., 2012). Compared to their White colleagues, underrepresented faculty of color receive less support for their teaching and research, often have their ideas dismissed, experience more of a steep path towards tenure and promotion which leads to higher dissatisfaction and attrition (Alexander & More, 2008; Hassouneh et al., 2014).

Faculty of color often feel they must hide pieces of themselves, leading to a decreased sense of belonging and increased isolation, which obstructs retention (Settles et al., 2018). Without feeling they belong; faculty's sense of commitment can wane and lead to faculty attrition. One tool effectively utilized to counter these feelings is engaging these faculty with professional development. Institutions utilize professional development in many ways, including fostering networks and encouraging skill acquisition (Henard & Roseveare, 2012). Professional development has shown to create a sense of belonging and community, and increase organizational commitment (Ismail, 2016; Miller & Eib, 2006). The effect of development on faculty persistence needs to be studied.

Positionality

As a professional development staff member who works with faculty development at a community college in Texas, I have had the opportunity to become familiar with faculty and faculty roles and witness trends within my own college community. I often witness new faculty orientation not having the visible diversity of the students at my college. Additionally, I have had

the opportunity to build relationships with faculty members and have heard from faculty members of color that they have a more challenging experience than their colleagues, both within and outside the classroom. I am not a person of color, and therefore, I have not had the same experience as a person of color. I have sought within this study to understand the experiences and viewpoints of faculty of color on recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges.

Statement of the Problem

Faculty of color show to increase the retention and graduation rates of students of color, who have the most common educational gap in the country (Bensimon, 2005; Hagedorn et al., 2007; Whittaker et al., 2015). As explained above, students of color enrollment at public two-year institutions increased; however, faculty of color employment rates appear to decline (Fujimoto, 2012). A culturally diverse faculty population is key to meeting the needs of a diverse population (Zajac, 2011). Community colleges, overall, enroll 51% of all non-White students in higher education, which puts them at a disadvantage as fewer than 40% of students enrolled at community colleges complete a certificate or degree within six years (Bailey et al., 2015; Ma & Baum, 2016). As community colleges look to increase overall student success, one key strategy is leveraging faculty of color, which entails recruiting and retaining these individuals.

Theoretical Lens

The theoretical lens for this study is that of critical race theory.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory looks at racism within the United States of America (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This lens acknowledges that race and racism continue to exist within the U.S. system of education, as well as within higher education institutions and organizations outside of

education. CRT overall speaks of how racism is engrained in the landscape of the country and is normalized to those within the culture (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). This is particularly key as policies that strictly treat all persons, regardless of race, the same only remedy extreme forms of injustice. This does not affect racist, common procedures and practices that exist in the everyday that persons of color encounter, including in higher education institutions.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) proposed five tenants of critical race theory—counter-storytelling, the permanence of racism Whiteness as property, interest conversion, and the critique of liberalism. For this study, I focused on the tenant of counter-storytelling, which involves the stories and voices of people of color.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the viewpoints of faculty of color regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges.

Research Question

The following research question guided this study:

Q1. What are faculty of color viewpoints of recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges?

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to faculty of color currently employed at a Texas community college. This study is also limited to a small number of individuals who will not speak for all faculty of color during an appropriate sample size for this study. A small sample size limits the ability to generalize about the lived experiences of all faculty of color. Additionally, there are many factors that affect a person's decision to remain at an institution, so it is likely there are

other reasons than those related to being a faculty member of color that cause a faculty member to be retained or not.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study should benefit various individuals and groups. First, faculty of color should benefit as the results will allow for a better environment for them, as well as improved recruitment and retention strategies. The results should be able to better assist community college administration in understanding their faculty of color, as well as increasing the diversity of their staff, which also will benefit students. This study will hopefully improve the institutional climate and academic climate, impacting current and future faculty of color and administrators. Additionally, this study should assist hiring managers in hiring and retaining faculty of color.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for this study included individuals currently employed as full-time at community colleges in Texas. The participants were required to have taught for at least three years, two of which being full-time. These individuals self-identified as persons of color (e.g., African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and mixed-race).

Definition of Key Terms

Academic climate. Culture perceptions and attitudes about academic leadership, teaching, and learning practices within an institution. This culture can include written or unwritten practices, rules, beliefs, and attitudes.

Faculty of color. Individuals employed as faculty who self-identify as non-White. This includes but is not limited to the following identities: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, Native American, and mixed race.

Job satisfaction. How people feel about their job and the different aspects of their job, including the extent to which they like or dislike it.

Recruitment. The purposeful action of enlisting individuals to join an institution.

Retention. The continuation of a faculty member in their faculty role from one academic year to the next.

Summary

This study looked at the faculty of color viewpoints of their institutional climate, job satisfaction, relationships, and engagement in professional development. Faculty of color are drastically underrepresented, and community college faculty of color are underresearched within the current scholarship. This study sought to illuminate strategies for recruitment and retention of faculty of color at community colleges. In Chapter 2, scholarship on relevant topics will be discussed, including community colleges, faculty of color, retention and recruitment methods, and professional development.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Efforts to recruit and retain faculty of color is not a recent effort in higher education, however, despite efforts recruitment and retention of faculty of color continues to be an issue. This review examines and seeks to provide a foundation for looking at what factors influence recruitment and retention of faculty of color, including the setting of Texas community colleges, issues that affect faculty of color, organizational commitment, faculty development, and the theoretical lens, critical race theory, that provides the foundation of this study.

It is essential to look at what differentiates community colleges from other types of higher education institutions, including the specifics of community faculty. To gain a better understanding of faculty of color, it was imperative to research hiring and retention as well as aspects of their perception, including belonging and isolation. Professional development for faculty was also researched to provide understanding for the development that is provided for faculty, as well as how to contribute to organizational culture, as well as how it is potentially utilized as a tool for retention.

Theoretical Lens Discussion

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) was utilized as the theoretical lens for this study, specifically the first tenant, counter-storytelling. CRT showcases the experiential knowledge found within stories. CRT was chosen for this study as it well-researched and is often utilized in the context of education. CRT allows for the evaluation of narratives that illustrate lived experiences as well as institutional racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT revolutionized how researchers look at race within education, specifically as it encourages centralizing stories of people of color to decentralize white normative discourse (Matias et al., 2014).

CRT emerged in the 1970s through the work of attorneys, activists, and legal scholars, with the initial intellectual precursors to the movement born from the works of Alan Freeman, Richard Delgado, and Derrick Bell (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT emerged from individuals realizing that the advances from civil rights in the 1960s, and the efforts to continue to fight for equality, had stalled. The theory came from the two previous movements, radical feminism and critical legal studies. Notable scholars worked through the 1970s and 1980s to craft new strategies and theories, holding their first convention in Madison, Wisconsin in 1989 followed by meetings and conventions, where scholars, activists, and students shared their views and added to the movement. CRT challenges claims of objectivity, colorblindness, equal opportunity, and race neutrality within educational institutions (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Ladson-Billings and Tate shifted the five original tenants of CRT when they proposed applying CRT to education. Critical race theory when applied to education has the goal of countering existing narratives that have been created by the dominant culture (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This study utilizes the first tenant of CRT, which is counter-storytelling. The creation of stories that counter the dominant culture is a crucial piece of the view of CRT by Ladson (1998), utilized to bring change to the culture and systems that perpetuate racism within education institutions. Stories and counter-stories are key as they provide the context for feeling, understanding, and interpreting. These stories are essential when trying to understand the lived experiences and the perceptions of persons of color. They help illustrate those experiences, particularly for those who have not shared in the same experience personally.

Community Colleges

According to the Association of Community Colleges (2020), there are 1,050 community colleges in the United States, 942 of which are public institutions. Of the 17.1 million students

enrolled in the U.S. in higher education institutions, 35% are enrolled in 2-year institutions (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019). Of the 6.8 million students attending as community colleges for credit as of fall 2018, 50% have reported that they are persons of color (AACC, 2020). Additionally, 53% of all students are women, and 29% are first-generation college students. The average tuition and fees for a community college were \$3,730 compared to a public four-year, in-state university at \$10,440. Community colleges have a diverse mixture of students and provide lower-cost education to the community in which they operate.

Texas Community Colleges

There are 52 community colleges in Texas, who employ 12,193 faculty members (Texas Community College Association, 2019). Community colleges are playing a pivotal role in educating the population of Texas and are being utilized strategically by the state to educate their population quickly. The state has committed to at least 60% of its population aged 25-34 will have a certificate or degree by 2030 (Texas Higher Education Foundation, 2017). This program, called 60x30TX, looks to preparing Texans for the future. Goals for this program include 550,000 higher education graduates in 2030, Texans gaining marketable skills through their schooling, and that student loan debt will not exceed 60% of the graduate's first-year wages. Community colleges correctly play a vital role in these goals as these institutions provide accessible, affordable education.

It is projected that Texas public two-year institutions will enroll approximately 780,000 students by 2020 as their enrollment grows at a more rapid pace than universities (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2019a). There was a downturn in enrollment between 2011 and 2014. However, the fall 2018 enrollments have shown that numbers continue to grow steadily, with 40,000 students in three years. Texas public two-year colleges are expected to enroll about

780,000 students in 2020. To assist in keeping costs low and education accessible, Texas community colleges have low average tuition, the third-lowest average nationally (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2019b).

Academic Climate

The academic climate of community colleges differs from that of four-year institutions. Academic administration has grown throughout years, with faculty freedom curtailed as managerial strength has grown (Levin & Kater, 2013). Despite the reduction in freedom, faculty still hold tightly to those pieces of their positions that allow for flexibility, including the freedom they may have to their teaching approach. Community colleges foster a professional identity for their faculty based more on student service and eschew scholarly work that extends further than teaching (Palmer, 2015). The scholarship is not an essential piece for a community college faculty member as it is for four-year universities but instead is seen as a personal option.

As a collective, community colleges have an overarching goal related to student access and providing opportunities to these students. There is an associated culture and set of expected behavior to reach these goals that pervade all cultures within an institution, to the potential detriment of faculty scholarship (Levin et al., 2014). Faculty are defined through their roles as educators, which moves past only teaching into student and institutional success outside of the classroom. Community college culture and institution policies and expectations encourage faculty to move past teaching to be relational-supportive professionals, with hands-on pedagogy to support students and the institution (Levin & Kater, 2013). In this way, the academic culture has been expanded and includes leveraging faculty as tools outside of the classroom.

Faculty of Color

Research looking at community college culture often looks at students of color; however, it often ignores the perspective of faculty of color (Levin et al., 2014). Faculty of color face different conditions within the field of higher education than their White colleagues, which in turn leads to them having a different experience (Levin et al., 2013). Faculty of color feel subordinate to White faculty, and struggle to feel that they are on equal standing as they have a different understanding of institutional life (Levin et al., 2014). More than feelings, they are also shown to be at a disadvantage. Faculty of color are more likely to be in heavy-workload positions with less benefit and are less likely to receive promotions than their White colleagues.

Levin et al. (2013) presented that faculty of color must contend with a double consciousness in which they have how they view themselves and how the institution and its constituents view them. This impacts personal and professional identities and could lead to suppression and identify the conflict. Faculty of color often feel they must hide themselves to assimilate, which affects their sense of belonging within their organization's context and increases isolation for a group that is already often tokenized (Settles et al., 2018). The professional and racial identity conflict is sometimes further complicated in interactions with institutional administrators, who may dismiss the experience of faculty of color (Levin et al., 2014).

Culture

Levin et al. (2014) explained that race and ethnicity are the norms for community college organizational culture, including informing organizational behaviors, particularly student behavior. There is a general culture for faculty in community colleges; however, there are separate faculty cultures within the broader organizational culture. This culture comprises

behaviors, actions, and views of each group, such as faculty of color (Levin et al., 2014). The environment for faculty of color in academia has been unwelcoming, or chilly (Mendez & Mendez, 2018).

There are also differences between faculty of color and their White colleagues in understanding their institutional climate and culture. Faculty of color describe their institutions as student-centered, which they report they enjoy; however, this term does not mean the same thing to each group. This puts the faculty of color on uneven footing as they define themselves as "student-centered." Also, with the differing definition of this identity between faculty of color and White faculty who are the majority, they would be misaligned with the majority and further marginalized. Additionally, this consensual culture, or behavior patterns being interpreted in similar fashion, ignores that of faculty and students of color, which can cause issues for intentional reform of culture (Levin et al., 2014). Levin and the other authors explain that because of continued omission of considering persons of color, reform will be met with limited success.

Hiring

The hiring of faculty of color continues to be influenced by The United States' legal landscape, specifically debate over affirmative action policies (Turner et al., 2008). The researchers further explain that the lack of implanting affirmative action policies contribute to the underrepresentation of faculty of color in academic institutions. Further, departments or institutions that successfully recruit and hire a person of color then consider a need-filled and relaxed effort to continue recruiting and hiring faculty of color.

Levin et al. (2014) reported in their data that the faculty hiring process suggests that ethnic and racial identities are of marginal importance to community colleges, moved to the

periphery. This lack of emphasis on hiring faculty of color means that other personal identities are prioritized when recruiting and hiring. In the same study, a participant described that hiring the institution looked for more candidates with doctorate degrees, causing conflict with the effort to hire a diverse faculty pool to reflect the student population better.

Recruiting and retaining diverse faculty is more relevant each year as the current academic workforce retires, which goes past hiring and into creating environments for retention (Robinson et al., 2013). Processes and programs should encourage creativity to foster more than hiring; it is also imperative. Therefore, community colleges must find ways not merely to hire faculty of color, but to find, implement, and execute processes, modules, and programs that will develop and ultimately retain faculty of color.

Retention Strategies

Higher education institutions have focused on retaining faculty of color for decades; however, it continued to be a prominent issue. Various strategies have been employed to achieve this goal, including relationships, a critical mass of other faculty, mentorship, and faculty engagement. Many scholars have suggestions to increasing the retention of faculty of color. Hughes (2015) explained that institutions looking to increase their numbers of faculty of color should look at a three-pronged approach of intentional actions, strategic planning, and the relationships between faculty of color, colleagues, and administrators.

One prominent strategy for retention of faculty of color as well as building relationships and community, is that of mentorship. In Zambrana et al.'s (2015) study, nearly all the faculty of color surveyed had a mentor, with more than half having three or more mentors in their field. Multiple mentors have shown to be uniquely useful for faculty success. A new or junior faculty member needs both institutional mentors as well as external mentors as they provide different services

(Mazerolle et al., 2018). Mentors provide various supports, including addressing the identified needs and wants of faculty and aid in their retention and success (Bruner et al., 2016). These mentors assist new and experienced faculty in navigating college life, particularly around scholarship, teaching strategies, and furthering their careers. Many mentees and mentors also have a relationship that extends to include seeking and giving guidance on maintaining a work-life balance.

More than mentorship, faculty can be positively impacted by witnessing the careers and successes of other faculty of color, which further aids in their retention as explained by Kaplan et al. (2018). A critical mass of faculty of color is key to retention as it assists in building community. Faculty of color need to have a community and of their own. Kelly et al. (2017) explained that a part of building that community was cultivating mentors within their departments and institutions. This environment is another piece that builds on the sense of community, allowing them to thrive, and leading to higher retention.

Belonging and Isolation

Maslow and other researchers have proven that humans need a sense of belonging, and organizational commitment and retention fostered through cultivating belonging (Buchanan & Settles, 2018). According to the literature, faculty at community colleges report higher job satisfaction than their university counterparts (Twombly & Townsend, 2008). This feeling of satisfaction does not necessarily extend to faculty of color, which are retained at lower rates and have lower satisfaction than their White colleagues (Webber, 2018). Faculty of color need to have a sense of belonging within their institution to aid in their retention. However, often these individuals are isolated instead of feeling they belong. Vázquez-Montilla et al. (2012) explained

that belonging and adapting to their institution while maintaining their unique cultural voice and identity was a challenge.

To cope with the feelings of difference compared to their White colleagues, faculty of color separate themselves into differing spheres socially, which can have a further negative impact on their career (Levin et al., 2013). These faculty feel they must suppress themselves to function in the culture and environment in which they exist. This suppression leads to a lack of feelings of belongings, which could lead to attrition.

Faculty of color are often tokenized and made to carry the burden of being the example of their race as they are the only ones within a department or area (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Robinson et al., 2013; Settles et al., 2018). Faculty of color, particularly if the college culture does not support mixing interdepartmentally, can be cut off from other faculty of color in other departments (Levin et al., 2014). The ability to interact with these other faculty or engage in other activities that foster and support racial and ethnic identities, is compounded by the other obligations put on them by the institution, further isolating them.

Student-Faculty Relationships

College faculty are a core element of student achievement and the development of students through their college careers (Levin et al., 2010). This is even more accurate for faculty of color. The presence and mentorship of faculty of color assist with students' retention and success (Fujimoto, 2012; Whittaker et al., 2015). Faculty of color by way of serving as mentors, role models, or representing a familiar identity, add to feelings of belonging for students of color and increase student academic achievements and aspirations (Levin et al., 2013). It is faculty that are uniquely positioned to advance racial equity across institutions, building a better community for students, and by extension, employees (Liera & Dowd, 2019).

Umbach (2006), in a national study of 13,499 faculty at 134 universities and colleges, concluded that African American and Native American faculty interact with students more than their White colleagues. In the same study, it showed faculty of color engage in active and collaborative learning techniques more frequently than their White colleagues. These strategies can be a more effective, engaging way of teaching, which leads to higher student success.

Faculty Professional Development

Higher education institutions depend on professional development activities to improve teaching and learning related to their faculty (Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015). Scholars agree that faculty become experts in their field through their schooling. They never receive instruction on how to teach when completing their degrees (Hott & Tietjen-Smith, 2018; Howard & Taber, 2010; Wynants & Dennis, 2018). Industry experience is vital to faculty, as shown in the research, faculty often seek out opportunities to grow their instructional abilities (Robinson et al., 2013). Development that is directly rated to their teaching assists faculty in their comfort in the classroom, as well as integrates faculty into the organization. Faculty report their orientations have been among the most impactful development opportunities they have engaged in (Robinson et al., 2013).

Professional development for faculty from their institution, as well as the development they seek out themselves, allows faculty to connect the needs of their students and institutions. The development is often around issues of scholarship, leadership, and teaching strategies, though there are many different areas that professional development cover (Hott & Tietjen-Smith, 2018; Wynants & Dennis, 2018). Faculty needed to understand how to cope with an increasingly diverse student population, which continues to be a need that is addressed with

professional development (Wynants & Dennis, 2018). These authors went on to state that community colleges and faculty cannot function without professional development.

Technology has a prominent feature in faculty development since the beginning of the 1970s. As the decades have passed, the need for faculty to remain relevant with the tools and technology of their field of education has only increased (Hott & Tietjen-Smith, 2018; Howard & Taber, 2010; Wynants & Dennis, 2018). Technology development and how to utilize different technologies in the classroom or as teaching tools is an essential piece of faculty development.

Faculty professional development in community colleges came in the late 1960s and early 1970s when community colleges were waning, and there was a call for increased effectiveness (Watts & Hammons, 2002). Community colleges have specific needs when it comes to their faculty, including that they should prepare to teach underprepared students and an even wider diverse student population (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013).

Programming specifically for faculty of color, has been an effective strategy around retention, including looking towards building leadership skills for these faculty members. Leadership development has become a new trend in professional development for faculty in higher education (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). In a study looking at minority faculty, both faculty of color and female faculty, it was identified that these groups need leadership presence, leadership presentation, conflict management, and other standard leadership competencies (Skarupski et al., 2017).

Summary

This literature review has presented a foundation of knowledge on faculty of color, including research on their experiences, isolation, belonging, retention, and recruitment. The setting that will be studied, community colleges in Texas, has been described to better show what

differentiates community colleges, specifically Texas community colleges, from other higher education in institutions.

It has demonstrated through this research that faculty, mostly faculty of color, have an impact on student success. Critical race theory will provide a lens to understand the lived and shared experiences of the faculty participants. Based on the research concluded here, efforts on recruiting and retaining faculty, are far from complete, and the current strategies, including aspects of professional development, are being studied in this research. Retention methods, such as mentorship, can contribute to retention; however, it remains to be seen what faculty development routinely provided by the institution has a significant impact on faculty perception of climate and urge to remain. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology of this study, including the research question, research design and method, the population and setting for the research, recruitment strategies, and how the data will be analyzed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

This chapter discusses the research design, research question, population, setting, sampling, data collection procedures, data analysis, and the ethical implications for this study. This qualitative research study utilized interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as it allows participants to express their interpretation of their lived experiences as faculty of color in community colleges. Participants were identified by recruitment through professional organizations as well as a colleague network. Semistructured interviews were then conducted for a small, meaningful sampling.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the viewpoints of faculty of color regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges. Through an IPA methodology, I explored faculty of color viewpoints of their institutions, academic climate, job satisfaction, and engagement in developmental opportunities. IPA, identified as the methodological approach for this study, allows multiple perspectives to gather data.

Research Question

The following research question guided this study:

Q1. What are faculty of color viewpoints of recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges?

Research Design and Method

Qualitative research is the methods and approaches for studying natural life, where the primary focus is human actions and their meanings (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Qualitative research utilizes empirical materials; one of the great strengths of qualitative research is that it begets rich data derived from participants' language, descriptions, and experiences (Leavy,

2017). For a study such as this, I believe it was essential to stay as true to the participants' experiences as possible, which is why this study utilized IPA.

Phenomenological studies address the meaning of human experiences in defining what and how the phenomenon was experienced (Neubauer et al., 2019). IPA goes deeper and focuses on utilizing personal experiences situated in a participants' terms and understanding, utilizing everyday experiences combined to show significance (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Rogers, 2008). Experiences are expressed in individuals' own words, rather than categorized into predefined categories (Smith et al., 2009). IPA examines how participants have experienced their personal and social worlds (Willig & Rogers, 2008). IPA allows many participants to experience similar events; however, they use their terms to define the event, which is then analyzed to find a collective meaning. The focus on experience based on individuals' terms that are then analyzed to show a shared experience is the reasoning behind utilizing IPA for a methodology. Participants were asked to describe their experiences with their institutions, colleagues, development opportunities, and their feelings behind these events.

While IPA is a method of phenomenology, this method looks beyond the meaning imparted by participants and uses a double hermeneutic approach, meaning that the researcher is making sense of the participant simultaneously while the participant is making sense of their experience (Pringle et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2009). IPA looks at both the discovery and interpretation of the experiences, and specifically, calls for researchers to deeply substantiate findings in what participants say, such as with direct quotes. This methodology allows for the flexibility to gather information from participants in many different forms, encouraging conversation, ongoing interpretation, and meaning for participants and researchers (Pringle et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2009). This methodology was chosen as the population studied, faculty of

color, is often suppressed within the academy. Faculty of color must often hide part of themselves, which was be studied here in the sense of belonging and experience invisibility and suppression (Levin et al., 2014; Settles et al., 2018).

Population and Setting

The population for this study was full-time faculty of color currently employed at community colleges in Texas. These individuals self-identified as persons of color (e.g., African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and mixed-race). Individuals were required to have taught at their current Texas community college for least three years, with at least two years teaching full-time. This is in recognition of full-time faculty members often having taught in a part-time or adjunct capacity before securing full-time positions. Participants were recruited through engaging with professional groups on social media, specifically the Texas Community College Teachers Association. Additionally, participants were also referred to me by other participants.

Sample

Smith et al. (2009) explained that an IPA researcher should aim for a purposefully homogenous sampling for their research. There is not a required number of participants for IPA studies, and researchers debate about the sampling size, not giving a specific number, except to suggest between four and 10 interviews. I completed semistructured interviews with eight recruited participants for this study.

Trustworthiness

Interviews were confidential. The participants and I were the only individuals present in the virtual room during the interview. Participant narrative responses were transcribed into textual data using Rev.com, a digital computer transcription service, allowing for the gathering

of verbatim words. The verbatim transcriptions required for IPA studies also allow for member-checking (Smith et al., 2009). The textual versions of the interview were emailed to participants to check for accuracy, in a technique called member checking. Member checking increases accuracy, credibility, and validity. The participants were asked to review the transcript for accuracy and provide any additional comments, concerns, clarification, or questions for me to review and address. Participants were also informed of the pseudonym utilized to identify them for this study within this member checking.

Pseudonyms were utilized within this study instead of individuals' names. The Greek alphabet was utilized as pseudonyms for this study with participants labeled in the order in which they agreed to participate in the study. I did not choose to utilize names as pseudonyms for this study as to not Anglicize names, in recognition of my participants being persons of color and some participants having traditional or culturally-associated names. Additionally, I did not want to use pseudonyms with an alphanumeric code such as "Participant 1" as I wanted the pseudonyms to be more personable as the information from participants includes sensitive, personal accounts. All participants were informed of their pseudonym through member checking, as noted above.

Transcripts, notes, audio files, and consent forms were saved with the participants' pseudonyms. All identifying information was kept confidential and will continue to be. I let the participants know they could withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so, without penalty.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

One delimitation of the study is the small sample size, which is a required for an IPA study. The small sample allowed for the ability to go deeper; however, it also limits the ability to

generalize about all the lived experiences of the faculty of color. Additionally, this study was not able to have individuals from all identified races and ethnicities with this smaller sample size. While there are multiple individuals from specific races, this sample is still not large enough to speak for the specific identity.

As the researcher, I was the only person evaluating the data, it is possible I overlooked the coding of some of the data. Although practices to ensure accuracy were in place, and I worked to set aside biases and assumptions, it is likely that someone who identifies as a person of color, or someone who has been a full-time faculty member, might identify or place meaning on something differently than I did within the data. Lastly, there are many factors that affect a person's decision to remain at an institution, so it is likely there are other reasons than those related to being a faculty member of color that caused a faculty member to be retained or not.

Research Materials

The interview protocol consisted of approximately 18 open-ended interview questions and six demographic questions, which have been created based upon information gathered in Chapter 2, as well as designed to align with the research question. The protocol is in Appendix A.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through open-ended interviews, as suggested for an IPA study (Smith et al., 2009). An email was sent to 33 individuals inviting them to participate in this study to get the sample of eight participants. After agreeing to participate in the study, the participants received an email with the consent letter, which explained the study's purpose and other related information, as well as a request of times to engage in the interview. The interview was

scheduled, and the signed consent form was received. Once the interview was scheduled, the participant received the interview protocol for their convenience.

Participants were asked to respond first to the demographic question, then the open-ended questions. The participants were reminded before the questions began that at any time during the interview, they could refuse to answer any question that makes them uncomfortable, as well as withdraw from the interview session without any threat to their relationship with ACU or penalty in any other way.

Each interview was recorded through the online meeting platform, Zoom. The meeting room was set by me, with a private link that could only be accessed by the participants. To ensure that the conversation of the interview was kept confidential while on videoconference, the interviewer was the only one present in the room. Additionally, there was no notice to the participant's institution for whom they teach. The participants' narrative responses were then transcribed into textual data to code and analyze for recurring patterns and themes. After completion of the textual data, I emailed participants their responses to check for accuracy in interpretation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The narrative data were transcribed into textual data using Rev.com, an online transcription service. The textual data of the participants' responses were then organized and coded into recurring patterns and themes. I conducted an initial analysis that included a contextual overview of the participants' responses and coded to align with the research question. Notes were be taken to assist with accuracy. I followed specific steps to interpret the data collected in the study.

- Step 1 I organized and prepared the data for analysis. This included using the transcribed responses to sort the data.
- Step 2 I read and looked at all the data to formulate general ideas from the data.
- Step 3 I coded the data. During the coding process, I organized the data by bracketing chunks and writing categories in the margins.
- Step 4 I generated categories or themes for analysis.
- Step 5 I created a narrative to describe the themes.
- Step 6 I identified the themes and interpreted the data to answer the research question.

The following coding process was used to generate recurring patterns and themes based on participants' responses.

Values Coding

Values coding allows for analysis focusing on struggles, conflicts, and power issues identified from participant responses (Leavy, 2017). This approach looked at feelings and viewpoints related to the identified research question in this study. This type of coding also allows a researcher to become attuned with the participants, allowing for a better understanding (Saldaña, 2009). This method was appropriate for this study as values coding is utilized when addressing interpersonal and intrapersonal actions and experiences and in subjects that may involve cultural values, such as this study which looked at experiences of faculty of color institutions that may not represent their cultural values.

Process Coding

Process coding was utilized as it has the potential to simplify the interview data. This coding is part of grounded theory and utilizes gerunds or words ending in "ing" (Saldaña, 2009). This strategy was called for in this instance, as it is precisely for ongoing interactions, actions,

and emotions around situations. This strategy was useful when looking at the interaction between faculty, their institution, and their development.

Analytic Memos

This is a second-cycle method is useful during the coding and after providing a space for organizations (Saldaña, 2009). Analytic memos were created during the coding and creation of transcripts and provided insight when all data were considered. They were utilized in this study to document and organize ideas, insight, or questions that arose during the process.

Triangulation

Triangulation allows for information from multiple sources to be compared to discover patterns or relationships (Leavy, 2017). This part of the analysis compared the interviews with one another for similar and differing experiences. All the analytical components combined led to the culminating interpretation of the data and resulting themes.

Ethical Consideration

The ethics considered here began at the risk of discussing sensitive subjects, such as race/ethnicity, belonging, and potentially unpleasant experiences, as discussed in the interviews. To ensure the protection of participants from harm, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review was conducted before beginning the study, and the study was approved.

Participants initially recruited were provided a statement of the minimal risks of the study as well as the study purpose. When the participant agreed to continue, they were informed at each stage that their participation was voluntary, and they could conclude the study at any time without penalty—additionally, guaranteeing their confidentiality. Rev.com, the transcription service utilized has their transcriptionists sign non-disclosure agreements, and files and data are encrypted using TLS 1.2 protocol, bank-level security. This study had minimal risk, primarily

focused on the potentially unpleasant feelings of reliving experiences. It was also hoped that by engaging with Yarley's first criterion for validity, sensitivity to context, this risk was reduced.

Summary

This study utilized an IPA methodology to study faculty of color at community colleges in Texas. Through a small sample of eight participants, I conducted in-depth, meaningful, semistructured, confidential interviews from a set protocol. These interviews allowed for first-hand accounts of the viewpoints of faculty of color on the areas of recruitment, retention, and academic climate at their Texas community colleges. Interviews were transcribed and subsequently coded and analyzed to identify themes and patterns within the data. In Chapter 4, the findings of this research will be presented. Experts from the responses will be provided to characterize the identified themes within the narrative, as suggested by Creswell (2013).

Chapter 4: Results

For this qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), I explored the experiences of eight faculty of color who currently worked at community colleges in Texas. The purpose of this study was to examine faculty of color viewpoints regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at selected Texas community colleges. This study intended to utilize the first tenant of CRT, counter-storytelling, to gather these faculty's narratives to understand the lived experiences and the perceptions of persons of color as faculty in community colleges. This study sought to answer the following research question:

Q1. What are faculty of color viewpoints of recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges?

This chapter will describe the results of this study, including a description of the participants, data analysis, narratives from the participants, and the recurring themes. It will end with a summary and introduction to the next chapter.

Sample and Population Description

Smith et al. (2009) explained that not a specific number of participants are required for an IPA study but suggests between four and ten participants with a homogeneous sampling. A total of 33 full-time faculty of color employed at selected Texas community colleges were contacted to participate in this study. Eight full-time faculty of color from those contacted consented to participate in this study.

The eight participants come from seven community colleges; two participants were from the same institution. These seven colleges are in Texas—East, Central, Gulf-Coast, North, and South. These community colleges included two that are single-campus institutions and six that were multicampus institutions. The smallest community college was a single-campus of

approximately 2,000 students, and the largest was a seven-campus system of approximately 80,000–85,000 students.

All participants have worked at their current institutions for at least three years, as required in my study design. The shortest amount of time teaching full-time of the participants was seven years, and the longest time being 33 years. Of the participants, three were female, and six were male. Of their identified race or ethnicities, five identified as Black/African American, two as Hispanic, and one as biracial identifying as Hispanic and White. Two participants hold associate professor as a title, and six have professor as a title, representing five teaching disciplines.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Self-Identified Race or Ethnicity	Years Teaching Full-Time
Alpha	F	Black	22
Beta	F	Black/African American	33
Gamma	M	African American	7
Delta	M	Hispanic	37
Epsilon	M	African American	17
Zeta	M	Hispanic	7
Theta	M	Hispanic and White (bi-racial)	10
Kappa	F	African American	12–13

Description of the Participants

Alpha is a professor in the department of Office Technology. Alpha works at the main campus of a multicampus community college located in the central area of Texas. Alpha has taught for 22 years. Alpha reports that their campus has approximately 10,000 students.

Beta is a professor of education on the main-campus of their five-campus community college system in central Texas. Beta has taught at this college for 14 years out of 33 years teaching full-time. Beta's campus holds most of the college's enrollment with approximately 18,000–20,000 students.

Gamma is a government professor at a branch campus of a seven-campus community college system in Texas's Gulf-Coast area. Gamma has taught for nine years, with seven years full-time and two and a half years part-time. Gamma's campus has approximately 8,000–9,000 students.

Delta is an associate professor of education at the main campus of a six-campus community college system in south Texas. Delta has taught for 37 years in their career, between 18 or 19 years at their current college. The enrollment of their community college system is approximately 30,000–35,000 students. Delta also serves as the chair of their department.

Epsilon is a professor of biology at a single-campus community college in east Texas. Epsilon attended their community college as a student and later returned to the college to teach. Epsilon has taught for 17 years at their alma mater, which has been their entire teaching career. Epsilon's college has approximately 2,000 students.

Zeta is an associate professor of government at a single-campus community college in central Texas. Zeta has taught for 12 years total, with seven of those years being full-time. Zeta's college has approximately 5,000 students.

Theta is an economics professor at one of seven campuses of the multicampus community college system in north Texas. Theta and Epsilon are from the same campus in this system. The community college system is currently going through a large-scale change, which

began in 2020. Previously, the campuses operated as separate colleges are now being united as a single college. Theta has taught at this college for 10 years full-time.

Kappa is a professor of government at the same community college system as Theta. As mentioned above, this community college system is going through an enormous change in its structure. Kappa has worked as a professor full-time for 12–13 years.

Interview Process

The eight participants in this study participated in a confidential, semistructured interview. The interview protocol contained five demographic questions and 18 open-ended questions created to align with the interview question and were created from information gathered in Chapter 2. The interviews were conducted one-on-one virtually through a private Zoom meeting room, with cameras on to allow the participants and researcher to see one another. Once complete, the audio was transcribed utilizing Rev.com, and the transcription was compared to its audio for accuracy.

Data Analysis and Themes

Themes were created based on the responses of the participants to the interview questions. Not all participants' responses have been included in the findings or used to determine recurring themes; these responses were omitted as outliers. Participants shared their experiences and viewpoints from working at their current institutions as faculty members of color. The following are identified recurring themes, along with their responses to support these findings (a) Intentionality, (b) Institutional Deceptions, (c) Good Faith Efforts, (d) Unconscious Bias and Systemic Racism, (e) Strategies for Purposeful Preservation, (f) Equity in Professional Development and Salary, (g) Instructional Disconnection Among Administration and Faculty, (h) Targeted and Isolated, (i) Disparity Among the Population, (j) Collegial Engagement, (k)

Inclusion and Engagement, (l) Close-minded and Omission, (m) Interdisciplinary Training/ Current Technology and Pedagogy, (n) Supportive Environment and Self-Advocacy, (o) Solidarity, (p) Eliminating Biases and Lack of Initiatives, (q) Advancing Inclusion and Recruitment, and (r) Climate of Insincerity.

Intentionality

As participants shared the strategies used by leaders at their institution to recruit faculty of color, intentionality emerged as a theme. Three participants shared that their institutions do intentionally recruit faculty of color. Strategies shared included recruiting places for persons of color, such as minority higher education institutions and specific conventions. Additionally, it was shared to advertise in minority publications and utilize word-of-mouth for recruitment. Conversely, four participants shared there was not intentional recruitment of faculty of color at their institutions. One of these participants shared they were not aware of deliberate efforts and that diversity work has been put to the side to focus on the institution's reaccreditation.

Alpha stated, "We do not necessarily recruit. That may sound strange, but there have been no active recruitment measures for faculty. We post jobs, and people apply."

Beta said, "I am not able to answer that question because I do not know. We do not have a great percentage of faculty of color at my institution."

Gamma said,

I have heard that they are trying to be intentional about encouraging people of color to apply. I suppose that they have probably gone through the Hispanic chamber of commerce; they have gone to Hispanic serving institutions and historically Black colleges and universities. Different places like that, conventions, and gatherings that generally would have people of color.

Delta said,

We live in an area where there is little diversity. We are between 80 and 90% Hispanic in this area. I have not noticed anything that the college has done to say, “We are going to recruit Hispanics,” or “We are going to recruit African Americans,” or “We are going to recruit certain ethnicities.” The college does try not to restrict any minorities or any protected categories. I feel that maybe they need to do a little bit more. I think we lack diversity. I would say that the faculty is 60% Hispanic, perhaps, even more, 80%. The rest is mostly white, and then very few African American, very few other races.

Epsilon stated,

None. The last three science hires have been men of color, and a lot of that was because they had the highest qualifications. It was not so much that the school was like, “Hey, we need to hire this person of color.” I think that is something that a lot of colleges forget. Your strategy needs to be independent of the skill level. As far as advertising the people of color in the community, there a Speech professor who is local in the community; he has been advertising quite a bit about if you are a person of color, you can come work here. That has been him independently.

Zeta stated,

I am not sure. I do not do a lot on the administrative side. I know that there has been a lot of dialogue in some of the meetings that we have had for Zero Week and throughout the semester that have to do with equality and equity, identify the issues, and increase faculty. Out of all the faculty, I want to say that there are five Hispanics across the campus. We do not have very many minority professors on campus. But I know that there

has been a lot of dialogue, but right now, we are in the middle of our 10-year reaccreditation, so a lot of those meetings have gone to the wayside.

Theta said,

I will say it is undefined. I know the trustees have made it a priority, so it is on record, and they are passionate about it. And the Chancellor is also passionate and interested in it. But it has had limited success.

Kappa said,

They advertise in various publications that are geared to people of color. They try to have people who sit on hiring committees do “word-of-mouth” recruiting. Primarily, it is advertising and publications. Another committee that I served on that explicitly dealt with minority-serving institutions would go to various institutional conferences for people of color and set up tables handing out information about the institution.

Institutional Deceptions

When discussing their perceptions of their institution’s recruitment strategies’ effectiveness, institutional deceptions theme became apparent from the narrative data. The intention of recruiting a diverse faculty does not meet the reality. Multiple participants shared a disconnect between their institutions’ intentions and actions regarding recruitment and their institution’s reality recruitment strategies.

Alpha said,

When people need jobs, they apply for them. It is effective to post a job and have people apply, but it is not so effective for our proposed mission. A search for diverse faculty, a faculty that is the most like our student body, would include race and ethnicity, because those are two different things, gender, military affiliations, because we are very close to a

military base. That sort of thing. So, again, the strategy of posting a job and getting applications is effective on the one hand, but on the other hand, it is not effective at all for diversity.

Gamma said,

I am not sure that because, having been on several hiring committees, I do not always see that we have a candidate pool that is as diverse as even the college may want or claims that they want.

Epsilon said,

My perception is that the college comes from a good place. The ideal that they think they are doing the right thing by hiring this person. It becomes, "Hey, look, we hired another Black guy," as opposed to, "Hey, look, we hired a very qualified professor." My perception is a bit different from many of my colleagues because I grew up in the area and returned to a community where we still have areas referred to as quarters. For someone like me who grew up in the community, I always hear what is said and postured. I am seeing what a lot of my community members are seeing. They are like, "Uh, looks like BS." So, I cannot go in and tell my boss, "Hey, I know what you all are trying to do, but people are calling you on this, pretty hardcore."

Zeta said,

I know that we have always talked about the limited number of minority faculty and how it is at other institutions as long as I have been here. We have always talked about something, but really, we are at the 'identifying the problem' point of the process.

Theta said, "It is not effective. But it does not mean it will not be the future. But it is just not right now."

Kappa stated,

Honestly, I do not know how effective it is because they could be extremely effective with many applications. But then the disconnect comes at the HR level. I cannot say where because something is happening, but I just do not know where it is. I do not know if it is recruitment, or I do not know if it is once it gets to HR and passing that hurdle, or once it gets to the hiring committee and passing that hurdle where diverse candidates are not hired.

Good Faith Effort, Unconscious Bias and Systemic Racism

Two themes emerged as participants spoke about the most significant challenges facing their institutions when recruiting faculty of color. Three participants spoke of a lack of a good faith effort on the part of their institution. The lack of a good faith effort came in actively recruiting faculty of color, including through advertising positions and purposefully seeking out candidates of color.

The second theme that emerged from participants was unconscious bias and systematic racism. Two participants shared that their institutions face a challenge from the surrounding communities, either being unwelcoming to minorities or applicants being biased against the community. In one instance, the participant shared an experience of biases from the institution itself, where the police were called on him and colleagues due to being persons of color. Examples of unconscious biases and systemic racisms within the hiring process, from recruitment to hiring, were also shared by participants. Gamma's response included both identified themes. The responses and recurring themes are below.

Good Faith Effort

Alpha said,

The fact that we do not do it actively. I think that is the big deal now. When we open programs that cater to the community, we can presume with mid to high probability that certain categories of people qualify for employment. For varying reasons, however, people in those categories do not necessarily apply. Consider this, my institution has a STEM program. Based on the demographics of our area, we can say there are so many people who fit this minority group, people of color in engineering, who could apply, but those qualified potential applicants never become applicants. One of the biggest reasons is pay. Why would an engineer go to a community college and work for \$80,000 when he or she can take the same commute in the other direction and make double and triple that? Recruiting qualified Black, Hispanic, or Asian professors will not happen without a concerted effort.

Beta stated,

The most challenging part they are experiencing is not advertising in media to gather persons of color. You must make sure that your campus is representative of the student that you teach. We need to do a better job in getting the message out because we are an outstanding two-year community college in the state of Texas, with the second-highest rate of transfer acceptance of students. We need to focus on making sure that we know what areas we should target to advertise.

Gamma stated,

Maybe they do not make as much of an effort as they say they do. I know that people of color go to school and get their masters or what have you. There are two HBCUs within a 30-minute drive and also HSIs. I do not know if they get out there and try to try. I do not know if they actually go to these places that they say they do. And maybe it is just that

there is not a coordinated effort. I guess on paper, they say they do, but I do not know that there has been an effort yet when it comes time to do it. I believe it is coming, but I do not think it has been done yet.

Unconscious Bias and Systemic Racism

Gamma stated,

Maybe they do not make as much of an effort as they say they do. I know that people of color go to school and get their masters or what have you. There are two HBCUs within a 30-minute drive and also HSIs. I do not know if they really get out there and try to try. I do not know if they actually go to these places that they say they do. And maybe it is just that there is not a coordinated effort. I guess on paper, they say they do, but I do not know that there has been an effort yet when it comes time to do it. I believe it is coming, but I do not think it has been done yet.

Delta said,

I think it has to do with the area itself. We will not make it to the news unless it is terrible. Sometimes that gives a reputation that it is not a friendly area for minorities, specifically African Americans. I feel that we do try to make an effort to recruit as many minorities as possible. But it is just that, the area “Oh, you are from that area that is almost 100% Hispanic, you are close to Mexico, so I do not want to go there.” We try, but I think the applicants may be a bit hesitant.

Epsilon said,

The surrounding community is not ideal for raising an African American family. I have many friends who try on almost a monthly basis to move towards central Texas. Just so there are more opportunities. That is a major turnoff. I think I am the only African

American professor that lives in the town where the college is and one of two that live in the county where the college is. There are some challenges to raising a family in this area. All, I went to college here. There are many challenges for African Americans raising their family in this town, in this area, in this region of Texas, that become more present over the past four years. My family lives about 60 miles away from me, and they are constantly calling in to check up on me because they are worried about what will happen to me. After all, if you are an African American educator in a historically systemic racist town, your family will let you know what is going on in the background before seeing it in the foreground. That is an immense challenge living in the town. The only person I must worry about is me, and that is why I am willing to stay here and teach. But I cannot speak for my colleagues; many recently discovered that, especially if they moved in from the area. In my third week of teaching at this school, the cops were called on me by one of the college administrators, reporting that an African American male was in the building. The next time they hired an African American to teach another science course, the police were called on him, too. And then it happened again. So that is the community we teach.

Kappa said,

I think the major hurdles are if a person of color made it through the HR screening process, it went to the hiring committees, and it depended on who was on the hiring committee and what they were looking for. You have anywhere from four to six individuals looking at applications and their components on the application that are subjective. That is where the issue could have arisen for many people of color trying to get hired.

Strategies for Purposeful Preservation

When asked about strategies their institution has implemented to support faculty of color retention, the participants explained that their institutions have aimed for purposeful preservation strategies. The intentional strategies included being faculty-minded and having other persons of color represented, including faculty, supervisors, and administrators.

Multiple participants mentioned the faculty represents the student body. Another purposeful preservation strategy was supporting these faculty through training.

Alpha said,

You would think we would be student-minded, and a great part of being student-minded is ensuring they have the best faculty for their areas of study. Those faculties come in all shapes and sizes and colors. Retention does not happen by holding a meeting telling faculty, essentially, they can find somewhere else to go if they do not want to be where they are. Faculty do not spend an entire career in higher education because of a promise of fortune, so when handed an invitation to leave, what registers is, "I am no longer useful. They cannot even see me."

Epsilon said,

I am not aware of any policies specifically targeting the retention of persons of color. There are some things that they have done that make me a little bit more comfortable working there. Now, whether these are on purpose or just happenstance is unknown. My new immediate supervisor is a person of color, making me feel a little bit more comfortable sharing with them. I do not share everything because they are a person of color who does not live in the immediate area, to my knowledge, they are a transplant. Some things are better left unsaid if I think it would either cause her some concern for my

safety, and because of her fears, just get the hell out of dodge. I believe that is the biggest thing they have done. I would have encouraged a person of color like me to stay. I did not think it would have an impact on me. The only real difference between that boss and my previous boss is they are now a person of color. Thus, I feel a little bit more open in speaking with them. I tend to keep my language specific when talking to a superior who is not the same color as me.

Zeta said,

I am not sure that they are targeting faculty of color per se. Our administration is open to any type of complaints that the faculty have. They are very faculty-minded, but not only towards faculty of color but all faculty. That creates a more receptive environment for all faculty and minorities by extension. I think something that I know our board would talk about since 2013 is that the faculty makeup needs to represent the population, and it is not. As of right now, our president is Hispanic, our Vice President is Hispanic, and they are both women. I think my college is moving towards becoming more representative of the population.

Theta said, “In the hiring process, they like to ensure it is a comprehensive representation of the student body. How they go about it, I do not know. I am not in human resources.”

Kappa stated,

Prior, if you were a faculty of color and wanted to transition into something else, they paid for organizations’ training. That training will train you to transition if you desire to go into administration. So, they were supportive of that. They paid for memberships to organizations that support staff and faculty in higher ed.

Equity in Professional Development and Salary

Participants were asked to describe how their institution utilized its financial and funding opportunities for faculty of color and their white colleagues. From all participant answers, the theme of equity for funding in professional development and salary emerged. None of the participants shared a difference in the funding allocation between faculty of color and their white colleagues. Many participants discussed how funding was reserved and allocated for faculty to utilize for professional development and travel.

Alpha stated,

I think at my institution it is pretty even across the board, as we operate very much in silos. Every department is given so much funding for professional development, research or, what have you. It really boils down to what departments are doing and how people within those departments are choosing to operate. Because I have a very clear sense of what is available to me in terms of funding for professional development, I take full advantage. Every year, I make it my business to spend it all, not for the sake spending itself, but rather for the sake of taking advantage of professional development opportunities for which I do not have to pay out of pocket. Notwithstanding, if there is anything I want to do, I am going to do it. I am going to pay for it, because I am concerned about my students, and I am concerned about what matters to them.

Beta stated,

Absolutely not. We have very robust professional development opportunities at my college, and there has not been any difference, or “you get more money than I get me.” I am not sure exactly how they do that. Every conference that I have asked to attend has been approved, no questions asked. As past president of the Texas Community College

Teachers Association in the state of Texas, my college has been supportive in awarding me, release, supporting me in other ways, and financially to perform my role as President of TCCTA. There has been no difference whatsoever there.

Gamma said,

I know the way that it used to be. It was very subjective when it came to money and other people they did not know. One individual is a minority, and she was told, "Maybe you do not need to go to this particular opportunity," But there were others who would ask for money and would get it. Some would not ask because they thought they would not get it. Two or three years ago, a committee was formed, and I was placed on the committee. All the full-time faculty in my division are allocated a thousand dollars to go to different conferences. The committee we are supposed to look at their request and use a rubric to grade and decide where it is; they are planning to go. It is not a perfect system, but that is what we are supposed to do.

Delta stated,

I think we are fairly good as far as providing funding regardless of race. I do not believe I have ever seen or heard of a difference. If I did, I would have spoken up. I do not think the college will ever do that.

Epsilon stated,

At my college, we are all on the same pay scale. How much you get paid a semester is based on your years of experience, how long you have been in the college, and your degree. So, my pay should be the same as anybody else based on years. When I first started here at my college, I was hired as a basic instructor, and I only had my lower degree. They created a new pay scale for me. That would be the only disparity in pay

scale that I would have seen, and I had some issues with that because the pay scale they made for me did not match the pay scale for an instructor in a technical program.

Zeta stated,

We get funding from a variety of sources. They fund our clubs. I am the sponsor for LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens], and I also do a couple of other ones with high minority participation. They are outstanding about paying for travel. If the money is there, they come out to us, so we do not have to look for [funding]. They send an email saying that they will fully fund the first 30 to 40 people who apply. They are excellent about paying, reaching out, and deciding what opportunities we want to take advantage of to become better professors.

Kappa said,

If you want to travel or go to a conference, the college has two specific funds, and you must meet certain criteria. And one of them you must request, the other one you do not. We used to have a travel fund in each school; there were five disciplines, so we had a travel committee. We had one representative from each of the disciplines, and then the faculty would submit to the travel committee costs. And, we have a Center for Teaching Excellence that has funding as well. I do not see a difference, but I am in the School of Social Sciences. My dean was African American; before that, it was a white female. So, it is very welcoming. So, in my experience, I have not had that particular issue. In other disciplines and other areas, they may have had those types of issues. I applied for a sabbatical one semester. It was approved, but it came back with these questions that I thought were not relevant. I talked to a couple of other people, and they did not have that same experience. My assumption, I do not know if it is true, is that it was what I was

attempting to do with my sabbatical. I was planning to go to an HBCU and spend time looking at a particular program that we also have at our college to make a comparison. I did get it approved, but I was interested to know why I was getting those questions.

Instructional Disconnection Among Administration and Faculty

When describing their institutions' academic climate, the theme of disconnection between administration and faculty became clear. Institution administration has requirements of faculty that the faculty do not agree with. There is also a disconnect, according to participants, when it comes to faculty of color and school administration, including recruitment and support of current faculty. The topic of the intention not meeting reality is present in participants' responses, as it has been in previous responses. Theta did share they had the academic freedom to evaluate students as they wished and positively view their institution's academic climate.

Alpha stated,

Community college professors, we are kind of the grassroots people. If we were in the Ivy League, we would be the rock stars, but alas, we are not. And for a long time, there is very little appreciation from those outside of the professoriate. There is a disregard for faculty as professionals who know their craft (the art of teaching), their subject areas, and their students. In fact, tensions between administration and faculty were so high, my institution's faculty senate was disbanded. Besides that, one of the biggest issues revolves around the general issue of how to handle students. One group believes it is impossible to have a rigorous curriculum and be gentle, caring, and kind students. Still another group believes it is possible. When it comes to cheating, one side believes it's important to watch students carefully while the other side asserts that it's their job to teach, not babysit. The culture across campus is mixed, but within departments, there's a better

flow. In my department, we love our students. We are different, all having our own niche. And we fit quite nicely in that we see our students as consumers. They deserve our very best, and we owe it to them. As we are different people, our best looks different, but it produces the same result.

Beta said,

I think that the academic climate at my college is one of uncertainty. The students would love to have more persons of color. I am not going to say that it is not a priority. I know that we want to create a warm, safe, inclusive environment. We are making strides, but I do not think we are making enough strides to make a difference. I believe that the climate is uncertain, especially moving into the COVID pandemic. Everything is on a halt right now as far as faculty hiring. When positions are available, we could potentially have faculty of color apply for the positions. Often, faculty of color do not apply because they do not perceive the college as a community where they can flourish and grow. After all, there are not enough persons of color to mix, mingle, and collaborate with. So, you tend to gravitate toward areas where you feel comfortable. There are very talented persons of color, but if they are trying to choose whether I want to teach at my college or teach out of Houston, if they had a choice, they will probably choose a school in Houston or Dallas, where they have persons of color and also more persons of color in leadership.

Gamma said,

The academic climate at my college is one that we want every student to succeed. The system has made different strides for African American students, specifically for African American men. A program was created called SSI. In the beginning, it was for African American males, but everybody can be involved. And somewhere along the way, the

focus on African American men was toned down, and it was just SSI and for everyone. There are two or three campuses within the system that receive a Title V grant because they have been designated a Hispanic Serving Institute. My campus created a Center for Leadership Academic Institute of Success (CLAIS) for Hispanic students. But it is open to everybody. The climate around academics is that we do everything we can to assist the students and make them feel comfortable in their learning, but we do have shortcomings. I was looking at some data today. It still seems to be lagging that African Americans have about a 50% success rate, and all other demographics are at least 11 percentage points higher than African Americans. And I do not understand that. I do not know why that is. Delta said,

The academic affairs division tries to tell the faculty what needs to be done. Many of the faculty are very highly educated, and they do not revolt, but they will speak up and say, "Wait a minute. You are telling us to do what? What about our academic freedom?" As long as we cover the objectives that we are supposed to cover, we can do it whichever we can within guidelines.

Epsilon said,

From the faculty level, it is very vibrant. Especially within science, extremely passionate individuals teach. When I first started, I worked with five of them. The things that they do daily are what got me into this field in the first place. We have had a couple of hiccups. A couple of people who we hired were not as driven as we may have wanted or as devoted to students as we may have wanted them to be. They eventually moved on to their greener pastures, and they were replaced with someone who was just as passionate. From the instructor's standpoint, there is an absolute passion for teaching. There have

been some issues between the two sides of the coin, most of those I ran into when I was president of the Faculty Association. The faculty association is entirely voluntary, so we are typically not included in any official policy documents. Right. It is a lot of pomp and circumstance. There have been some administration efforts as of late to bring the inclusion of faculty into the fold.

Zeta stated,

There are pockets within the institution of how they perceive leadership. Nobody will come out and say it, but there is some small animosity that our leadership is Hispanic. Our president, who is Hispanic and female, was given the position. Many people were upset because she is young, and the person she got the position over has been our Vice President for a long time, and he had worked his way up the ranks. Many people felt that she was given the position because she was a woman and Hispanic, and they were trying to fill quota. The vice president has been there since 1994, and people know that she is the Vice President because she deserves to be there. That can create some animosity. Other than that, there is not a lot of racial tensions within the campus.

Theta said, "I think it is good. I teach economics the way I think it should be taught. I am free to evaluate the students in the way that I think they need to be assessed."

Kappa stated,

The culture at my campus seems very driven by the being a teaching and learning institution. Policies align with that, but practices may not align. You talk a good game, but do you walk a good game? Generally, there is the idea that we will strive to be a teaching and learning inclusive institution. But in practice, just looking at programs that are offered for students, for instance, that are funded by the institution, or looking at the

percentage of Black male faculty, which is abysmal. Females are better but certainly nowhere near Caucasian, and Hispanic, the same thing that the numbers are not acceptable.

Targeted and Isolated

The participants in their responses felt that the academic climate targeted and isolated faculty of color's professional work. Many participants spoke about their burden as persons of color, including underappreciation, demoralization, and prejudice. Many talked about the lack of other faculty of color and how they thought they were in the spotlight.

Alpha stated,

It creates a lot of discord, uneasiness, and unsettling. How is it so much better now that I and most professors are working remotely? We do not have the cloud that simply looms. When you go on campus, you can feel it. It is hard to explain but you can feel the heaviness of not being appreciated. You can feel the heaviness of having to fight for everything, including the freedom to do the work set before you.

Beta stated,

It is kind of like the elephant in the room. We know that we are in the minority. We feel like we must make sure that we do our work and do it well because sometimes I feel like I am under the spotlight. After all, there are not many faculty of color—also, a feeling of acceptance. I am here; I was hired to do a job. I was hired because of my expertise and skill, not so much as my skin color. Would it be nice for us to have more persons of color? Sure. Do I tell people about opportunities that are available at my college? Sure. But I am not in the leadership position to go out and recruit those faculty. I would say

that faculty of color are aware, but we try to move on and do the best to connect with those we have to provide emotional support.

Gamma said,

I think the fact that the college has made an effort, it does help. Now, we have an honors college, we have Phi Beta Kappa, we have all these different accolades for students, but there are not very many students of color in those. I appreciate those employees who created SSI and assigned mentors for completing the program, having the Title V grant, and TRIO. But when it comes to getting scholarships and so on, I do not see so many students of color, particularly African American students, accepted into the programs and groups and given full-rides and things like that. And I do not see very many faculty of color teaching those honors classes. I do wonder about that, and I cannot say something. Nowadays, supporting faculty of color and students of color is a lot more than creating a diversity center and professional development. At some point, it has got to be an A to B connection. You got to have professional development, and then you got to tie it into academics. We have learned these things; how can we make this connection to make it better in the classroom, for our faculty and the students? It is a supportive environment, but it is not where it should be.

Delta stated,

I think this has a negative effect. The idea that I need to tell you how you are going to teach, because you may not be good at what you are doing. It demoralizes the faculty. We do not like to be told, especially minority faculty. We have very few minorities here, and we do not like that.

Epsilon said,

It is an excellent thing. It is good to fear your co-worker's work because that makes you dig deeper. Everyone has their niche, and everyone respects faculty niches. So, if you are doing something involved with that person's niche, you will reach out to them, and they will reach out to you. The largest issue we have is integrating new hires into the system because of the unwritten rules of who takes what area or task "Hey, this person is over that, this person is over that." "Well, where is it on the paper?" "Well, it is not really on paper, but if you need this, you go to that person because they do it the best." They are the best at their niche, so do not step on their toes. Try to see if the other faculty have the area covered and if they do not, and you can do better, go ahead. Everyone strives to fit in, except for new hires trying to get used to the system because they may come from a school that whatever you want to do, you do. Or if you do not do this by yourself, then why are you here? Getting them into that fiber mesh network of this is a team effort. The goal of this team effort is to provide the best experience for all our students possible. Once they link into the meshwork, they rarely leave. Most people who leave do not want to sign on to that team effort.

Zeta stated,

I am sure that it affects the mindset. As a professor of color, I do not feel that it affects my work. This is something that we have known exists. We understand that prejudice exists; we know that any type of success that you get over somebody that is not of color can be met with derision. That is nothing new and does not affect our work. It is just something that we live and deal with every day, which would never negatively affect my career. It may affect how you interact with certain people if you know that a specific person feels a certain way. You see that not just in what they say, but in how they interact

on social media. Social media posts give you a different gateway into their mindset. It would never negatively affect my work, but it is just something that [faculty of color] think about and deal with every day.

Kappa stated,

People who are active, engaged, and doing the work of cultural awareness, and trying to help the institution understand and learn about different cultures. For those people, it is “Okay, we are going to do this no matter what, and these are the things that we are going to do. And we are going to work to get support from the institution.” So long as the institution says, “Yes, we support it. We may not get the money to do it, but we are still going to do it. This is the work we are going to do so that we can make sure that this is a place that is welcoming to everyone.” Students who look like us know that people who reflect them are working towards a more inclusive community. When you look at protections that staff has compared to faculty’s protections, it is very different. So, if we are doing committee work for an academic program focused on something related to diversity and equity [staff needs permission to serve]. Staff is where you primarily see your people of color. They do not have the protections, and then if their supervisors are not supportive of the work, then [must do work after hours]. Faculty is very different. It is “Okay, I am faculty. This is a part of academic learning, and this is what I am going to do. And I hold my office hours, and so anytime outside of that I am not in a class, I am just going to go and do this thing.” That affects the culture of people at different levels of the institution. What type of support do you have for people who want to do work that a larger group of people may not support at the institution? So as faculty, I am good, and I can do it. But many employees want to be involved, which is very difficult for them.

Disparity Among the Population

A theme of disparity among the population became clear as participants discussed the faculty's racial diversity within their department and institution. Most faculty shared a significant difference between faculty of color and their White counterparts within their institutions or departments. There were pockets of persons of color where there was high representation in many instances, but others have low numbers of faculty of color or none. One participant shared that they do have a large representation of Hispanic faculty, which is usual for their Texas area; however, it does not have a presentation of other minority races.

Alpha stated,

My department employs eight full-time professors. When I first started, there was one Black woman who worked as an adjunct; I replaced her although I interviewed for a full-time position, which was ultimately filled by a White woman. For 10 years I was the only person of color before the department hired another person of color, who, after a couple terms, found the job was not a good fit for her. When the White professor who got the position I initially interviewed for retired along with another White professor, I secured a full-time position. Approximately four years later, two other women of color were hired as adjuncts. One retired after a couple years; the other left shortly thereafter. Now, after 22 years, there is one other full-time professor of color. Of the college, overall, I think you will find it seems pretty diverse, but as you move from department to department, there is not much diversity. What you do find, however, is that there are more faculty of color in certain departments than there are in other departments. If you look at our nursing faculty, there are a lot of Black and Hispanic female professors. When you look

at our communications department, there is one. Some divisions house several subject areas.

Beta said,

Within my department, of 44 faculty under the humanities department, there are probably two or three full-time persons of color: Black-American and Hispanic. And this is just in one division of 44 people. The division maybe a little larger than that if you include the adjuncts, but there are no persons of color serving as adjuncts.

Gamma said,

There are two African Americans, one Latina, and three individuals who are White in my discipline. So that is a pretty good composition. In my division, there are only two African Americans and maybe three Hispanics. That is five minorities, it is not as racially diverse, and it is a slow process.

Delta stated,

I happen to chair the department, so I significantly impact recruiting and recommending faculty for our department. And that is always in my mind, you know, that I do not want to leave out anybody because of race, gender, orientation, or any protected categories.

There is an effort from the college to make sure that we select the best person based on their credentials, not on anything else. We are mainly Hispanics, and we try to make an effort, you know, not only with the full-time but with the part-timers to recruit and make sure that we get the best qualified. But it goes back to what I said earlier that sometimes we post a position, and out of ten applicants, there could be one who is African American and one White. So that kind of limits the choices of hiring somebody who may be the

best qualified, who might be White or Hispanic or African American. In our department, it reflects the college, 20% white and 80% Hispanic. And we do not have other races.

Epsilon said,

That is a very good shade of beige. You can go to the website, and you can look at the faculty pictures. As far as admin and general college, it is beige. If you look at overall faculty, and then you look at the numbers, you may get excited about it, but I think as far as full-time faculty, I can think of two African American professors. On the academic side, outside of biology, off the top of my head, I can think of two African American professors. That being said, the science building is separate from everything else, and I am not counting Athletics, but that would be five. Pretty much the same number as Biology for the rest of the school. I am not surprised by that. I was more surprised when we hired the second African American professor in my department [there are now four]. Overall, I would say my college is beige with some coloration sprinkled in. For the healthcare side, there is [one African American]. Across the administration, the only African American I can think of is my immediate boss. Our board has one African American female on it.

Zeta said,

There are three Hispanic faculty in the Math department, the administration is both Hispanic, and it is probably roughly the same across the institution. I am sure we have some adjuncts that I do not know about, but as far as full-time professors, at max, there would maybe be ten faculty members of color at the institution. There is just not a lot there.

Kappa said,

Within my department, I could probably count everybody on two hands. In my discipline, we have two women of color, two Hispanic males, and one person from North Africa, but they categorized themselves as Caucasian. History has three people of color. Sociology has one, Psychology has one too, and then the other departments do not have people of color. There are nine of us out of probably 25 people. And then the campus as a whole, the numbers are much worse. My school probably has the most because we are Social Sciences. Physical Education has more faculty of color because they have volleyball, coaches, an African American female basketball coach, and an African American male coach. Soccer may have a Hispanic male, but you might have three or so in the other departments. It is not very many. I do not know the numbers offhand, but it is small.

Collegial Engagement

Faculty of color were asked to discuss the academic communication among faculty members in their department and program. Based on their responses, collegial engagement emerged as the recurring theme. Several of the participants expressed that colleagues' communication is a sense of team engagement. They stated that they often engage in conversations in passing and through emails. Many have weekly and monthly meetings to keep them informed on the business of their departments and programs. Especially during the pandemic, which impacted their physical connections, all meetings are held virtually via Zoom and WebEx.

Alpha said,

Within department, we get to see one another in the hallways or during office visits.

There is always email; department meetings every two weeks. I am not a meeting person, but it helps to keep the communication flowing. I think different departments use those

same kinds of tactics. If we are talking about communicating across departments and across the entire college, there are very few one-on-ones, just having a conversation. There are lots of emails written for documentation. It bothers me that it is evidentiary rather than real communication.

Beta said, "Email is our primary source of communication, and across the college, it is through the LISTSERV."

Gamma said, "Email is the primary means. Now we meet every Thursday via WebEx because faculty work from home."

Delta stated, "Since March, most of our communications have been video conferencing through Zoom meetings, Microsoft Teams meetings, emails, telephone calls. Maybe now and then, texting."

Zeta stated,

We do not communicate between different departments. On my side of campus, we have got administration at the end of our building with Institutional Research and Planning. Then on my side, we have got the rest of the Liberal Arts faculty offices, and so we interact with each other a lot, but for example, we have our Testing Center on the opposite side of campus. We never see them. We will see them once a year for All College Day, which is the first day before the semester begins. The Math and Science Department are a great example because they are on the other side of campus. Unless we are on committees together or something like that, there is no interaction unless you know them outside of work. There is not a lot of talks. There is not a lot of chance for intermingling.

Kappa stated,

Emails. We have discipline meetings, and then we have department meetings. The college has meetings too, of course, and they have convocations. For the discipline, our dean hosts a school meeting where everybody is invited, and then she will discuss with each discipline. Everybody in each discipline separately, and then the disciplines have meetings to talk about discipline-related issues. The people in my discipline all have each other's phone numbers. I think Psychology and Sociology are the same. We text a lot if we must do something. In some of the other disciplines, their dynamics are different. We have been having a lot of virtual meetings. If something happens, we will text each other or set up a team meeting or something and talk to each other.

Inclusion and Engagement

The participants were asked to discuss how their institutions support the academic and professional performance of faculty of color. Based on their responses Inclusion and Engagement emerged as the recurring theme. Several participants stated that their institutions had programs or initiatives to address faculty performance. However, most confirmed that the initiatives were not always explicitly geared to faculty of color.

Alpha stated,

I do not know that there is a real support for that. Generally, the faculty course load is five courses; anything else is an overload. On top of that load, we must also meet a contact hour requirement. A typical load for any normal institution might be five classes with an enrollment of 20 to 25 people. With my institution, in addition to the five classes, and you must have nearly 7,000 content hours. It is pure manipulation because what that does is ensure an increase in every section capacity, also known as doing more for less.

This practice undermines the professionals who are charged with doing it. With that in mind, I do not see the support of faculty of color.

Beta said, “Well, there is no distinction for development between faculty of color and non-faculty of color.”

Gamma said,

The Center for Engagement, which I serve on the committee, held two race summits. Last year, we had a campus Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion summit and a year-long Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Certification Program. I do not know that the institution directly gave any money for those programs. The Center for Civic Engagement and the Title V grant pooled money already there and allocated it to these specific programs. A faculty fellow created the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Certification Program for the organization, so I guess the college indirectly supported the program. The Lone Star College Council on Black American Affairs, a group of faculty, became charter members, and we brought in all the African American or Black faculty members. The college created an account that we could pay dues to; however, no money came from the college itself. In summer 2020, the college started a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee system-wide that will come up with recommendations to address Black African American employees and Black students. Some recommendations were to create an Office of Diversity for a Chief Diversity Officer and professional development. I did serve on the Professional Development Committee, and the college is considering the recommendations. The Lone Star College Council on Black American Affairs is considering making the organization an official Lone Star college program. It is very reactive instead of proactive, but they did it, and I appreciate that.

Delta said,

It is challenging to make a statement because we do not have the diversity that we need.

The college does make an effort to include different ethnicities and races in almost whatever we do. I am part of various committees, and I can tell that the college does try to recruit or include minorities.

Epsilon said,

I do not think there are offerings specific for faculty of color. We have a professional development folder that we must fill in. From one standpoint, it becomes more homework, but on the other viewpoint, my past bosses and even my current boss are very encouraging for me to go ahead and, "Hey, do this, especially if it is free. If it is free, oh, yeah, do that!"

Zeta said,

There is nothing that they do that would be specifically for faculty of color. They do it for everybody. If there was anything that they do to support it is at one point, we were a very conservative school, and I think now we are moving away from that to where they are less worried about what community feedback would be. If there are activities that faculty want to do, they are not going to come out against us because the idea is too liberal or something like that. The faculty and students are going in different directions or trying something new, and the administration supports us for that.

Theta stated,

I think the administration and our trustees recognize that is real weakness and shortcoming. We have this new alignment of the college that we are moving into, which should address that. There is an office of professional development with faculty fellows.

We have now got four faculty fellows. And so, we expect this change to be faculty driven. So far, you know, I am pleased and happy with what is happening.

Kappa said,

Every year the department for professional development would send a list of the leadership development that the school pays for, however, you must apply. Your dean would have to support that, and the VP and the President will look at it and decide what to support. May have been three specific leadership training specific to African Americans and Hispanic persons, and then a couple for women. You could go through that list and apply to the programs, and they would decide which one you were going to attend. You would rank it and usually would get the one you wanted. If you were a new employee on our campus, you had to go through an orientation training with four cycles and then just traditional professional development for everybody, not only for faculty of color. If you were an employee at our campus, these are professional developments that you had to take. They were trying to encourage people to be aware of cultural differences, ethnic differences because our campus is extremely diverse and our student body. Training included not just how to work with people who looked different from you but also how to work with our student body.

Close-Minded and Omission

The participants were asked how their institutions encouraged the professional improvement and job satisfaction of faculty of color. Based upon their responses, Closed-Minded and Omission emerged as a recurring theme. Most participants shared that their institutions encouraged faculty to participate in professional development opportunities to promote improvement and job satisfaction; however, they also stated that faculty of color were not

targeted or differentiated when it came to these efforts. One participant shared that while there is no differentiation in professional development at their institution, there is required training on cultural and ethnic differences.

Alpha stated,

I am not being glib, I promise you, it is just true. The institution does not care about job satisfaction. This is it, you just kind of go with it. I have said to every department chair I have had, "I do not work for money." Do not get me wrong, I need money, like everybody else. I have a family, I need to eat, I need a place to stay, insurance, all that kind of stuff. I do need money, but I do not work for it. The moment I start working for money, it is time for me to go. When an institution begins to devalue what I am bringing, I might be afraid to leave if my being there is all about money. I am here for my students and not for you. Previously, my college was a wonderful place to work, but the leadership was different. There was a respect for people, before we got to where we are now. There is a total disregard for anybody who gets in the way at my institution. All people are recognizing that there is a disparity here. We have a professional development plan that outlines how much of a given area faculty must engage in. One such area is on-campus involvement, time spent participating in campus affairs outside of one's everyday responsibilities. Another area is off-campus involvement, time spent participating in different professional organizations to which one belongs. The final area is community involvement, time spent participating in community activities. Every year faculty are required to accumulate about 20 or 33 hours, but the truth is that doing so is a check box. As an institution we have come up with this plan to maintain our accreditation, which is not a bad thing. Service has just lost its authenticity. Beta. We get the email information

for professional development, and we are encouraged to attend. We are encouraged to submit approval through the portal for credit. And there is no distinction between different types of faculty on who gets a chance to go and who does not get the opportunity to go. It is all one big pot. If we want to attend a conference, Webinar, or training, we can attend if there are funds in the budget.

Epsilon said,

I do not think there is a specific distinction for faculty of color. The problem comes when I ask for money. In my experience, there is an abundance of professional development available at the school level, which is free for the institution. If you want to do something beyond that, the barrier becomes money. They want to see some amount of professional development. If I have something that I want to share with the school population that directly impacts instruction, I send an email to the person I want to do the development under, and they will create a platform for me to do that.

Zeta said, “There is nothing that they do specifically for faculty of color. They offer programs and services for everybody.”

Theta said,

I do not think there is anything. The institution began Employee Resource Groups within the last year at the behest of the board. Now you have a Hispanic organization, a Black organization, an LBGT organization, and a few other organizations pop up.

Kappa said,

The leadership development offerings from HR. Also, if faculty are a new employee, you must go through an orientation with four cycles. Then traditional professional development for everybody, not just for faculty of color. If you are an employee at our

campus, there is professional development that you must take. They were trying to encourage people to be aware of cultural differences, ethnic differences because our campus is extremely diverse and our student body. Training included not just how to work with people who looked different from you but also how to work with our student body.

Interdisciplinary Training and Current Technology and Pedagogy

Participants were asked to describe some of their current professional development activities, and Interdisciplinary Training and Current Technology and Pedagogy emerged as a theme. Responses reflected the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on faculty. Several participants shared that they have sought training on technology and virtual pedagogy due to teaching remotely. Many participants also shared they seek out interdisciplinary training or development that falls outside of their discipline.

Alpha said,

I am professional development junkie. Most recently I went to a three-day, eight-hour a day conference on coaching and speaking. I thought it was meaningful, and so I paid for it myself. Recently, I completed a presentation for NISOD on intercultural communication. I have just finished some teaching strategy sessions. I also participated and helped facilitate five weeks of conversations surrounding equity and inclusion, and race and tension in the community.

Beta said,

My professional development activities include attending reading and teaching education conferences across the state and online. To enhance my technology skills, our college has a wonderful IT department where multiple workshops are offered each month.

Gamma said,

At the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education, I have attended two or three of their seminars this summer. I have participated in the Leading from the Middle conference with the Texas Community College Teachers Association in July. I have attended Courageous Conversations, and that was a seminar also through TCCTA that focused specifically on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Last summer, I participated in the Leadership and Mentoring Institute, put on by the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE). I have attended so many, but also the TCCTA annual convention in February.

Delta stated,

I am very actively involved in different professional associations. I am part of the executive committee of one association at the state level. Tomorrow, the college is hosting a meeting, and part of it is to talk about the professional development needed by college professors. The college is very receptive to providing opportunities for professional development. The college has an extraordinarily strong professional development team, and they are always encouraging us to attend professional development or current professional development to peers and others.

Epsilon said,

This summer, I was involved with the state-level community college meetings, most of which were digital. I did some sessions with the Pearson education company towards the end of last semester. Before COVID hit hard, I was able to go to the annual conference for our state-level last semester. I recently just did a Zoom training on improving test design in the testing system we use. I have done some individual professional

development for the online lab system that I am currently using meeting with them to embed it better. My largest issue with professional development remains that I must attend and write up a report, like homework. I understand the importance of that, but the act of writing how it will be used is superfluous. It is already incorporated into my class. If it is good, I am going to use it.

Zeta said,

Being stuck to teaching remotely, faculty were forced to say, “Okay, how can I make this online course not look like an online course?” Since March, I think all my professional development did a lot then, and then we did a lot over the summer to try to prepare once we knew we would be online, was focused on remote teaching. Remote teaching and how we can make our online classes as robust as possible and still cater to students who feel like they need to be in a classroom. That has been within the last six or seven months.

Theta stated,

I think they have been related to technology, even pre-COVID. It was related to technology but not related to my discipline. Our college has seven separate campuses, currently being combined under one district], and it is a real weakness in our professional development.

Kappa stated,

I did train-the-trainer training to talk about racial justice, social justice, and sustainability to go back to our campuses and host training. The concept was great, the training, not so much. But the idea of being trained centrally to go back to our campuses and host the same training that never happened. We have an Equity [College Name] committee, which provided DEI [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion] type programming. We get professional

development for that, even though we are the ones who are creating and hosting these various activities. A lot of the professional development I have been doing is for accessibility training, which came from a lawsuit due to accessibility issues. We have had a lot of training about that. I have done professional development training for cybersecurity, and we were doing it before going online. So, it worked out great since we are now virtual. Now my training, I currently do the best way to engage students online.

Supportive Environment and Self-Advocacy

Study participants were asked to discuss their perceptions of mentoring, job satisfaction, and sense of belonging at their institution for faculty of color. Two themes emerged from the responses, Supportive Environment and Self-Advocacy. Many participants explained that their supportive environment was highly impactful and contributed to their satisfaction and sense of belonging. Many participants shared that they must find their way or seek out solutions on their own when needed. This self-advocacy included seeking out their mentors in some instances and creating their place, impacting their belonging.

Alpha stated,

Faculty of color have had to find their place. We have to find our people, have to find the people who are not merely like us but those who are willing to grow. That means finding people who are already where you want to be, or at least really close to being where you want to be; finding people who will encourage you and who will provoke you to continue in the work you have been chosen to do. I use the word provoke because it best describes the gentle force of being prodded into uncomfortable places that will eventually yield growth and development. So having people who both motivate and provoke us is really important. Admittedly, this does not happen naturally. While some departments do assign

mentors to new faculty that mentor most often happens to be a book. Someone may say, “Here is the book. Let me know if you have any questions.” Admittedly, that is how mentoring works for most people at my institution. There is no real mentoring although it is absolutely needed. Consider a person who wants to be a medical doctor. After medical school, that person spends time as a resident, and, as resident, practices under the supervision of a fully licensed doctor for four to eight years, depending on your specialty. Now consider our profession. We are required to learn our craft. If psychology is my area of study, I have to know psychology. Oddly enough, I do not have to know how to teach even though I intend to teach. I started teaching in my early 20s. For the first few years, I was winging it. It would have been nice to have a mentor come alongside me and say, ‘Hey, this is how teaching goes.’ Having a mentor would be powerful. It would save both professors and students a lot of headaches. I, along with other people around campus, have taken on self-prescribed roles as mentors to adjunct faculty to help with student issues, basic teaching and learning, syllabi, class structure. Providing that kind of support gives strength to the faculty who receive it. Again, mentorship should be a huge part of how faculty are supported, but on my campus, it exists on paper only.

Beta said,

I have never felt like I did not belong. And because my college has awarded me an opportunity to seek professional development, I have grounding. In the last 13 years I have been at my college, I have never felt like I did not belong there. Since I was in the tenth grade, I have always been in a multicultural environment, so I am able to function in and out of different settings. I have never felt like there was not anything that I could

not do if I put my mind to it. But, if you talk to someone who grew up in a totally Black environment, teaching at a predominately white college may be uncomfortable for them.

Gamma said,

At my college, I was never assigned a mentor. I came to my college and chose a mentor until one day they said, “You know, I am sorry, looking back on it, you were not assigned a mentor.” And I said, “Well, what do you mean? You are it.” I have mentored a newer faculty member and was assigned to do that. A formal program called leader-career coaching is the mentoring program through leadership development throughout the system. But as far as just organic relationships, you kind of have to build those. And I guess it is not always easy to do. But if you find a good mentor as I have, it is highly effective. I am very satisfied with what I do, working there because I know the alternative. Having administrators who I believe have our best interest at heart. I look at what is going on now with the pandemic, and they do not want us to be on campus if we have no reason to be. Whereas in other places, you must go back to campus. People are pretending like the pandemic is over, and it is not. People are still dying, and I know who they are, primarily minorities. And so, I appreciate that. I understand when the stuff happened with Mr. Floyd, Miss Taylor, and Mr. Avery earlier this year. I appreciate that administration sent out a personal email. Some of them did not know exactly what to say, but they wanted to say something. I appreciate that. It is not perfect; some are very dissatisfied. But I appreciate being valued as an individual. We got some miles to go, but I think that my college is positioned to go the distance. I do feel like I belong. There have been times where I did not. As more faculty of color came on and came to work there, I felt more valued. On-campus, I must admit that sometimes, being in the classroom, you

kind of wonder whether students feel like you do belong. In higher learning institutions, we must put all of ourselves out there, and students look us up on Rate my Professor and so forth. You know that you have been looked over to see whether you are even worthy. The campus I work in is in a small town and is not remarkably diverse. I lived there for a little while, and I did not feel welcome. Being on campus is one thing, but once you step off-campus and go into the community, I do not feel like I belong. But I feel like I belong on campus. I went to the bank to get a cashier's check, and I am being questioned about which account, and we must go back and forth about that. Then I am leaving the bank, and someone locks their door because I am passing by their vehicle. I have a student that tells me to be careful. I knew exactly what she meant about being careful in that community. When I would live there, I would not leave my apartment complex at night because I was there by myself. On-campus it is okay, I guess; for the most part, I feel like I belong. But, outside of that, no.

Delta said,

I think we are doing an outstanding job as far as our department. Whenever we have a new person who comes in, we provide a mentor for that person, plus I am also available. They have their assigned mentor, but I make sure that I tell them when they contact me for any kind of questions, they are not bothering me. That is my job to help them.

Because if I help them, I feel that they will be better prepared to work with our students. I think that this also reflects the mentoring from the college. The college tries to provide mentoring as needed. The sense of belonging, we are the best department because we get along really well and, I think part of it has to do with telling the faculty, "We are colleagues, we need to work together. Yes, I am your supervisor, I sign certain things for

you, but that does not make me any better. We are at an equal level.” I think this creates this sense of belonging and satisfaction within our department and then, in turn, that goes out to the college. We go out and communicate with other faculty. That is the mentality that we are a team that we should be working together. It is our department, our school. I think that creates a sense of belonging for the college. We work together with other departments on different projects, with other areas of the college, and I can sense that we like each other. We have differences, some strong, but we still, at the end of the day, there is a sense of enjoying each other and community. I feel particularly good about the connection we have at the college, the sense of belonging, satisfaction, and mentoring. Epsilon said,

There is not a mentoring program specifically for people of color. I think you latch on if you can. All my mentors at my college were Caucasian. I was the first African American hired in the Science Department, which was back in the day. My initial mentors focused on the importance of the student toolset or what tools you give a student so that when they get out in the real world, they can at least approach a problem correctly. As years went on, as we got more faculty of color, they would, of course, come to me saying, “Hey, man, what is the deal with this college?” And I try to give them the skinny without scaring them off, telling them I do not want them to leave but telling them what they need to know. Some of them have dealings with the area. So, they may not live directly here, uh, but they have family in the area, so some of their belonging and mentorship comes from that. There is a general mentor program that has changed drastically back and forth over the years. When it first started, a professor in the same field rode shotgun with you to help in getting to know how we do things. Then it switched to administrators, then

back to professors. Over the past two years, I have noticed that my supervisor being a person of color, has made active strides to pull me aside and say, "All right, hey, what do you want to do now? Do, do you want to get your doctorate? I think that would be good for you." My question is if they are paying and giving me time off. So, that is a feather in her cap; she has made efforts. It is not policy. I think that is her trying to make sure her professors are as far as they want to go with their degree plan and college position. I am most satisfied with my job when I hear from a student after they have left the college that I have impacted their life. Everything else is pretty much a hot mess. I do not do the job for the satisfaction you would get on a day-to-day basis. I do it because I know the impact that my professors had on me. As far as job satisfaction, on the one hand, it is a job. You do the job, and you get to have money. On the other hand, I recognize that, to some extent, in the modern template, because I have been here for a while, I have seen the quality of incoming students drop off drastically. I went from students who would take the Socratic teaching method and run with it, now having students who will continuously ask for the answer, which hurts my soul. There are issues with any job, and most of my stress points come from reduced rigor to increase enrollment. I tried to bring an organization to campus, a national organization, uh, that focuses on leadership and leadership strategies. That has improved my satisfaction substantially. Okay, so as far as the sense of belongingness, I still do not feel like we belong in the community, but I think we must belong at the college. It is pretty much a requirement. But as far as the immediate community, especially within the past two years, I have withdrawn from the community. I used to attend the local church here, but I am not comfortable going there anymore. I used to go and hang out with certain parties in town. I am no longer

comfortable doing that. It is that real. I do not feel I belong in my town; I know I belong at my college.

Zeta said,

Mentoring? There is not any. Just from knowing faculty of color here, I am not sure that there would be any type of mentoring that they would request. My college is very inclusive, and for the most part, we are friends; everybody gets along. We do not have a lot of animosities; there is not a lot of bickering. As far as the minorities at my institution, I would not say that there would be anything that we would necessarily need. And just a limited number of minorities that we have, the demand for it just probably would be there. That is two sides of the same coin. I would rate my job satisfaction as extremely high. But then again, I am kind of biased because I grew up here. My mom has been teaching here since I was in junior high; in some capacity, I have been walking the college halls since the early 90s. I started at UT after I graduated high school, and then I came back as a student for a couple of semesters to the college, so for me, it is different; I feel comfortable because it has been like a second home since I was a kid. I am not sure the other faculty of color would necessarily feel that way because they do not have that background. I grew up with everybody. I think my mindset would be different from what others would see, but I mean, there is not a lot of negativity that they feel; at least, I have never heard people argue that my college does not move towards or care about their minority faculty.

Kappa said,

Mentoring, for me, was great because it happened in a way that was not intentional, I think. When you come on as a new faculty person in the district, you are assigned a

faculty mentor. It just so happened that the faculty mentor I got was one of color, and she taught history, so we are in the same discipline. The person who eventually ended up being my dean was the committee's chair that hired me. I already had been talking to her, she goes, 'Okay, so I am going to be your mentor as well. And you have an official one; I am your unofficial one.' And she is also a woman of color. A person in my school gave me insight into what happens in my school and all the processes. Then I had this other person; she was not in my school; she could give me the global aspect of what happens at the institution and in the district. I do not think that this happens with everybody, but they do have a system in place so that new faculty are assigned a mentor and faculty. I do not know about employees. I have no idea if they do it for staff. My perception is, generally, faculty are satisfied. Generally, I am satisfied. I think it has more to do for me with the school that I am in. Being in Social Sciences, it seems to operate differently than some of the other schools. I am generally highly satisfied. Other faculty of color, the ones in my school, seem to be satisfied people. Faculty in other schools, some of them do not seem to feel that they are getting the support that they need. There is one person; I met him recently after almost ten years. I asked my dean, and she said that he used to be extremely active on campus, and he was trying to move up in his department, and somehow, he got blackballed. And so, he retreated, and he comes, he does his classes, and he leaves. He is a Black male, and that is what he does. I found that in a lot of departments, for Black males. It is different for them with that stereotype that Black men are scary. They must present a certain way, which would be difficult for someone. If I were doing something and had a disagreement about how this thing should go, I would voice my opinion.

In comparison, a Black male faculty member would not be able to express his opinion in the same way. I am not a Black male on campus, so this is my perception. I do not know that they feel the support that they should. As a Black woman of color, I feel that support is departmental. What is the culture in your department? How is your dean? If your dean is supportive of all faculty, then that is good. But if your dean is threatened by you but does not recognize that you threaten her, she will never say that as a woman of color. But the way she performs an assignment of classes and, and assignment of committees, you see it manifest that way. I do know a couple of faculty of color who experienced that. For faculty and belonging, I think females of color generally feel we are represented in the faculty body. There are a lot of females who work on the campus. The President is female, and the Vice President is female, but that position does not exist anymore. There is a sense of belonging as a female. As a person of color, it is not that you do not belong, but do you feel completely welcome? Sometimes you do, sometimes you do not. And men of color are not made to feel like you should not be here per se, but it is not “we love that you are here.” It is always something said, or some comment made. Where it is a “Do you know what you just said?” “Do you recognize what you said that type of thing?” You deal with that daily. And people say things to women of color about men of color. And you are thinking, “Do you realize who you’re talking to?” They are more comfortable, I guess, with women. So, they make comments, and it becomes us talking about what they said and why it is not appropriate.

Solidarity

Participants were asked to describe their community college’s social and cultural climate, and Solidarity emerged as a theme. Most participants shared that amity existed within their

communities, and the atmosphere was a positive one. A few participants shared that administrators of color were impacting the climate, and they have witnessed a positive shift due to this. However, two of the participants did explain that their institution has a micro-aggressive environment.

Beta said,

It is very warm and inviting. Could we do better? We can do better. Do we have opportunities to discuss and perhaps erase or discard microaggression? No. We have not been awarded that opportunity. We have not had a diversity officer until just now. More minority students are attending the main campus, where students stay on campus. All sports are offered on that campus. I teach at a commuter campus, so we have not had an opportunity to talk about race and even talk about students who may be unhappy or complain against a faculty. Because we do not even have a diversity committee or a diversity council, the existing Title IX Director is also the Director of Culture Diversity. He is a person of color, and he has been with the college for over 25 years. He is working on creating a Diversity Task Force and Diversity Dialogues.

Gamma said,

For the social climate among faculty of color, we do have some camaraderie and understanding. One of our administrators was big on getting the Local College Council on Black American Affairs (LSCCBAA). When I wanted to participate in the leadership and mentoring institute that I mentioned earlier, she and another administrator who was a person of color were instrumental. I had to go before a specific committee, and they were both strongly in favor of me being able to participate. We all get along, and so on. I have not experienced any issues. And the LSCCBAA has allowed us to come together and do

some things in the community in community service. Especially around the holidays. Earlier this summer, LSCCBAA sent out a survey asking, “how do you feel, and do you feel comfortable.” And although I do not recall getting the results on that survey, I can imagine that the results concluded that people were not very much in a good position. It was also useful to have that camaraderie sit around and talk, and things like that.

Delta stated,

Right now, it has not been very much, other than what we are doing here, a virtual meeting. But, overall, it is positive. For example, when we would have face-to-face meetings, the faculty would bring in goodies to eat. When we go to professional development or go to other events, there are usually some takeaways. So, I think we are very social, trying to make it a party wherever we go.

Epsilon stated,

At my college, I do not really know that we have a culture there. I know at one point we had a club that focused on diversity. The advisor for that club was African American, and since she has left, that club has kind of fallen into disarray. I could not take over that club, as I was already over two other organizations; I did not have the stretch for it. I believe that many of us, and by us, I mean African Americans, teaching at pretty much any public institution that is not an HBCU; we must put on the façade. We have to put on the face, do our job. Do not be yourself, be what they would want you to see. If you can call that a culture, then I guess that is what it is. Because you might see your faculty of color there, but you will not talk to them like you will speak to them off-campus. You will catch them off-campus, you will have a chat with them. But on campus, you will not get laid back with them. Also, within the African American culture, there are different

cultures. Some people may see themselves as high born, and people may see themselves as low born. That is still going on in this town and this community. Whether or not the opacity of your blackness determines your level in the Black hierarchy. Since I grew up out of [the community], I see it from the outside. There seem to be different cultures of African Americans here, and I see very little of that on campus as professors. I do see students who are enjoying their culture. There is no restriction on that, no one telling them not to enjoy their culture. I know that many of us [faculty of color] mainly put on that façade because we realize there is more than African American students in our classroom, and our job is to reach all students, not just students that look like us. We are trying to get that middle ground. How can I present myself to reach the most students, not only the students like me? I have had a conversation with a couple of other African American professionals from my area, and this is the feeling of what we do. Our community is a community of, “Hey, let us do the job. Do be yourself. Whatever you got to do, by yourself, you are going to do that. If your ‘self’ slips through, hope they did not catch it because you might lose a job.”

Zeta stated,

I would say that it is positive. In the past, there has been some administration that I would feel were not as sympathetic to causes of minority professors. And not necessarily in what administrators did, just in their policy actions and the policy they put forth. What helps now is that we have Hispanics in the two top leadership positions at my college. I know that helps, not just me, even if it goes unsaid. When we look to the top two positions, when we look to the ones who get interviewed, they are the face of the college. That helps the culture, at least from my perspective. I would venture to guess that even if

I were not the son of an administrator that would still help me feel like I belonged here because the administration looks like me.

Theta stated,

At my college, pre-reorganization, I think we were the district's standard, and I would put us against any college across the state or country in terms of how to operate as a college.

I think we have outstanding leadership. There is a lot of cross-collaboration between departments and disciplines. We will see how that works out as we go to one big college [instead of separate colleges under one district]. That still must be determined.

Kappa stated,

I think my campus is social. People go to the campuses, it is a beautiful campus, and you walk around, and people are speaking to each other, stopping in the hallway, talking, and having lunch together. People who are in the same hallway together always talk to each other because of proximity. The two deans that I have had since I have been here would frequently bring food at the beginning of the semester. And we would have people coming from other schools at the college because they knew that we were going to have it in our school. Cultural climate, it goes back to I think that there is a good intention. The intention does not always carry through to action. If we are talking about culture as an institutional culture and how people relate to each other, it is a great workplace. People are generally friendly. You have one or two outliers, but people are generally happy and are usually willing to help you. It is just like any other institution; there are going to be those things that, "Okay, now it comes down, we are competing to get a thing." Then it becomes a competition, but that is anywhere you go. But, generally, the culture at my college is friendly.

Eliminating Biases and Lack of Initiatives

Participants were asked to share the essential goals their institution had achieved or was currently working toward achieving for faculty of color. Through their responses, Eliminating Biases and Lack of Initiatives were identified as themes. Some participants shared that their institutions do have efforts focused on eliminating biases; however, this was not true for all. A few participants stated that their institutions did not have goals or initiatives to address the differences among faculty of color and other faculty. One participant noted that the administration at their institution assumes that all faculty are the same, and therefore there is no immediate need to create goals for specific faculty.

Alpha stated,

Honestly, we have not set any goals for faculty of color. I do not want to presume that everything that happens is bad, but we have kind of given in to the notion that faculty is faculty, and thus all the same. So, no real efforts.

Beta stated,

One of the mission's goals has to do with an appreciation of one's culture and make sure there is a welcoming atmosphere. I believe that my college has done a great job in welcoming the persons of color. I think sometimes, and this is where we have little microaggressions that come into place, a slight bias when you have specific faculty who sit on committees that have a biased mindset. They are not accustomed to persons of color receiving awards and receiving recognition. I believe the institution could develop more goals to encourage faculty of color to seek leadership positions.

Gamma said,

The Chancellor created a system-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. And the truth is, we already had one. But he created another one and named two of the campus presidents who were African American males to be co-chairs. I think that point has been lost on many people, but I do remember all of that. But the committee was charged with doing certain things, and those are the goals, and they were very specific. It was, ‘what do you want to do about this?’ Goals were the Chief Diversity Officer, professional development, a social justice curriculum, making Juneteenth a holiday, hiring a diverse faculty. Those are the goals that the institution has. They were sending emails, but when the committee recommendations came out, not everyone was happy. On our campus, when the committee sent us an email, and the faculty had a discussion, there was some dissent, saying that it left out white males, and you know, there was no holiday for people of other races. Many people served on that committee, but only a handful of people actually defended what the committee did. Some people would sit back on the sidelines and say, “Oh, well, that is just how he is, and he is going to be all upset and cantankerous.” But there were very few people who came forward and said something, not people of color. Even though we are going in the right direction, not everybody is happy about it.

Delta said,

I think being more inclusive, making sure that color or race does not impede anything. I think the college does an outstanding job of including people wherever possible, and if they meet the credentials, they do whatever they are asked to do. I feel that the college does an excellent job. I must go back and say we are not as diverse as we need to be, but

even then, I can sense that people of color, Hispanics, feel like they are treated fairly in most cases.

Epsilon stated,

I do not think they have any goals specifically for faculty of color. I will say that having a science department with four individuals of color is unheard of at the university level.

That is some high-order math. But we go back to how we started our conversation, is that a consequence of them hiring a person of color over a person not of color at the same rate? I do not think so. From what I heard during the interviews and what I heard of the interviews that I was not involved with, these were the most skilled individuals out of the selection group. I see that not as a goal for the college but as a goal for African Americans in general. Science is one of those areas that we are not very much encouraged. I can count on my hand the number of times during research experiences over summer that was aimed at underrepresented groups, the number of times I ran across another Black student. And these are specifically aimed at underrepresented groups. For us to have four professors of color, that is a goal for African Americans, I think, more than the college. When you sign up for an anatomy course, a biology course, an environmental course, anything outside of physical sciences, mainly because none of us are trained in physical sciences, you are likely to see someone who looks like you. Something [students] did not think you could do. And the power of that, especially knowing that they were not just hired as a token. I do not believe any of our African American hires have been tokens. I could be wrong, but they all bring the heat, which I have personally seen. Everybody but me has a side hustle; most of them are active in the community off-campus. I think I am the only one who kind of withdrew from the

community. A lot of that is because I live here. I am not living 50 miles away as others are.

Theta said,

I do not think there are any. I mean, you talk to the administrator or somebody else, they may have a different opinion, but I do not. I know it is vital to trustees, but it is just a work in progress. We are still working on it.

Kappa said,

One of the goals that were there before I got here was to provide professional development opportunities for faculty of color who want to transition from the classroom to administration. That was something good that they did, providing an avenue to do that. My dean made sure that I knew about it. I think the program was known because they will send out the email to all campuses. I think that was an outstanding program that they had. They were working on trying to get better at increasing the number of faculty of color. They were working on it. Something that they need to work on is supporting Black male faculty of color. And probably Hispanic males too, because, presumably, there are not that many. There are more Black male faculty of color. But I think that it is something that needs to be worked on.

Advancing Inclusion and Recruitment

Participants were asked their interpretation of their institution's vision for diversity among faculty, staff, and students, and Advancing Inclusion and Recruitment emerged as a theme. Many participants shared that their institutions are creating new positions around diversity and seeking to recruit a diverse faculty and student population with varying success levels. However, several participants felt that their institution's vision does not necessarily

advance to include faculty of color. The recruitment of this population was not as advanced as it should be for a 21st-century institution. One stated that the institution had not seen significant changes in hiring senior-level administrators in over 20 years.

Alpha said,

On a more positive note, our Deputy Chancellor of Finance and Accounting has been named the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO). You would think for a Military-Serving Institution, we would have had a Diversity and Inclusion Officer before now, at least an office, department, or something, but we have not. In my institution's more than 50-year history, this is the very first time we have even seen it. The CDIO is building a committee, and I have been asked to be a part of that. Things are currently on hold with everything else that is going on with the pandemic, but I am really very hopeful that something good will come of it. Again, that we even have a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer is phenomenal.

Beta stated,

We have a new Diversity Officer; I believe their vision is to hire more persons of color, so we are more representative of the community we serve. When I was a co-chair of Achieving the Dream, I was able to bring together for the first time in the history of my college an event with minority and Hispanic leaders. It is documented in my report that it was the first time that they have been asked to talk about student success, even though they have a relationship with the college. And I think that moving forward; the school will be more intentional in including persons of color from the community in the framework and trying to see how we can work together to bring more persons of color to faculty. Once you have more persons of color on faculty, I believe that that will also

bring in more students of color. Because the students that live in town tend to go away to school. Sometimes, it is not because they want to get away from home; they want to go to a Historically Black College or go to another college or university to see people who look more like them.

Delta said,

The college does make an effort to include individuals. I think there is no doubt about it. One thing that I feel is lacking; they should be more out in the open about administrative positions. I mentioned that there are maybe 80% Hispanic employees, yet in the administrative positions, it is the other way around. It is probably 90% white and maybe 10% Hispanic. I think, if anything, the college needs to investigate something like this. It is not exceedingly difficult; you can look at an organizational chart and tell you this unspoken area. I have been here for almost 20 years, and I have yet to see a vice president or a dean who is Hispanic or who is African American. I think that is one area that the college needs to consider for the future. We do have talented individuals who are not White, who should be considered.

Epsilon said,

Our goal statement has something about diversity, but I think the interpretation is something we must do. I do not feel many of my college's decisions come down to diversity, as they come down to who is the best person for the job. When it comes to the students, they seem to be more concerned about how we bring in students of color who may not be on an athletics team and retain them. The college may eventually put two and two together and say, "Well, maybe we hire more instructors of color." One of the things I heard from the community after I was hired and teaching here for a little bit, from

people I did not even know, was that they came to my college because they heard a Black professor had been hired. That is the impact that I do not think a lot of people see. As your school is looking for funding through federal and proxy state money, so much can come from first-generation college-goers. Quite a bit of these students are individuals of color, African American, Latin American. And if you do not have a professor that looks like them, why would they want to come to your college? You receive some signaling when you have a Latin American professor, an African American professor, or an Asian professor. Their groups will identify with that, and it opens a new door possibility for them.

Zeta said,

I know that they want the faculty and the student population to be representative of the people. We are working on what we call our Circle of Support, which came from Amarillo College, around poverty and serving students. So many people got behind that initiative. Even as a faculty of color, these were issues that I did not realize existed. I was aware that I was a minority, but I never realized how privileged I was and things I never had to deal with. We have a closet if students need clothes for a job interview or something. Both programs have existed, but now they are working. Even though these programs are not explicitly geared towards minorities, minority students are more likely to be affected.

Kappa stated,

It is theoretically useful. One of the strategic priorities was to improve the diversity of faculty. What it transpired to do; it did not occur; faculty of color even said it would do the exact opposite of what they were trying to do. One of the things that the college does

is require applicants to respond to a set of four questions for their initial interview. It used to be written; they implemented a program where you had to do a video to respond to the questions. Their idea was to do a video that equalizes everybody, so you are not basing it on somebody's name or basing it on other factors. That is the complete opposite now because now you can see the person. I think that was a huge misstep, but they did not see it that way. I think you do not see it that way because you are not a person of color. I already have to contend with my name sounding ethnic; now you see me on the video. To see a person on video, someone could say, "I did not rate that person low because they were a person of color, but it was because they did their interview video in their kitchen." So, you did not find any reason to say why you rated a person low. I understand why they tried to do it, but it just was not the right way to go. They had a vision and a plan of how to improve and diversify the faculty ranks in that particular tool, and in my opinion, it had the complete opposite effect.

Climate of Insincerity

Participants were asked to describe the climate of their institution for diversity and faculty of color. Most participants shared that they experienced an environment of insincerity at their college. However, there were a few participants who shared that they do have a sincere culture. Delta shared that she could sense the feeling of inclusion on the campus. While Theta and Kappa are at the same institution, they have opposite views. Theta shared that she believes the climate is positive; however, Kappa shared an opposing description. In Kappa's experience, the atmosphere is affected by individuals being hesitant around engaging or following up with DEI subjects. Those who shared that the climate was insincere shared a lack of programming and follow-up and a homogeny culture without acknowledging the difference.

Alpha said,

I think we are becoming more open, especially in terms of students. Even though we do not always think alike, I love that students have so much spark. They are not letting anything fly. They have such a fire in them that they are not standing for much foolishness. Our students will not be ignored, and many of us faculty encourage them. If something that affects students is going to change, students themselves are going to be the one to ignite that change. And they have done phenomenal work. Overall, however, there is a forced homogeny, a kind of “let us be this way; let us do it this way.” That, in my opinion, comes from the current hierarchical structure. It is woven into our Chief Executive Offices, which is quite frustrating. We get the lip service: “Hey, we need to do this. We need to collaborate on that.” For example, faculty in my department received an email from our chair, telling us the chancellor requested ideas about some diversity topic that now escapes me. The chancellor wanted feedback right away. Faculty are thinkers. I personally love to think, and I love to solve problems, so I was on task immediately. Some days later, my department chair goes to the meeting where this collaborative thing is supposed to happen. Sadly, she was told to hold onto the ideas, as the collaborating team was not ready for ideas. Faculty were eager to help, but it turned out to be another waste of time. My institution seems never ready for real solutions.

Beta said,

The climate right now is not high, and not low. The climate is in the middle and not to one extreme or the other. It is not a high racial, nor is it low on the totem pole where it is not receiving any attention. It is a climate that needs to be identified as “What more can we do?” How can we bring more persons of color into our school? Because we know that

diversity brings richness for everyone involved. It brings a feeling of mutual interdependence. I help you; you help me. And how can we gather to make sure that all students of color have an opportunity to experience success? We could do more, but it is hard to say because there are no initiatives to recruit persons of color to my college.

Gamma said,

I was a co-chair of the Diversity Conference for the employees at our campus. There was a lot of hesitation if we were doing too much. Suppose it was too much for the employees too soon. The mentality of the campus I worked at is not as progressive. There was a lot of concern about if anybody was going to show for the conference. But when we walked into that conference room and got on the stage, it was a room full of people. Now, a lot of people who needed to be there were not there. It was the people you expected. I would also like to say that when we had the diversity, equity, and inclusion certification program, there was only one white male who participated.

Delta stated,

I think we appreciate and respect diversity as a college. We encourage diversity not only in race but in religion, gender, and way of thinking. It is okay to be different. And I think the college does a rather good job of maybe not putting it on paper, but you can sense it. You can tell that the college does try to include people who may be different.

Theta stated,

I think it is good. If you are Black, Asian, Hispanic, White, whatever, I think it is good. And you know I cannot speak to anybody's experience other than mine. But I think you have to go out of your way not to fit in. At my college and across the college district, the

faculty in general in our district are good-natured people. I would say the climate is favorable.

Kappa said,

The climate is okay for faculty of color. You have the immigrant people who feel like you are attacking me now. You are saying, 'I have done something wrong because I am a person of color.' So that affects climate. This committee that I was on did a lot of programming around the incarceration of people of color, immigration, and immigration laws, including the history of immigration and immigration laws. All to show how the system was set up to encourage immigration in some parts. A whole bunch of different types of DEI programs that people thought that it was great programming. But when it is time to sit down and talk, you would see some pushback, affecting the climate. The administration would be supportive when we would be doing something with students and then offer professional development. But then you have some faculty who are not persons of color feel uncomfortable, and then they go to the administration, which must step in. It is this whole cycle of, if we are going to support DEI work, then it is going to be uncomfortable, and so let us not try to put any blinders on when we are doing the work. They try to be supportive, and that part is excellent. But trying to be and being are two different things. As far as the climate in that respect, it has been an excellent climate to support programming and faculty of color engaged in that work.

Evaluating Climate for Diversity

In the interview's final question, participants were asked to evaluate their institution's climate for diversity. This differed from the previous question, describing the climate for diversity and faculty of color. Half of the eight participants shared that they viewed their

institutions as diverse overall, though this may not extend to the faculty. Three of the four shared that their institution was a place that was suitable for the growth of diversity, where, overall, the community is supportive of the diversity. Kappa assessed their institution as diverse in some ways, with racial diversity primarily seen in support staff. However, efforts to support diversity work are not supported in all areas at this institution, which in their view, meant that the culture was not good overall. Two other participants shared that the culture was sub-par and unsupportive at their institution. While there were some shared experiences between the participants, I could not determine a recurring theme from the responses.

Summary

This chapter has summarized the questions and responses from the eight participant interviews. Through the responses, I intended to understand better the experiences and views of faculty of color regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at their Texas community colleges. Through these responses, I hoped to illuminate where change could be implemented for improvement. Based on the coding of responses, it was found that faculty of color across different colleges and areas of the state have similar experiences and views.

Chapter 5 will summarize the findings of this study and provide implications for practice, providing administrators recommendations. The next chapter will also discuss the purpose of this study and how it was met. Chapter 5 will also give suggestions for further research to extend this topic through the additional study will also be included.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Summary, Implications, and Recommendations

The recruitment and retention of faculty of color is a longstanding issue within higher education (Whittaker et al., 2015). While this topic has been researched at four-year institutions, the research lacks community colleges (Levin et al., 2014). Community colleges have a larger population of students of color than four-year universities, and student numbers increase, while the number of faculty of color decreases (Fujimoto, 2012). This disproportionality is problematic as faculty of color have shown to increase student of color's success, including recruitment, retention, academic achievement, and completion (Levin et al., 2013). Smith et al. (2004) stated that of all diversity initiatives, those around faculty of color are the least successful. To work towards student and institutional success, faculty of color should be leveraged, necessitating recruiting, and retaining these individuals.

The purpose of this study was to explore the viewpoints of faculty of color regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges. This study's participants provided their views and experiences to fulfill this purpose and answer the research question. This final chapter summarizes the key findings of this study and future research recommendations within this topic. Connections will be made to the research and the theoretical lens, the critical race theory. Topics for this chapter are (a) Study Overview, (b) Summary of Findings, (c) Interpretation of Participant Responses, (d) Implications for Change, and (e) Recommendations for Future Research.

Study Overview

An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) methodology was utilized in this qualitative study to explore faculty of color's viewpoints regarding recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges. IPA allows for multiple perspectives to gather

data. Many participants can experience similar events, and responses are in their terms to define the event, which is then analyzed to find a collective meaning.

Study Procedures

This study's data were derived from semistructured interviews conducted with eight full-time faculty of color currently employed at community colleges in Texas. The participants shared the viewpoints of their institutions, academic climate, job satisfaction, and engagement in developmental opportunities. The interviews were recorded, and the audio recordings were sent for transcription to Rev.com. The written transcripts were compared to the audio to ensure accuracy and validity. During the interview, I took notes and analyzed the interview transcripts to understand best the lived experiences that were shared. Data were coded to identify reoccurring themes to provide an answer to the research question.

Participants

As stated in the previous chapter, eight full-time faculty from seven community colleges participated in this study. The faculty all identified as persons of color. They all have taught at their current community college for at least three years and have taught in their careers between seven and 37 years full-time at a college.

Summary of Findings

There were multiple themes identified from the interview responses, all of which are discussed below. Despite the many reoccurring themes that stemmed from the research, a lack of intentionality emerged as the overall theme. Participants shared many examples from their institutions where there was a professed intention, but that the intention did not meet reality in their experiences. A lack of follow-through or action was seen by participants in many areas, leading to culture insincerity, a disconnection between faculty and administration, and

deceptions by the institution. Additionally, there is not a purposeful intention to differentiate faculty of color. Programs do not exist that target faculty of color, despite it being a well-documented issue with recruiting and retaining these faculty members; faculty are all treated homogenously.

Interpretation of Participant Responses

Based on the participants' responses, reoccurring themes emerged, providing the answers to the research question for this study.

Q1. What are faculty of color viewpoints of recruitment, retention, and academic climate at Texas community colleges?

The themes discussed throughout this section are: (a) Intentionality, (b) Institutional Deceptions, (c) Good Faith Efforts, (d) Unconscious Bias and Systemic Racism, (e) Strategies for Purposeful Preservation, (f) Equity in Professional Development and Salary, (g) Instructional Disconnection Among Administration and Faculty, (h) Targeted and Isolated, (i) Disparity Among the Population, (j) Collegial Engagement, (k) Inclusion and Engagement, (l) Close-minded and Omission, (m) Interdisciplinary Training/ Current Technology and Pedagogy, (n) Supportive Environment and Self-Advocacy, (o) Solidarity, (p) Eliminating Biases and Lack of Initiatives, (q) Advancing Inclusion and Recruitment, and (r) Climate of Insincerity.

Intentionality

Seven of the eight participants spoke of intentional strategies, or the lack of strategies, to recruit faculty of color. Four of the participants explained how there are not intentional efforts on the part of the institution to recruit faculty of color. Levin et al. (2014) explained that racial and ethnic identities are of marginal importance to community colleges and moved to the periphery,

which was seen in one participant response who spoke about how diversity efforts have been put aside to focus on reaccreditation.

Three participants did share their institution had intentionality when it came to recruitment. The positive intention was seen through various means of advertising and purposefully seeking candidates of color at events and other places with a larger population of persons of color. Word-of-mouth and embedding recruitment as a piece of campus culture are both suggestions of intentional recruitment practices to grow faculty diversity (Hughes, 2015).

Institutional Deceptions

Intention did not meet the reality in many of the descriptions of participants' descriptions of the effectiveness of institutional recruiting strategies. Many participants explained that their colleges' professed intentions were not what they observed or experienced. Often there is a settlement when it comes to recruitment and hiring persons of color, where departments or institutions that successfully hire a person of color then consider a need-filled and then relax any further efforts to recruit and hire more faculty of color (Turner et al., 2008). This could be one possible reason that participants' institutions were often described as having good intentions. However, efforts to recruit and hire faculty of color are nonexistent in accordance with what is intended or professed to exist.

Good Faith Efforts

Another barrier to recruitment is the lack of good faith effort on the part of institutions. Three participants spoke of a lack of good faith effort on their institution when it came to actively recruiting faculty of color. Institutions did not advertise or recruit faculty in areas of higher minority populations, such as HBCUs, or specialized conferences or publications. Specialized and targeted advertising and recruitment is a crucial suggestion for effective

recruitment (Gasman et al., 2011). A lack of good faith efforts in recruitment strategies leads to less diverse hiring pools and faculty populations. Supportive and intentional recruitment strategies must be implemented to ensure a diverse faculty (Kelly et al., 2017).

Unconscious Bias and Systemic Racism

Unconscious biases and systemic racism are barriers inhibiting the recruitment of faculty of color. Participants shared personal experiences and witnessed accounts of bias and racism within their communities or within the institution with hiring practices and recruitment. Instances of applicants being biased against the communities, meaning they would not apply for a position, and instances of racism and bias against persons of color were shared. In one example, a participant shared a memory of the police being called on him for being a racial minority in a campus building. The same participant explained that subsequent emergency calls were made on other faculty members of color when hired.

Strategies for Purposeful Preservation

Most participants shared that their institutions aimed to have purposeful preservation strategies for faculty when it came to retention. Four of the participants shared in their responses they were not aware of specific targeting of faculty of color with retention strategies. Overall strategies aligned with many of the strategies suggested by researchers, including representation of other persons of color on campus, including administration. Having other persons of color has been shown to increase feelings of belonging and increase retention (Whittaker et al., 2015; Zambrana et al., 2015). Multiple faculty mentioned that faculty reflected the student body, which is mutually beneficial for both groups (Whittaker et al., 2015). Levin et al. (2014) explained in their study that nearly all faculty participants reported what retained them at their community college was their connection to students.

Equity in Professional Development and Salary

All participants shared that there was equity in salary and funding for professional development at their institution. No participant shared in their response that they saw a difference in funding for faculty of color and their white colleagues. Salary is a vital tool for recruitment and increased job satisfaction, meaning it is key to having policies and practices for equity in all areas of compensation to sustain a diverse community (Freeman et al., 2019; Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Another vital strategy for retaining faculty of color is a professional development initiative (Kaplan et al., 2018). Institutions remove a barrier to accessing development when they allocate specific funding for faculty development, which was indicated in many participant responses. Further information on the professional development of the participants is discussed later in a successive theme.

Disconnection Among Administration and Faculty

Strong relationships with administrators of color can lead to a heightened sense of belonging for faculty of color (Zambrana et al., 2015). Many participants, however, shared how there was a disconnection between administration and faculty. Some participants spoke of requirements being set by administrators that were not agreed with by faculty. Participants also shared further examples of reality not meeting the intention, which has been seen in other themes and responses. This lack of intent meeting experience has led to a disconnection with faculty. Participants spoke of the disconnection between faculty and administration and the disconnection between institutional intention and reality in terms of lack of current faculty support and recruitment of faculty of color. If structural and attitudinal barriers are to be removed, administrators should maintain a strong institutional commitment to diversity (Smith, 2011).

Targeted and Isolated

Almost all the participants spoke of the burden of being a faculty member of color, including feelings of underappreciation, being overworked, demoralization, and isolation. Faculty participants shared how they are expected to perform above and beyond their role, which is not uncommon for faculty of color. Faculty of color are more likely to be in heavy-workload positions with less benefit and are less likely to receive promotions than their White colleagues (Levin et al., 2014).

Faculty of color are also often tokenized and made to carry the burden of being the example of their race as they are the only ones within a department or area (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Robinson et al., 2013; Settles et al., 2018). Many of the participants spoke of how they feel they are in the spotlight within their institutions. One participant also spoke about how faculty was separated from the staff, including more persons of color, which increased the amount of isolation felt by them.

Disparity Among the Population

As noted above, faculty feel they are under a spotlight as faculty of color are underrepresented around them. Most of the participants shared a great difference in the numbers of faculty of color and White faculty in their departments and institutions. According to the AACC, 75% of faculty at community colleges identify as White, reflected in the responses (AACC, 2018). As shared by the researchers and noted above, faculty can be tokenized as they are often the only person of color in their department or one of few in the subject area, which leads to isolation and further burden (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Robinson et al., 2013; Settles et al., 2018). The scholarship shows that it is essential to have a representation of other faculty of color or a critical mass for faculty of color to be retained (Fujimoto, 2012; Kaplan et al., 2018).

The participants shared that they witnessed pockets of faculty of color at their institutions. However, other areas of the institution had low numbers of these faculty or no faculty of color.

Collegial Engagement

Hughes (2015) shared the importance of relationships for faculty and that their colleagues' relationships influenced a faculty member's retention. Several participants shared their department's engagement and their colleagues' engagement, and many shared examples of speaking in passing when on campus and through emails. Most participants had regular meetings to keep them informed of the business of their departments and programs. The responses of departmental and collegial engagement are significantly impacted by the ongoing pandemic, which has meant that there is less face-to-face interaction as interactions have been closed in many cases, and classes moved to virtual platforms. All participants shared that though their physical connection has been impacted during the pandemic, they are still engaging in virtual meetings utilizing Zoom and Webex. Particularly during a tumultuous time such as this, colleagues' ongoing connection is essential, as collegiality and faculty work being valued by colleagues feeds positively into faculty persistence (Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Inclusion and Engagement

Many participants shared that their institutions had initiatives or programs to encourage faculty's academic and professional performance, usually professional development. However, the initiatives were not intended for faculty of color specifically. While there was positive engagement, inclusion was lacking for faculty of color. Professional development and faculty engagement have been shown to create a sense of belonging and community and increase organizational commitment (Ismail, 2016; Miller & Eib, 2006). Without differentiating, the impact of the engagement and sense of inclusion and belonging is lessened.

Close-Minded and Omission

An effective tool to encourage a sense of commitment and lessen faculty of color attrition focuses on professional development, including fostering networks and encouraging skill acquisition (Henard & Roseveare, 2012). Most participants shared that their institutions encouraged faculty to participate in professional development to encourage improvement and job satisfaction; however, that faculty of color were again no targeted or differentiated when it came to these efforts. This omission leaves faculty of color, once again, left out of purposeful strategies that would feed into retention. Faculty at community colleges overall have a higher job satisfaction than their university counterparts; however, this does not extend to faculty of color, which are retained at lower rates and have lower satisfaction than their White colleagues (Twombly & Townsend, 2008; Webber, 2018). A purposeful strategy to engage faculty of color for job satisfaction and professional improvement is necessary.

Interdisciplinary Training/ Current Technology and Pedagogy

The development of faculty is essential as faculty are experts in their field; however, they never receive instruction on how to teach when completing their degrees (Hott & Tietjen-Smith, 2018; Howard & Taber, 2010; Wynants & Dennis, 2018). Community college faculty can often also have industry experience; however, faculty, particularly those who do not have former teaching experience, should seek opportunities to grow their instructional abilities (Robinson et al., 2013).

When speaking of their professional development activities, the participants spoke of training that involved current technology and pedagogy or interdisciplinary training. Many of the responses reflected the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on faculty, including how they teach. Several participants spoke about seeking out training on utilizing technology and

pedagogy as they shift their usual teaching practices considering the pandemic and virtual course delivery. The need for faculty to remain relevant with the tools and technology of their field and education has remained (Hott & Tietjen-Smith, 2018; Howard & Taber, 2010; Wynants & Dennis, 2018). The move to virtual teaching in the wake of the pandemic has emphasized this need for technology and teaching development for faculty.

Supportive Environment and Self-Advocacy

Mentors assist in navigating internal barriers (Peters, 2011; Zambrana et al., 2015). Mentors attend to faculty's needs and wants and aid in their retention and success through assistance in navigating scholarship, teaching strategies, and furthering their mentee's career (Bruner et al., 2016). Faculty of color should have the opportunity to cultivate mentors within their departments and institutions, and it is a crucial piece to creating an environment where faculty can thrive (Kelly et al., 2017).

Many participants spoke to the high impact of a supportive environment when speaking about their perceptions of mentoring, job satisfaction, and the sense of belonging for themselves and other faculty of color in their institution. Additionally, many participants shared that they needed to see their solutions and find their way at their institutions. A few participants also shared that part of their self-advocacy included seeking out their place and creating their mentor relationships, which impacted their sense of belonging.

The academic environment for faculty of color has been unwelcome, including alienation, marginalization, and other negative aspects that feed into these faculty's attrition (Mendez & Mendez, 2018; Robinson et al., 2013). A supportive environment can lessen attrition and improve belonging for faculty. An environment that is supportive builds community allowing faculty of color to thrive, leading to higher retention (Kelly et al., 2017).

Solidarity

Some participants spoke of how solidarity and amity existed within the culture of their community colleges. Administrators of color in particular impacted some of the participants' institutions' climate, and they are witnessing a positive shift connected to this. Administrators have a large hand in setting the institution's culture, including through the diversity efforts and policies that are set (Smith, 2011). Administrators can either assist in the cultural identities of their faculty of color or can perpetuate a negative experience and environment. Professional and racial identity conflict for faculty can sometimes further be complicated in interactions with institutional administrators, who may dismiss or minimize faculty of color's experiences (Levin et al., 2014). Relationships with colleagues lead to a more positive culture and retention of faculty, as do ongoing, mutually beneficial relationships between faculty of color and administrators (Hughes, 2015; Jayakumar et al., 2009).

Eliminating Biases and Lack of Initiatives

Initiatives around faculty diversity are among the least successful diversity programs on college campuses (Smith et al., 2004). Participants shared that efforts existed for eliminating biases when speaking of the critical goals to benefit faculty of color at their institutions. Various suggestions for eliminating biases and adding to a positive culture exist within the literature. Development is often a suggestion, including stakeholder training to promote the acceptance of persons who are new or different from themselves (Whittaker et al., 2015). The researchers also go on to suggest that leaders should be instructed on recognizing and addressing biases.

Participants also shared a lack of initiatives that specifically addressed the differences among faculty of color and white faculty. Colleges pursue diverse hiring to mitigate white, patriarchal hegemony; however, they see little progress (Zambrana et al., 2017). Community

college culture is discordant, and faculty are not a homogeneous body (Levin et al., 2014). The assumption of there being no differentiation between faculty as a whole, in this case addressing the specific needs of faculty of color, will impede progress for initiatives.

Advancing Inclusion and Recruitment

Participants shared that their institutions were working towards advancing inclusion and recruitment, many times by creating positions for diversity and efforts and policies around diversity. Hughes (2015) explained that institutions looking to increase their faculty of color should look at a three-pronged approach of intentional actions, strategic planning, and the relationships between faculty of color, colleagues, and administrators. The environment is also a substantial factor in advancing inclusion and the recruitment of faculty. Recruitment without building a welcoming and appreciative environment is counterintuitive and can lead to resistance and protest (Kelly et al., 2017). Additionally, participants shared that their institution's vision does not support faculty of color or retention and recruitment efforts. Representation for faculty of color requires a focused inclusion approach, where procedures and policies reflect inclusivity (Luster-Edward & Martin, 2019). Institutions, particularly PWIs, should have specific policies to address the retention, recruitment, and inclusion of faculty of color and allow their employees to work in a cross-culture manner (Luster-Edward & Martin, 2019; Whittaker et al., 2015).

Climate of Insincerity

The creation of diversity policies is not enough, and lack of follow-up has been shown to affect the understanding and practice of cultural competencies (Luster-Edward & Martin, 2019). Most participants shared that they experience a climate of insincerity at their institution, though a few did share that they felt the climate was sincere. The reasons for the lack of sincerity include

a lack of engagement and programming, a lack of follow-through and follow-up, and a culture of homogeneity without acknowledging the difference for faculty of color.

While administrators are vital to ensuring fair practices exist, many administrators are unprepared to support innovative mentoring and development activities for faculty of color and an equity-minded culture (Whittaker et al., 2015). This lack of preparation could lead to a culture where the administrators are disengaged and the climate as insincere,

Implications for Change

Counter-storytelling, the first tenant of critical race theory under Ladson-Billings and Tate, involves the stories and voices of people of color, which was attempted through this study (Hiraldo, 2010). From these narratives and subsequent themes, implications can be drawn for future practices.

Overall, school administrators should look to intentional action and culture awareness when wanting to enact change for faculty of color in recruitment, retention, and academic climate. You cannot increase retention and recruitment and improve climate without first changing the culture. To positively impact all these areas, institutions and administration should purposefully enact policies, procedures, and practices addressing faculty of color's specific needs. As the leaders of their institutions, administrators have the obligation and power to enact change; however, it must include follow-through and intentional action.

Additionally, the forced or assumed homogeneity of faculty should cease. Faculty of color should be purposefully sought out and recruited and targeted explicitly for retention efforts. Development activities and mentorship are two impactful practices to harness in retention efforts. Additionally, both provide a positive impact on climate and environment, providing a sense of belonging and inclusion, which positively retains faculty of color. Development for all,

including administrators and White faculty, provide skills for cross-culture collaboration and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts which will positively impact the culture for all at an institution even beyond faculty.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for future research to help create a better understanding of retention, recruitment, and academic climate for faculty of color at community colleges are below. It is recommended to broaden the research by utilizing another methodology. An IPA study can go deep into the lived experience; however, other methodologies would provide additional data on the subject. Additionally, it is also recommended to have a study with larger sample sizes as the sample size of an IPA study is small, focusing on depth rather than breadth. Further studies should also look at the experiences of specific races and ethnicities rather than faculty of color as a whole. Research focused on specific races and ethnicities would be able to provide a better understanding of the lived experiences of these groups. Additionally, further research could look at specific genders or the intersectionality of a gender and a specific race/ethnicity.

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Appendix A: Abilene Christian University IRB Approval

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885



July 17, 2020

Caitlin A. Graves
Department of Education
Abilene Christian University

Dear Caitlin,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Faculty of Color Viewpoints Regarding Recruitment, Retention, and Academic Climate at Texas Community Colleges",

(IRB# 20-094) is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Demographic Questions

1. What is your identified gender?
2. What is your institution's size?
3. What is your faculty title designation?
4. Are you a full-time or part-time faculty member, and how many years have you taught?
5. What is your identified race and ethnicity?

Open-Ended Questions

1. What are the strategies that your institutional leaders have used to recruit faculty of color?
2. What is your perception of the effectiveness of these recruitment strategies?
3. In your opinion, what are the most significant challenges that your institution faces in recruiting faculty of color?
4. What strategies do you know of that your institution has implement to support the retention of faculty of color?
5. Discuss the financial and funding opportunities available to you as a faculty member, and any differences you have seen between opportunities for faculty of color and your White colleagues.
6. Describe the academic climate at your institution?
7. How do you feel the academic climate at your institution impacts the professional work of faculty of color?
8. Discuss the racial diversity of faculty within your department and within your community college.

9. Discuss the academic communication among faculty members in your department/program.
10. How does your institution support the academic and professional performance of faculty of color?
11. How does your institution encourage the professional improvement and job satisfaction of faculty of color?
12. Can you describe some of your most current professional development activities?
13. Discuss your perceptions of mentoring, job satisfaction, and a sense of belonging at your institution for you and faculty of color?
14. Describe the social and cultural climate for faculty of color at your institution?
15. What would you say are the most important goals that your institution has achieved or is currently working toward achieving for faculty of color?
16. What is your interpretation of your institution's vision for diversity among faculty, students, and staff?
17. How would you describe the climate of the institution for diversity and faculty of color?
18. How would you evaluate the climate for diversity at your institution?