Minority community college CEOs perceptions of underrepresentation, preparation and
ascension to the presidency

by

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the perceptions of thirty-four CEOs of color of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles at community colleges. Research has identified an underrepresentation of race and gender diversity among community college presidents that fails to mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of community college students today. Historically and currently, the majority of presidents in American community colleges have been older white males. An analytical review of the research shows scant progress in diversifying minority-serving community college presidents, creating a need to understand leakage points in the pipeline to the presidency relevant to understanding the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. This qualitative study used Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling theoretical frameworks. Thirty-four CEOs of color participated, representing diverse ethnic backgrounds, including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic, and spanning twelve states and every region of the U.S. In semi-structured interviews, the CEOs described their perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents, their ascension to the presidency, and the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges. Multiple steps were used to conduct the data analysis. Counter-narratives were examined using a modified interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) concept model the researcher expanded creating a nine (9) step system of data collection and analysis for the. Using the Pew Research Center's (2020) classification and name of generations as a guide, the researcher coupled and aligned each participant by both generations of the American community college, development (Deegan and Tillery, 1985; Geller, 2001) with distinct characteristics of generations of community college leadership style (Sullivan, 2001; Boggs and McPhail, 2016) hence updating the generation

definitions and naming conventions. An analysis of the study determined the current focus of community college leadership development is more Equity Centered labeling the 4th generational style as Transformers and the 5th generation as Equity Achievers. What emerged were rich counter-stories and voices from Gen X and Gen X II/Millennials I leaders providing a unique perspective from this newest and little-explored generation of leaders. Findings arranged by composite, gender, and ethnicity groups retained participants' authentic voices. An analysis of the data identified significant themes that illustrate leaders' perceptions of challenges, barriers, and biases that contribute to the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles in community colleges. Themes included structural barriers within institutional culture, biased perceptions of race, and gender and systemic racism. Findings from the study indicate that the leadership development system that served a movement in the second half of the 20th century may be insufficient for addressing ongoing underrepresentation in the 21st century. Findings identified including lack of a clear pathway to the presidency, evidence of a leaky pipeline, a flawed hiring process and gatekeepers along the continuum, opportunity, access, support, mentors, and intentional leadership development. Systemic biases and structural racism, a glass ceiling for men and women of color, and socio-political forms of oppression as microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, the Imposter Syndrome, and John Henry-ism. This study identified numerous deficiencies that impact the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency offering sixteen (16) recommendations to improve practice. Recommendations included the role of university-based leadership preparation programs, a call to action for regional, state, and national associations and affiliate councils, and examining the role of boards of trustees and governing boards in leading the charge for diverse leadership.

This study makes a practical, theoretical, and social contribution to the study of the underrepresentation of race and gender diversity in the community college presidency provides insight into the myriad of factors identified, gives voice to the newest generation of leaders, and discusses implications for future research and practice.

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This phenomenological study explored the perceptions of thirty-four CEOs of color of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles at community colleges. Research has identified an underrepresentation of race and gender diversity among community college presidents that fails to mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of community college students today. Historically and currently, the majority of presidents in American community colleges have been older white males. An analytical review of the research shows scant progress in diversifying minority-serving community college presidents, creating a need to understand leakage points in the pipeline to the presidency relevant to understanding the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. This qualitative study used Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling theoretical frameworks. Thirty-four CEOs of color participated, representing diverse ethnic backgrounds, including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic, and spanning twelve states and every region of the U.S. In semi-structured interviews, the CEOs described their perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents, their ascension to the presidency, and the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges. Multiple steps were used to conduct the data analysis. Counter-narratives were examined using a modified interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) concept model the researcher expanded creating a nine (9) step system of data collection and analysis for the. Using the Pew Research Center's (2020) classification and name of generations as a guide, the researcher coupled and aligned each participant by both generations of the American community college, development (Deegan and Tillery, 1985; Geller, 2001) with distinct characteristics of generations of community college leadership style (Sullivan, 2001; Boggs and McPhail, 2016) hence updating the generation

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This study makes a practical, theoretical, and social contribution to the study of the underrepresentation of race and gender diversity in the community college presidency provides insight into the myriad of factors identified, gives voice to the newest generation of leaders, and discusses implications for future research and practice.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The need for a diverse college presidency at higher education institutions in the United States has been an area of concern for researchers, scholars, and practitioners for decades. Early research predicted a need to increase the numbers of qualified candidates in the leadership pipeline because the profile of the community college presidency in America was changing (Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). However, recent studies have revealed that the leading demographic profile of college presidents by racial composition is stagnant, with the majority of community college CEOs as white males (ACE, 2013; Gagliardi et al., 2017). To address this and other concerns of a declining leadership and a racial and gender gap in the community college presidency, attention was given to leadership development programs, institutes, and identifying leadership competencies relevant to the position. Despite efforts to turn the tide for community college leadership, subsequent studies indicate diversification continues to proceed slowly.

The role and importance of community college leadership are important topics relevant to higher education today. Community colleges, created by historical precedent and state legislation, are the cornerstone of the American education system. These colleges' open-door access missions serve a diverse body of students, benefiting the academically underprepared, economically disadvantaged, first-generation college students, minorities, and women (Cohen et al., 2014).

A report by the Aspen Institute and Achieving the Dream (2013), quoting former community college president George Vaughan from 2001, suggested that the impending retirements of huge numbers of community college presidents would prove to be one of two things: a moment of crisis or an opportunity to develop a new generation of great leaders. Given

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the changing American demography and the communities served by today's community colleges, now is the opportunity Vaughan anticipated not only to fill the presidencies but also to diversify the leadership so that these institutions better resemble the diverse student bodies and communities they serve.

Nationally, the low numbers regarding racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency reveal an underrepresentation of race and gender in the leadership pipeline toward the community college presidency (Shults, 2001; Aspen, 2017; Gagliardi et al., 2017). The massive wave of retirements in community college leaders predicted by Shults (2001) may present an opportunity to close the race and gender gap in the community college presidency. A report by the Aspen Institute (2017) on developing a diverse pool of higher education leadership in a time of rapid change argues for action to address "inadequate systems for preparing diverse and non-traditional candidates for the presidency" (p. iii). Understanding factors that preclude greater numbers of minorities and women ascending toward the community college presidency is paramount to understanding how to increase representation and narrow the gap.

A predicted burgeoning leadership decline among community college presidents and a need to increase the number of minorities and women are influencing the need for succession planning. Many agree that expanding and diversifying the presidency leadership talent pool "is critical to succession planning and provides an opportunity to move away from the longstanding notion of who is a leader" (Aspen, 2017, p. iii). Aspen's study moves the issue of diversifying the presidency to the forefront while underscoring the importance of leadership development in the process. Higher education, including community colleges, is increasingly recognizing that leadership in the presidency and senior administration and faculty should reflect and honor the diversity of the community and student body. It is undeniable that institutions benefit from a rich

diversity that people from different backgrounds bring to the community college leadership and their respective communities. Very few studies have explored the phenomenon of the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency, with the notable exception of the American Council on Education's (ACE) longitudinal American College President's Study (ACPS) dating back to 1986 (Gagliardi et al., 2017).

The literature is replete with studies on community college leadership, the type of leadership needed to transform today's community colleges, and desired competencies necessary to be successful as a leader. Eddy and Khwaja's (2019) *What Happened to Re-Visioning Community College Leadership? A 25-Year Retrospective* analyzed journal articles published between 1990 and 2015 to examine changes in the gendered discourse on community college leadership, postulating that "[t]he language used in the scholarly examination of leadership is a reflection of the ground realities of the community college setting and provides insight into the persisting gendered constructions of leadership at two-year colleges" (p. 53). The authors' analysis concluded there was a shifting tide in the conceptions of gender in community college leadership, "an awareness that the complexity of today's community college requires changes in leadership" and hope that "new conceptions of leadership will be collaborative and inclusive" (Eddy & Khwaja, 2019, p. 73). In 2018, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Commission on Leadership and Professional Development revised its widely lauded competencies for college leaders to include specific focus areas "to guide the development of emerging leaders and to assist colleges with the selection of employees dedicated to the community college mission, vision, and values" (AACC, 2018, p. 3). The Commission noted that while "diversity and equity are not expressly outlined as a separate competency, AACC

understands the importance of creating an environment that embraces diversity" and creating environments where "employees reflect the demographics being served" (p. 5).

A 2019 survey of college and university presidents and the presidential pipeline conducted by Inside Higher Education and Gallup reported "60 percent of community college presidents agree there are too few minority candidates for community college presidencies, and 42 percent agree there are too few female candidates" (Jaschik & Lederman, 2019, p. 7). The void in the literature on the lack of diversity in community college presidencies sends an alarm that the issue needs to be addressed, presenting an untenable position for diversifying the community college pipeline. An examination of the perceptions of minority college presidents on their ascension to the presidency will help to inform practice.

Overview of the Issues

Many of today's leadership challenges were identified in the previous century. A report by Vaughan and Weisman (1998) on community colleges and the new millennium highlighted several issues to address, including a reliance "upon the support systems inherent in the college's culture" for an incoming president's success and survival, an increase in females in academics, the presidential pipeline and the presidency as an indicator "the face of the presidency [was] changing," a need for current presidents "to serve as a mentor to one student member of a minority group" and to "expand professional opportunities for women and minorities who wish to move into the presidency" (p. 148). The authors described a need for mentoring, preparation programs, and efforts by current presidents and boards of trustees to increase the number of candidates in the pipeline to senior leadership and the presidency:

> The Board of trustees should make every effort to include women and minorities in the
> pool of applicants when seeking to fill a presidency. For the percentage of female and

minority presidents to increase, current trustees and presidents must assist, encourage, and help orchestrate the move into the presidency. (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p.149)

While considerable effort has been made on the challenges identified, progress has been slow.

A joint report by the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees states, "The first two decades of the 21st century have placed significantly more pressure on the nation's 1,103 community colleges—to enhance their role across multiple platforms" (AACC & ACCT, 2018, p. 4). A 2013 report by The Aspen Institute and Achieving the Dream on the importance of aligning the community college presidency with student success described community colleges as:

> The education of over 7 million degree-seeking students, more than 40 percent of the
>
> U.S. college population; they have in recent years been growing at four times the rate of
>
> four-year colleges, and they enroll a disproportionately large share of the rapidly
>
> expanding number of college students of color and first-generation students (Aspen,
>
> 2013, p. 2).

While today's community colleges are constantly transforming, the complexities and demands of the position make it difficult to be prepared for the presidency. Significant strides have been made in the development of leadership institutes to prepare aspiring leaders, as well as the identification of desired competencies for emerging leaders (AACC, 2018). However, colleges continue to grapple with a leadership crisis, a leadership gap in the college presidency, and increased accountability to improve student success, and the board of trustees plays a significant role in appointing, supporting, and positioning their presidents and institutions to flourish. A 2018 CEO Tenure Study by the Community College League of California concluded "by recognizing the value of longer tenures, boards of trustees can provide yet another opportunity

for colleges to thrive through stable leadership focused on a long-term student success agenda" (Navarette et al., 2018, p. 3).

Today's college presidents fail to mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of their students. Reports on leadership in higher education conclude more generally that administrators, professionals, and faculty remain predominantly White and predominantly male, particularly within the faculty ranks (Espinosa et al., 2019; Pritchard & McChesney, 2018). Studies on women, and minority college and university presidents examine how females navigate barriers of race and gender that can be observed at every rung of the academic career ladder (O'Callaghan & Jackson, 2016; Jackson & Harris, 2007). A current review of literature on the subject reveals few studies examining the underrepresentation of minority presidents in the context of community college leadership.

Historically, the archetype of the community college leader has been a White male about age 60, approaching retirement, and averaging upwards of 15 years of experience in office (McClenney, 2001; Stripling, 2011). An AACC report by McClenney (2001) titled *Converting Crisis to Opportunity* stated "the majority of presidents in American community colleges are still male and white, but the profile—however slowly—is changing" (p. 25). This phenomenon of the "greying presidency" is a major concern for many universities and colleges as they consider the impact of retirements on senior positions of leadership in succession planning (Stripling, 2011). Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) affirmed that "as more and more sitting leaders retire, the demands of the job increase and fewer individuals seek out top-level leadership positions, it is important to address how to develop community college leaders" (p. 127). On the subject of promoting leadership and diversity, McClenney (2001) argued, "Given the changing face of America – and more particularly, the demographics of current and future community college

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students, there could hardly be a need more pressing than the development of leaders who embrace diversity as strength; who insist that diversity be reflected in college culture, curriculum and personnel; who demonstrate forthrightness and skill in addressing diversity issues; and who are themselves diverse" (pp. 25–26). McClenney's report was based on a summit convened by AACC and utilizing comparative research data on the community college presidency from 1986 to 2001. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) stated,

> As community colleges in the U.S. transform to serve an increasingly complex mission and constituency, we must understand that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, with their potential to oppress and marginalize coexisting with their potential to emancipate and empower. (p. 26)

While the massive turnover in leadership is a major cause for concern, the inability to diversify the presidency at more than a nominal rate also presents a major roadblock and cause for concern for a new generation of leaders (Seltzer, 2017). Gillett-Karam et al. (1991) referred to the concept of "reproduction of self" (p. 30) to explain how people leaving positions of influence hire replacements who reflect themselves and hold the same values, persona, and leadership style. The traditional model for a community college president is a white male.

Santamaría and Santamaría (2015) argued for more culturally responsive leadership practices among leaders in higher education, which are necessary to promote access and equity and to improve disparities between groups based upon race, class, gender, or other differences of historical and systemic consequence. McClenney (2001) has stated that "the question at hand is whether the leadership development system that served a movement well in the second half of the 20th century is now adequate to meet the leadership needs of the 21st. The answer, many believe, is 'no'" (p. 26). This shift in leadership development will require a dramatic change in

higher education culture, with multiple stakeholders, e.g., leadership preparation programs, the boards of trustees, and presidential hiring firms, supporting the change.

Success for the next generation of college presidents, and the flourishing of higher education, will require an expanded, more diverse pool of prepared and talented leaders who possess a skill set that is deeper and broader than ever before (Aspen, 2017). The literature supports a need to diversify the presidency as well as the development of community college leaders. Early on, AACC leadership convened organizational and program leaders in education, foundation and development officers, college presidents, and board of trustee members to collaboratively outline strategies to address challenges for community colleges in the new millennium. They outlined strategies for preventing the loss of leadership knowledge among senior administrators and faculty as a mass of presidents prepared to retire and the development of a diverse leadership pipeline (McClenney, 2001). The Aspen Institute's Taskforce Report (2017) on the future of the college presidency reported:

> stakeholders—including college presidents, national associations, and boards of trustees—must be willing to invest in the college presidency to ensure that a healthy supply of talent can be identified, cultivated, and supported, lest they leave higher education incapable of delivering quality in the face of demographic, political, and economic pressures (p. iii).

A review of the literature supports the need for investing in leadership development programs for the community college presidency to increase the number of minorities and skilled talent in the leadership pipeline.

McPhail et al. (2007) argued the importance of the role of trustee governance in the leadership equation within the context of creating change from a traditional to a focused

approach in managing complex issues of learning, student success, leadership, and sustainability. A change in cultural leadership practices and governance models is a shift in cultural thinking about leadership development. Community colleges are adept at using transformative approaches to consider new ways of thinking about complex issues. A survey of community college leaders by Eddy (2019) on pressing challenges for community colleges contended, "The opportunity to address historic achievement gaps among whites and Asians relative to Hispanics and blacks exists when equity is at the center of programming and decision making on campus" (p. 1). The researcher further supports new approaches and transformative thinking about leadership development stating, and "Opening up the leadership pipeline to women and leaders of color is required for a school to mirror the student body and to build expanded connections" (p. 1). The role of the board of trustees is pivotal in creating change in leadership practices, student success, and diversifying the presidency.

A few studies have explored the trends in community college leadership, including diversity among minorities and minority women in senior-level positions (Jackson & Harris, 2007; Espinosa et al., 2019; Scholder et al., 2019). Researchers contend the racial and gender diversity of persons moving from senior positions to the presidency has not adequately kept pace, suggesting a glass ceiling for persons in the presidency pool (Jackson & Harris, 2007). Only 16.8% of presidents in higher education are minorities, and 36% of them are women leading community colleges, indicating few men of color in the presidency (Espinosa et al., 2019). Nationally, the slow pace of racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency suggests an underrepresentation of race and gender in the leadership pipeline (Aspen, 2017; Gagliardi et al., 2017). An article by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International by Scholder et al. (2019) titled *The Business Schools Glass Ceiling* stated

that "women pay a 'gender tax' they describe as the intentional recruitment of women and minorities by business school administrators to achieve diversity on committees and teams. Thus, women and minorities pay a 'gender' or 'minority' tax because of their more limited numbers, particularly as they achieve ranks" (Scholder et al., 2019, p.1). The authors argued, "While schools have made progress over the past five years bringing in more women as students, faculty and administrators, women are still underrepresented at virtually every level" and their salaries lag behind their male peers (p. 1). As the diversity of race and gender among community college presidencies lags, colleges must reevaluate institutional practices and policies for hiring.

Understanding impediments to racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency would help unplug the candidacy pool for minorities and women. Gillett-Karam et al. (1991) concluded that community colleges "as a mirror of society, will recognize racial-ethnic and gender diversity and work to include members of ethnic minorities and women in all leadership roles" (pp. 207–240). Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) stated, "[T]he opportunity to recast what community college leadership looks like is upon us" (p. 139). Though an underrepresentation of racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency persists, few studies have provided an in-depth examination of the reasons for the causes.

Statement of the Problem

Research has identified a clear underrepresentation of race and gender diversity in the community college presidency (Aspen & Achieve the Dream, 2013; Espinosa et al., 2019; Gagliardi et al., 2017; Shults, 2001). An analytical review of the research shows scant progress in the diversification of minority-serving community college presidents (Seltzer, 2017). A 2018 longitudinal study by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) identified a racial and gender gap evident among community college boards of trustees in the U.S. (ACCT, 2018).

A report by the Aspen Institute (2013) cited major gaps in the recruitment of presidents and the criteria used for evaluation by boards of trustees, which is the funnel that directly influences the hiring of community college presidents. Recommendations from the Aspen study included increasing alignment in training, hiring, and the preparation of presidents, stakeholders, constituent groups, researchers, advocated associations, presidential search firms, and other groups that influence the hiring decisions of college presidents (Aspen, 2013). These key issues have created a need to understand the leakage points from the pipeline to the presidency, as well as other factors that prevent increased numbers of minority women and men from becoming community college presidents (Jaschik et al., 2019). An examination of leakage points in the pipeline to the presidency is relevant to understanding the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents.

AACC CEO Walter Bumphus (2018), in speaking about leadership opportunities at community colleges, stated, "[C]ommunity colleges look to develop a pipeline for retiring baby boomer leaders — the sector sees some 250 turnovers annually among its presidents — there is an opportunity to ensure emerging leaders represent the diversity of their students" (Dembicki, 2018). The need to develop and diversify the pipeline to the presidency, coupled with a diminishing pool of qualified prospective presidential candidates (AACC, 2012), highlights both a disparity and an opportunity to increase diversity among leaders. Many longitudinal studies related to the community college presidency consistently reported abysmally low numbers of minority male presidents. The numbers for minority female presidents were equally low yet couched as an aggregate by gender alone. This phenomenon has received exiguous attention in the literature. Currently, there is a gap in the literature when it comes to understanding the persistently low racial and gender representation of minorities as community college presidents.

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Given the shortage of community college leaders, the low number of qualified candidates in the pipeline, the lack of diversity in the existing pool of talent, the lack of clear pathways, and the slow progress in minority presidents, this study is timely. The present research study explored, through the lived experiences and perceptions of sitting and retired minority leaders, the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles in community colleges. Recent studies have indicated that the minority student populace continues to outpace that of the community college leadership that remains overwhelmingly White and male (Gagliardi et al., 2017). The main objective of this study is to draw attention to the persistently low rate of minorities serving as community college presidents.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this investigation:

1. How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?

2. How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?

3. How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

Theoretical Framework

This study employed Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling (GCT) theoretical frameworks to analyze participants' narratives both individually and thematically based on their

social identities as minorities. Critical race theory (CRT) is an analytical theoretical framework that stems from the field of critical legal studies, which examines racial inequities in society and culture as they relate to categorizations of race, law, and power (Ladson-Billings, 2013; Hiraldo, 2010). The Glass Ceiling framework refers to the invisible barriers to career advancement for women and minorities (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). Chief among them is CRT. Both theories prove relevant to understanding the impediments to advancement towards the community college presidency of qualified minority and women candidates engendered by existing stereotypes and preconceptions.

Scholars have used Glass Ceiling Theory to examine the underrepresentation of minorities in positions of leadership, particularly in senior-level positions that research data have identified as points of institutional control. GCT proved relevant as a contributor to the framework developed and applied to understand the shortage of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Latinos in leadership levels in higher education. An example of a question that utilizes both CRT and the Glass Ceiling Theory is "How do community college presidents of color describe their stories and journeys to the presidency?" The Glass Ceiling Theory suggests that when all things are equal a glass ceiling exists for progression into leadership ranks. In conclusion, I have integrated two theoretical frameworks, drawing on two schools of thought, with CRT being a major theoretical foundation. Each framework, allows the researcher to examine social, cultural, educational, and political issues and barriers that disproportionately affect the lives and experiences of minority populations (Patton & Haynes, 2014).

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to explore minority presidents' perspectives on the underrepresentation of minorities in community college presidencies. Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding in which the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture (Creswell, 2014). A phenomenological approach was used to understand the lived experiences and perspectives of participants. Phenomenological studies seek to describe meanings and understand the essence of a phenomenon by capturing people's experiences and their interpretations of those experiences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Patton, 2015) and can be especially effective when a study aims to understand a person's experiences rather than to provide a causal explanation of them.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will help inform program practitioners, community college leadership practitioners and developers of leadership development curricula, executive search firms who assist college boards in their search process, and finally boards of trustees who make final decisions about the filling of presidential positions at community colleges. There is great utility in understanding minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles in community colleges.

It also seeks to augment understanding of the failure of the academy to address the phenomenon given decades of longitudinal studies on pathways to the presidency. The findings of the study will contribute to filling a void in the literature of the event (Espinosa et al., 2019; NCES, 2019; Gagliardi et al., 2017; Selingo et al., 2017). Exposing racial and gender disparities in the community college presidency will provide a rich dialogue examining culturally systemic barriers in higher education, thus allowing more minorities to prepare, develop proficiencies, and

persist through the pipeline to the presidency. Research suggests that it is essential that the community college presidency embodies a diverse set of leaders reflecting life experiences similar to those of members of the college community (AACC, 2018). This study aims to make a practical, theoretical, and social contribution by adding to the literature and field on the underrepresentation of race and gender diversity in the community college presidency.

The results of such a study could help to guide community college practitioners to (a) bring awareness to the issue of racial and gender diversification in the presidency, (b) create organizational climates and cultures that eliminate structural and institutional barriers that may inhibit diverse leaders from successfully achieving senior leadership roles that position them to ascend to the presidency, (c) provide a framework to inform the board of trustee and executive search firm hiring practices that may lead to an increase in representation of minorities in the presidency, and (d) inform leadership preparation curricula through the lens of critical race pedagogy. By understanding current and former presidents' perceptions of leakage points from the pipeline to the presidency, this study informs practice in training, hiring, and preparation of presidents, stakeholders, constituent groups, and community college boards of trustees. It adds to the literature by deepening our understanding of the perceptions and lived experiences of minority community college leaders.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Roberts and Hyatt (2019) define assumptions as "what you take for granted relative to your study" (p. 111). One assumption of this study was that there are barriers affecting minorities and women when advancing to senior-level positions in organizations, leading toward the

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presidency. A review of the literature seems to support this assumption. Other assumptions of the study include:

1. Participants will answer interview questions honestly and candidly.

2. The inclusion criteria of the sample participants are appropriate and assure that participants have experienced the same or similar phenomena examined by the study.

3. Participants have a sincere interest in participating in the study, and their responses accurately reflect their personal journeys and experiences without other motives, for example, concern for a perceived compromising of their position by agreeing to be in the study.

Limitations

1. The validity of interview results, in general, has the potential to be distorted by any relationships with and the perceptions of the interviewer.

2. Participants may not always answer honestly.

Delimitations

1. The study will include a snapshot of current and former minority community college presidents/CEOs from colleges in the United States.

2. The experiences of each president may differ based on the location, size, student demography, and type of institution/system served and that institution/system's cultural impact on the nature and role of the presidency.

3. Community colleges and community college leaders referred to in the study are limited to public and private, not-for-profit, two-year institutions affiliated with the AACC.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions will clarify the operational and technical terms used in this research study. The researcher developed all definitions not accompanied by a citation.

Community College President/CEO: Chancellor, President, Campus President. The president carries out general administrative duties and has periodic meetings with the board and the heads of state agencies. To a lesser extent, the president makes decisions on faculty recruitment and selection, conducts public relations activities, and coordinates the college program with programs of other institutions and community groups. (Cohen et al., 2014, pp. 142–143)

Community College: For this study, a community college is "any not-for-profit institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree" (Cohen et al., 2014, p. 5).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) Methodology: A theoretically grounded framework that offers researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers an approach to understanding socio-cultural factors and the ideological construction of race from the broader perspectives of history, culture, social and power relations, and group self-interests across dominant cultural modes (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) Intersectionality: The lens and approach for understanding the nature of social inequities, the processes that sustain them, and the aspects of how one's social and political identities (e.g., gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, etc.) intersect to create unique modes of discrimination (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015).

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Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT): A framework used by researchers to understand transparent, artificial, and unbreachable barriers, based on attitudinal or organizational bias, toward minorities and women as a group who are kept from advancing to higher positions, regardless of their qualifications or achievements (Cotter et al., 2001).

Minority Community College President/CEO: The term "minority community college president/CEO" encompasses a broad demographic of individuals, some of whose experiences may not be expressed in the study; as a result, conclusions drawn may not be generalizable due to the sample size and demography of participants. For the study, minority community college president/CEO is defined as persons currently or previously serving within the past eight years and retired from American community colleges affiliated with the AACC, from one or more of the following groups:

- *African American*: A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa (U.S. Census, 2018).

- *American Indian or Alaska Native*: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment (U.S. Census, 2018).

- *Asian Pacific Islander*: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam (U.S. Census, 2018).

- *Hispanic / Latina/o*: A generic term used to refer to Hispanics or Latino persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or South or Central American heritage, or from any other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race, including subpopulations such as

Mexicans, Salvadorans, and others (U.S. Census, 2018).

Summary – Chapter 1

This chapter provided an introduction to the study and an overview of the issues surrounding the study under investigation. It includes a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, a theoretical framework, and the research design that informs the study. The chapter concludes with the significance of the study, assumptions, limitations and delimitations, and definitions of terms.

Organization of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges. This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 contains the introduction, background, problem statement, and purpose of the study; research questions, theoretical framework, and significance of the study; assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and definitions of terms. Chapter 2 includes the review of related literature, looking at research about the problem investigated and the dynamics of race and gender in higher education through a critical race framework. The literature review explores theories and aspects of leadership, including ascension, preparation, pathways, diversity, and equity in the pipeline to the presidency. Chapter 3 includes the research methodology and design for the study. Chapter 4 consists of an analysis of the research questions and a summary of the research findings for this study. Chapter 5 contains the summary, conclusion, implications of the research, and recommendations for future research and practice. The study concludes with a bibliography and appendices.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews and evaluates the existing literature relevant to understanding and interpreting the underrepresentation of minority presidents/CEOs in community colleges. The literature review is organized into four sections.

The first section provides a historical overview of American community colleges, including key legislation that influenced their growth and expansion, followed by a description of six generations of community college development, as presented by Deegan and Tillery (1986). The second section reviews literature on four generations of community college presidents' leadership styles. Additionally, an overview of significant leadership theories contributing to the development of a community college leadership-competencies framework developed by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is in this section. The third section reviews the current demography of the presidency, along with the eroding pipeline and preparation to address it as identified in previous research by Shults (2001) and Gagliardi et al. (2017). The final section offers a review of the literature on the two theories that serve as the theoretical framework for this study: Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT)—and their application to this study. These theories inform the research questions chosen for the study and help guide the analysis and interpretation of data.

Historical Overview of American Community Colleges

Community colleges have existed for more than a century, changing significantly over time. A historical review of community college development and the leadership that transformed it is important to the study under investigation. This section includes an overview of community colleges, key legislation impacting their development, and generations that defined them, and

concludes by presenting the distinct characteristics of four generations of community college leaders.

The development of community colleges began in the early 1900s. The term *junior college* is generally attributed to William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago, and Stanley Brown, Superintendent of Joliet Township High School, founders of the first public community college in the state of Illinois in 1901 (Cohen et al., 2014). The creation of the junior college was significant in two ways: (a) it served the need to bridge an educational gap between high schools and universities, and (b) it served as an early model for two-year, associate degree-granting institutions that forever changed the landscape of American higher education. Renamed Joliet Junior College in 1916, this school and other early community colleges were established to make postsecondary education more accessible and to accommodate students who desired to remain within their community while pursuing a college education (Vargas et al, 2019). As a result, community colleges made education, skills and vocational training, and personal goals accessible and attainable for the common person.

Overview of Milestones and Key Legislation for Community Colleges

The development of community colleges ran parallel to the overall growth of higher education in the United States during the 20th century, with several social forces and legislation contributing to its development (AACC, 2012; Cohen et al., 2014; Kantor & Armstrong, 2019). Since the mid-nineteenth century, key legislation has supported the premise of community colleges as an investment in the education and economic benefit of society. The Smith-Hughes Vocational Act of 1917 was the first authorization of federal funding of vocational education (Cohen et al., 2014; Jacobs & Worth, 2019). The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, referred to as the G.I. Bill of Rights, expanded higher education options for millions of World

War II veterans and had a profound impact on dismantling social and economic barriers to education in America for many (Cohen et al., 2014).

A 1947 report by President Truman's Commission on Higher Education is best known for introducing the term *community college* (Boggs, 2012). Principal outcomes of the Truman Commission include a call for the establishment of a network of public community colleges to serve local communities, promotion of post-secondary education for returning veterans, and recognition of community colleges as "a national asset" (Kantor & Armstrong, 2019, p. 66). The report legitimized the philosophy of community colleges as affordable, equitable, and accessible, all for the greater societal good. It was not until 18 years after the Truman Commission's report, with the passage of the landmark Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, that "the federal government initiated a broad-based effort at addressing the Commission's access goals by working to erode cost-based barriers to college" (Gilbert & Heller, 2013, p. 5). Title IV of the HEA mirrored the Truman Commission report and clarified the federal government's role in making higher education affordable by providing grants and subsidized loans to economically disadvantaged students. Subsequent legislation for vocational career and technical education, such as the various Carl D. Perkins Acts from 1984-2018, further improved higher education accessibility for individuals with disabilities, single parents, incarcerated populations, and low-income individuals (Cohen et al., 2014; Gilbert & Heller, 2013; Kantor & Armstrong, 2019). The mission of community colleges to provide accessible and effective higher education for all students, particularly the socially and economically disenfranchised, continues to play a role in transforming the American socio-economic system.

In 2011, President Barack Obama convened the first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges. Its mission statement read as follows:

To emphasize the role of community colleges in achieving the President's goal of making

America the most educated country in the world by 2020; To demonstrate that

community colleges are critical partners in our efforts to prepare our graduates to lead the

21st century workforce; To highlight the *Skills for America's Future* initiative, a new

Gates Foundation program called Completion by Design, and the Aspen Prize for

Community College Excellence. (White House, 2011)

The spotlight placed on community colleges by President Barack Obama, the public college and

university association collaborations towards increasing degree completion, and the initiatives

established as a byproduct of the White House Summit continue to have transformative and far-

reaching effects on colleges today. According to an article published by the Winston-Salem

Chronicle (2015), Walter Bumphus, president of the AACC, stated, "This is the Camelot

moment for community colleges – this brief shining moment in time, where the promise of the

future that community colleges can provide for the nation's citizenry has been realized"

(Winston-Salem Chronicle, 2015). According to the article, Bumphus referred to the recognition

community colleges experienced across the U.S. and nation as a result of recognition by then

President Obama and the completion agenda efforts at that time resulting from the White House

Summit (Winston-Salem Chronicle, 2015). The collaboration of public American post-secondary

higher education was a converging point for and collective commitment by public institutions,

public colleges and universities, and community college leadership. It also represented one of

many history-setting precedents in the timeline of American community colleges.

Generations of Community College Development

Historically, the life span and influences of community colleges can be categorized into

two major eras researchers refer to as the evolution of community colleges (Deegan & Tillery,

1986; Geller, 2001). Researchers Deegan and Tillery (1985) examined the American community college in five generations, with Geller (2001) suggesting a sixth. The first four generations occurred in the first era and were (a) from 1900–1930; (b) from 1930–1950, as junior college, the people's college, with a curriculum of vocation, remediation, and transfer; (c) from 1950–1970, as community college, focused on accessibility; and (d) from 1970–1985, as more expanded institutions, with comprehensive missions and including programs. The evolution of community colleges "during the first four generations, identity, mission and growth shaped the agenda for community colleges" (Deegan & Tillery, 1986, p. 191). Deegan and Tillery (1986) referred to an unnamed generation from 1985 to the late 1990s, noting, "The fifth generation and beyond will usher in potentially significant changes in mission, delivery systems, meeting student needs, and accommodating attendance patterns" (p. 191). In writings at the time, Geller (2001) proposed a sixth generation, from 2000 to now, as the learning-centered community college, named after the work of educator Terry O'Banion. Boggs and McPhail (2016) expanded the discussion on generations of community colleges by suggesting that community colleges are the heartbeat of the nation's higher education system, bear the tremendous responsibility of serving the needs of a vast and varied student body, and provided a model for understanding mission issues "for viewing the development of the community college mission in terms of generations in which each generation builds upon the past" (p.17).

Community colleges of the current generation serve a societal need and provide opportunities for all persons to further their educational needs without leaving home. It is not enough to focus on the transforming mission and eras of the community colleges but attention must also be given to the evolution of leadership styles of the leaders during their era of community college development and the characteristics of leadership that shaped and defined

each generation. A review of the eras of community college leadership that complements the historical organizational development of generations of community colleges outlined by Deegan and Tillery (1986) is important in understanding characteristics of leadership styles in the presidency.

Generations of Community College Leadership Styles

A review of relevant literature on the scope and nature of the community college presidency since its beginnings in the early 1900s revealed distinct characteristics of leadership in each generation. During the past century, the roles of community college presidents have changed significantly as the institutions evolved into comprehensive community colleges (O'Banion, 2019; Sullivan, 2001; Vaughan, 2004). Probing beyond Deegan and Tillery's (1986) generations of community college development, researcher Leila Gonzalez Sullivan (2001) grouped four generations of community college leaders as follows: Founding Fathers, Good Managers, Collaborators, and Millennials.

The first generation of Founding Fathers in community college leadership were builders who "cultivated an educated citizenry" and were responsible for the architecture of much of the postsecondary system in America that shaped the community college movement (Kanter & Armstrong, 2019, p. 81). They worked to develop and establish a new form of higher education that offered a unique mission of access and core values and practices that persist in community colleges today (Sullivan, 2001).

The Good Managers of generation two led their institutions through periods of growth and management of resources (the 1960s and 1970s) "when community colleges were a core part of the nation's effort to dramatically expand access to higher education" (Bailey et al., 2015, p. vii). The Founding Fathers and Good Managers shared many of the same leadership

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characteristics, personal experiences and leadership styles, exhibiting "a traditional leadership style within a hierarchical organizational structure" (Sullivan, 2001, p. 561). Demographically these presidents were primarily married White males in their fifties who held doctorates and had served in the military (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005).

Generation three, the Collaborators, prepared for leadership roles through professional development programs specific to community colleges. Many were the first in their families to attend college and "became involved in social action groups—the civil rights, antiwar, or women's movements—during or after college" (Sullivan, 2001, p. 562). Collaborative leaders successfully worked with various constituency groups, internally developing teams among faculty, staff, and administrators and externally with foundations and businesses in the workforce (Cohen et al., 2014; O'Banion, 2019).

The fourth generation Millennials have been mentored by the Collaborators, come from non-traditional pathways, are technologically astute, and are more diverse than previous generations of community college presidents (Gagliardi, 2017). Although the trend for each successive generation has been increased preparedness to navigate the challenges of the next generation, the fourth generation of community college presidents is not as confident. Shults (2001) noted, "New community college presidents feel unprepared to deal with key aspects of their jobs, including fundraising, financial management, and working effectively with their governing boards" (p. 1). Traditional leadership development programs tend to focus on traits, skills, or behaviors that help an individual in a position of authority to enact leadership (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017, p. 20). Kezar and Holcombe (2017) recommended a shift in leadership development from a focus on "the identification and cultivation of individual leadership skills to an examination of the organizational structures, relationships, and processes that promote shared

leadership and collaboration" (p. 20). Institutional culture is established by its leadership's ability to navigate challenges and rally constituents around change.

In 1984, Bolman and Deal developed a model to understand organizations and leadership using four perspectives or frames they describe as structural, human resource, political and symbolic, which have been refined over the years and widely applied to the study of leadership in the academy as well as community college presidents and the fourth generation of community college leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2017, McArdle, 2013). Several studies indicated that community college presidents' use of a multi-framed approach to leadership is critical when dealing with challenges and crises (AACC, 2018; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Eddy & Mitchell, 2017; McArdle, 2013). Bolman and Deal (2017) argued multi-framing is a skill embodied in exemplary leaders. McArdle (2013) presented evidence of positive momentum in leaders' ability to multi-frame throughout each of the four frames, given the challenges presented. Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) advocated that contextual competency should follow throughout each of the competencies and frames. A similar conclusion was posited by the AACC (2018) in outlining challenges community college leaders face and how the leadership competency framework can be applied to those challenges.

Community colleges have transformed the face of American public education by providing access, equity, workforce readiness, and community enrichment to society. Many studies suggest that community colleges have changed significantly over time and made a profound impact on the communities they serve. Some studies indicate a need to consider the leadership theories, framework, and profile of community college presidents that informed the changes (Eddy & Garza Mitchell, 2017; McNair, 2015; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). An understanding of the generations of community college leadership styles and the scope and

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nature of leadership establishes a foundation for the framework of community college leadership and related theories.

Overview of Leadership Theories

This study focused on the major theories of leadership as they pertain to the community college presidency and competencies for the community college leadership framework. A more comprehensive review of leadership revealed numerous distinct categories and approaches to leadership, each presenting several leadership theories and models illustrating the evolution of thought concerning leadership (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2013). An AACC study by Roueche, Baker and Rose on exemplary community college presidents, *Shared Vision: Transformational Leadership in American Community Colleges*, defined leadership as "the ability to influence, shape and embed values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors consistent with increased commitment to the unique mission of the community college" (Roueche et al., 1989, p. 225). This definition of leadership by Roueche and others (1989) guided the review of theories of leadership relevant to this study, including trait theory, the University of Michigan study led by organizational psychologist Rensis Likert and Ohio State studies' important contribution to behavioral theory in a leadership framework. Additionally, situational contingency theory, organizational theories of leadership including Bolman and Deal's four-frame model of leadership, and transformational leadership theories were also reviewed.

Trait Theory Studies

Trait studies on leadership dominated early thinking in the 1900s. These early studies were based on the presumption of the historical antecedent of a great man as a natural leader who possesses inherent traits which separate him from followers (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2010). Yukl (2010) credited Thomas Carlyle with the earliest investigation into trait-based

studies in the mid-1800s. Carlyle's 'great man' trait approach to leadership was based on the rationale of extraordinary natural attributes, intellect, and abilities as inheritable traits where leaders were born and history shaped by the leadership of these great men (Yukl, 2010).

Researchers credit the work of Ralph Stogdill in 1948, where he analyzed 124 studies focusing on traits and leadership that had appeared in print between 1904 and 1947, to the development and understanding of leadership (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2010; Bowers & Seashore, 1966). He concluded, "A person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but a pattern of personal characteristics of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities and goals of the followers" (as cited in Hackman & Johnson, 2013, p. 73). A second exhaustive review by Stogdill (1974) between 1949 and 1970 of 163 trait studies challenged popular views on trait studies, finding that a commonality of key traits by leaders was inconclusive and that both personal traits and situational factors influenced leadership (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). Examining the alignment of major theories of leadership, Yukl (2010) agreed that a major flaw in the dominant studies of trait theory was "a lack of attention to intervening variables in the causal chain" that could explain a significant correlation between the traits of individual leaders and a criterion of leader success, without examining any explanatory situations and processes (Yukl, 2010, p. 13).

After years of research, a few traits emerged as important in the field; however, studies in trait leadership failed to produce a definitive list of key leadership traits or styles of leadership useful in all situations (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2010). Leadership has been studied informally by observing the lives of great men and formally by attempting to identify the personality traits of acknowledged leaders. Reviews of literature in trait studies revealed inconsistent findings, resulting in a shift of focus "from a search for personality traits to a search

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for behavior that makes a difference in the performance or satisfaction of the followers" (Bowers & Seashore, 1966, p. 239).

Behavioral Functions Leadership Theory

Behavioral theories gained popularity as focus shifted away from leadership personality traits (Bowers & Seashore, 1966, p. 239; Yukl, 2010). The most notable research on leadership behavior beyond trait studies included concurrent studies underway at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, led by organizational psychologist Rensis Likert (1947), and at the Ohio State University's Bureau of Business Research, led by Ralph Stogdill (1946). The studies provided a structure and implications for behavioral approaches to leadership and contributed significantly to understanding the behavioral functions theory that informed later frameworks for community college leadership.

The University of Michigan Studies of Leadership

The University of Michigan research by Likert (1947) studied the relationship among leader behavior, group processes, and measures of group performance effectiveness to better understand the characteristics of leadership and structure that would make organizations the most effective (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2010). The behaviors of leaders were studied to attempt to locate patterns of behavior that would differentiate effective and ineffective leaders. Two major styles of effective leadership identified by researchers were employee orientation and production orientation. Employee-centered styles emphasized the personal needs of employees while production-centered styles emphasized employee tasks and the methods used to accomplish them (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Yukl, 2010). The researchers initially conceptualized employee orientation and production orientation as opposite poles of the same continuum. Further studies by the researchers theorized these two dimensions as

independent leadership orientations that could occur simultaneously. Likert and associates also identified three types of leadership behavior that differentiated effective and ineffective leaders: task-oriented, relations-oriented, and participative.

Later, Bowers and Seashore (1966) at the University of Michigan extended the investigation of leadership behavior, attempting to isolate key factors of leadership in their study *Predicting Organizational Effectiveness with a Four-Factor Theory of Leadership*. They posited that "there are both common sense and theoretical reasons for believing that a formally acknowledged leader through his supervisory leadership behavior sets the pattern of the mutual leadership which subordinates supply each other" (Bowers & Seashore, 1966, p. 249). Building on the work of Likert and other prominent researchers of the time, Bowers and Seashore (1966) concluded that five dimensions comprise the basic structure of leadership: (a) principle of supportive relations, (b) group interaction facilitation, (c) goals emphasis, (d) technical knowledge, and (e) work facilitation (also, Yukl, 2010). The researchers further concluded that leadership effectiveness is related to causal factors in situations and that "leadership alone is not adequate to predict the effectiveness and that intervening constructs must be included to improve prediction" (p. 263). Although varying in terminology, the five dimensions based on behavioral leadership studies influenced transformational leadership theory and are found in the AACC community college leadership competencies framework.

Ohio State University Study

Concurrently with Likert's University of Michigan study, researchers at Ohio State University's Bureau of Business Research undertook construction of an instrument for describing leadership. Joined by Ralph Stogdill (1946), they analyzed over 100 trait studies using the *Leaders Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ)* to conduct a statistical analysis of key

leadership behaviors useful in selecting future leaders (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Yukl, 2010). They determined that much leadership behavior could be characterized in groups and situations as initiating structure and consideration. Initiating structure refers to the determination of clear-cut standards of performance where a leader focuses directly on defined tasks, organizational performance goals, communication, and the evaluation of work group performance. Consideration consists of interpersonal communication designed to maintain an amiable working environment and the degree to which a leader exhibits trust, respect, support, and concern for workers (Yukl, 2010). Both universities developed models during the same period using questionnaires toward the objective of determining behaviors of effective leadership. Both models emphasized task-oriented and people-oriented styles of leadership, which can be classified as either employee or job-centered styles. The Ohio State model has four leadership styles that operate distinct and independent of one another while the University of Michigan's model proposed two leadership behavioral styles as one-dimensional and operating on opposite sides of the same continuum (Yukl, 2010).

Both the University of Michigan and the Ohio State studies contributed widely to organizational behavioral leadership studies. University of Michigan researchers identified three types of behaviors that differentiated effective and ineffective leaders, with two of those behaviors analogous to results of the Ohio State study (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Yukl, 2010). The first, task-oriented behavior, is an attribute of effective leaders who focus on planning, scheduling, and coordinating subordinate activities and is analogous to the initiating structure behavior label in the Ohio State studies. The second, relations-oriented behavior, demonstrates support to followers including confidence, trust, helping with problem solving, and showing appreciation. The University of Michigan study introduced a third concept of participative

leadership not found in the Ohio State studies. The Ohio State studies helped shift the focus from a universal traits approach to a more situational behavioral leadership view. Trait leadership theories attempted to find a definitive list of preeminent attributes for successful leaders. Behavioral functions leadership theories sought to isolate leadership styles ideal for use in all situations. Neither produced specific leadership attributes or behaviors appropriate in every scenario, which led to the rise of situational contingency models of leadership that take as their premise the idea that style is dictated by situation (Yukl, 2010). The University of Michigan study found a direct correlation between a leader's communication style and the ability to motivate followers (Yukl, 2010). Such a premise supports and builds on the work of Stogdill (1946) at Ohio State.

Behavioral research by Yukl (2013) extended the examination of trait leadership studies by categorizing variables in terms of the characteristics of the leader, the followers, and the situation related to traits, skills, behaviors, values, and influence (p. 12). Through a survey of community college presidents, Vaughan and Weisman (1998) identified prerequisite skills and traits required of a president in the 21st century: effective leadership governance, ability to motivate followers, communicating a culture of change and accountability, financial management skills, a consensus builder, participatory manager, and collaborator. All these prerequisite skills and traits identified by Vaughan and Weisman (1998) are represented in the 2018 AACC competencies for Community College Leaders framework.

Situational Contingency Theory

Situational theory emerged during the 1960s and 1990s to explain the relationship between leadership traits and behaviors in various situations as an indicator of leadership effectiveness. Several researchers were "pursuing situational explanations for leadership" to understand the relationship between a leader's style and followers' performance (Hackman &

Johnson, 2013, p. 81). Webber (1947) was among the first theorists to recognize the situational

nature of leadership and the need to move dynamically from one type of leadership style to

another to remain successful (Yukl, 2010). The most commonly studied situational contingency

approaches to leadership are scientist Fred Fiedler's (1964, 1967) contingency model of

leadership and Hersey and Blanchard's (1960) situational leadership theory. Fiedler introduced

the dichotomy of task vs. relationship orientation, concluding that the interaction between

leadership style and situation predicts the effectiveness of leadership behavior (Hackman &

Johnson, 2013). Hersey and Blanchard originated the situational leadership approach which

posits "different situations call for different styles of leadership" (Yukl, 2010). The focus of the

two models is different yet similar in agreeing that no single style of leadership is effective in all

situations and a leader's approach should adapt to the people they lead, the followers'

development, and the circumstances surrounding the task.

Yukl (2010) described an interconnectedness among leadership approaches between the

leader, the follower, and the situation or environmental context in which leaders and followers

take their cues. Organizational theorist Henry Mintzberg (1973), through observation, developed

a taxonomy of managerial roles into the three categories of information processing, decision

making, and interpersonal roles. Kotter (1990) proposed, "The importance of leading and

managing depends in part on the situation" and yet "problems can occur if an appropriate

balance is not maintained" (Yukl, 2010, p. 7). Kotter found that traditional leadership hierarchies

styles of leading were dated, requiring leaders to transform their styles to operate in multiple

frames and align organizational structures and processes to be agile in the amidst of constant

change (Kotter, 2014). Continued evolution of studies beyond situational contingency theory

sought to address the optimal combination of leadership styles that contributes to effective leadership.

Organizational Theory

Organizational theories that influenced higher education leadership frameworks and practices include behavioral, contingency, and situational leadership theories (Bass, 2008; Hackman & Johnson, 2013). Organizational theory in education emanates from work seeking to explain the interrelated behavior of individuals, groups, or subgroups interacting in a business and performing activities towards the accomplishment of a common goal (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). German sociologist Max Weber was among the first to distinguish bureaucratic theory of organizational management where organizations have a defined hierarchal structure with clear rules, regulations, and lines of authority which govern it. Yukl (2010) described Weber's use of the term *charisma* to describe the motives and behaviors of charismatic leaders as "a form of influence based not on tradition or formal authority but rather on follower perceptions that the leader is endowed with exceptional qualities" (Yukl, 2010, p. 261). Social psychologist and MIT professor Douglas McGregor's (1950) Theory X and Y attempted to isolate how attitudes and behaviors influence organizations (Hackman & Johnson, 2013, Yukl, 2010). McGregor's Theory X and Y's two divergent approaches were based on a set of assumptions regarding human nature that distinguish between the classical bureaucratic views of leadership and situational approaches to leadership (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). Theory X is an authoritarian approach that assumes workers need to be directed and require constant supervision, with controls and incentives in place to induce productive results. Theory Y is a participative approach that believes workers are self-motivated, creative and require little direction and considers the unique characteristics of the individuals performing the task. Both X and Y are on two independent axes where leaders can

operate within either given the context of the situation addressed and are consistent with Weber's

sociological approach to charismatic leaders control and influence over others (Yukl, 2010).

Likert's (1967) evaluation and synthesis of studies at the University of Michigan led to

his development of four styles of leadership: the exploitative authoritative, benevolent

authoritative, consultative, and participative. These four styles are based mainly on the decision

making of the leader and the degree to which others are involved in the decision-making process,

and they contributed greatly to organizational management models of leadership, including

Bolman and Deal's four model framework (Yukl, 2010). Likert later became more prominently

known for his development of a scale for attitude measurement, known as the Likert Scale. He

devised survey methods for use in formally structured interviews, measuring attitudes along a

continuum of choices such as strongly agree, agree, and strongly disagree where a numerical

value is assigned to each statement (Given, 2008). An understanding of situational contingency

theories and organizational theories is relevant to the current research study describing the

leadership competencies most relevant to being successful as a community college president

today.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory informed the definition of leadership developed by

the AACC (1989) and the framework for the AACC competencies for community college

leaders. An understanding of the theory's development is relevant to the current study in

comprehending community college presidents' experience and preparation for the presidency.

Concepts of transactional and transformational leadership were introduced by political scientist

and presidential biographer James McGregor Burns in 1978 in observations of behavior by

military officers and their follower groups (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). Burns attempted to

differentiate between traditional leadership characteristics and behaviors of managers and leaders. Transactional leadership is concerned with meeting the basic needs of followers through a transactional exchange of rewards or privileges toward a desired outcome, while transformational leadership is concerned with the performance of followers (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). Transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other advance to higher goals. Although Burns argued that transactional and transformational leadership are dichotomous, subsequent work by Bernard Bass (1985) and associates proposed that leadership is multi-dimensional, set the stage for traditional theories of leadership and found that, "similar to the hierarchy Maslow described, lower-level transactional leadership is the foundation for higher-level transformational leadership" (Goethels et al., 2004, p. 101).

Bass (1985) extended the work of Burns (1978), defining transformational leadership primarily in terms of the leader's effect on followers and the behavior used to achieve this effect. Transformational leadership is an approach that changes individuals and social systems. Research by Bass described the psychological underpinnings of transformative leadership—including creativeness, charisma, vision, and empowerment—that take into account individual abilities, organizational culture, and characteristics (Burns, 2004; Goethels et al, 2004). Transformational leaders identify the needed change and create a vision to guide the change with the commitment of the members.

While Bass's model of transformational leadership theory has generated significant research, other studies have covered similar territory, including Mintzberg (1979), Yukl (1999, 2013), and Bolman and Deal (2007). Henry Mintzberg (1979) viewed transformative leadership through the lens of organizations as a political arena, a combination of social systems without

common goals that need a transformative leader to supply the missing glue of collective purpose (as cited in English, 2015). Leader effectiveness is based on interacting variables and a combination of factors such as the situation, the leader, the followers, and the culture of an organization as well as characteristics of charisma and culture (Bass, 2008; Yukl, 2013). Studies have analyzed leadership behavior and orientation using Bolman and Deal's four frame model of leadership: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic against that of the fourth generation of community college leaders and administration (Bolman & Deal, 2017; McArdle, 2013). In examining the relationship between the frames of leaders and their constituents, the most effective leaders operate within multiple frames, adapting their leadership style to the situation (McArdle, 2013).

Roueche et al. (1989) developed a theoretical framework for transformational leadership based on data collected from a multi-phased study of community college presidents. The study found transformational leaders had five basic orientations around vision, people, motivation, empowerment, and values, thus "dispelling the idea that leadership is an innate trait or personality a variable" (p. viii). Myran et al. (2003) examined issues and strategies to achieve transformational change in the context of organizational design, policy, students, curriculum, workforce and staff, and resource development as applied to leadership in community colleges. The authors noted that for community college leaders "to successfully engage their institutions in the process of transformational change, leaders must possess and be able to draw on a variety of management skills and competencies" (p. 16). While these researchers looked at leadership theories, the AACC (2018) shifted the conversation from leadership theories to leadership competencies. An understanding of the competencies required of today's community college leaders informs the current study.

Framework for Community College Leadership

Community colleges, like other institutions of higher education, are experiencing a leadership gap as a result of current leaders retiring. A 2001 study conducted by Shults for the AACC titled *The Critical Impact of Impending Retirements on Community College Leadership*, highlighted issues and trends that combined, place potential community college leadership in peril (Shults, 2001). Trends included both community college presidents and faculty retiring at an alarming rate, a loss of tacit knowledge and experience resulting from the retirements as well as concerns that "the pipeline for potential leaders is similarly affected, with higher than normally projected retirements over the next 10 years (Shults, 2001, p. 1). The AACC report concluded:

> There is clear evidence that pending retirements in community college leaders and the leadership pipeline pose a critical challenge to community colleges. Needed future skills have been identified. Many professional development activities exist to help teach these skills and prepare future leaders. But will these programs and activities be sufficient to prepare the community college leaders of tomorrow? (Shults, 2001, p. 5)

Combined, these issues raised concerns over hiring patterns, faculty, and administrative feeder positions to the presidency. The researcher further questioned:

> With the graying of the presidency of the leadership pipeline leaving fewer individuals under 50-will hiring patterns change? With the aging and retirements of a significant number of faculty, who will fill the feeder positions to the presidency? These questions must be addressed to ensure the needed quality and quantity of future community college leaders. (Shults, 2001, p. 5)

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Many researchers argued more work needed to be done to prepare and diversify the pipeline to the presidency. According to an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vaughan (2004) argued the crisis illuminated a failure to diversify the presidency and inbreeding of hire for sameness. The author stated:

> The word "crisis" begs for attention and smacks of a sense of urgency bordering on panic. But somewhere along the way, the true crisis has been overlooked, or at least not addressed. The Crisis has two aspects: First, community college leaders have failed to fill presidential vacancies with members of minority groups anywhere near the level that reflects the general population of the nation, and second, there is far too much inbreeding at the presidential level. Without diversity at the top, institutions face stagnation and loss of the fresh ideas and new perspectives that will keep them vibrant, responsive, and intellectually challenging. (Vaughan, 2004)

Amey (2006) suggested a failure by community college leaders to provide both adequate succession planning and leadership development programs necessary to fill the voluminous leadership gap and aid aspiring leaders in acquiring the competencies necessary for advancing to the next levels of leadership. The literature demonstrates a constructive urgency to consider the challenges in leadership preparation necessary for more minorities and women to ascend to the ranks of community college presidents.

Out of concern for an impending rate of high turnover in leadership and reports of small applicant pools for presidencies, the AACC focused the association's resources on the imperatives of leadership preparation, support, and development (Boggs, 2012). Seeking to address the looming shortage of community college presidents, the AACC launched a series of Leading Forward initiatives funded by a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (AACC,

2005; Amey, 2006). These initiatives supported the planning stages of a leadership development framework to recruit, prepare, and support substantial numbers of diverse leaders by identifying a skills and characteristics framework, strategies for developing, recruiting, and increasing the pipeline, and evaluation of leadership development programs specific to community college leadership (AACC, 2001). Given the drive in the literature to increase the number and diversity of qualified candidates in the pipeline to the presidency, this study is timely to inform understanding of how these efforts translated into increasing the preparation and hiring of minorities and women in community college leadership.

Building on the work of the Leading Forward (2001) efforts, AACC reports examined the pipeline to the presidency and focused efforts on developing and sustaining community college leaders (AACC, 2001; Amey et al., 2002; AACC, 2004b; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). In examining community college leadership, researchers Amey, VanDerLinden, and Brown (2002) concluded the path to the presidency via the academic route, the norm, and the internal hire of senior leadership were the most common means of appointment as part of the pipeline development. Incorporating data from a series of research studies, national forums, and summits, the development, and articulation of field supported competencies for community college leaders began in 2001 (AACC, 2004b). To ascertain a general portrait of the community college presidency, Weisman and Vaughan (2002) reported findings of an AACC longitudinal study, *The Community College Presidency 2001*, which surveyed 936 presidents of public U.S. community colleges belonging to the AACC. The findings of the report identified a threefold increase in female presidents, a lack of sizeable increase in the percentage of minority presidents, and an increased rate of presidential retirements (Weisman & Vaughan, 2002, p. 2). However, *2017 American College Presidency* longitudinal studies about the college presidency and the higher

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education pipeline by the American Council on Education (ACE) concluded that the percentage

of presidents of color and by gender and ethnic representation progresses slowly and

insufficiently to close the gap caused by presidential retirements and turnover (Espinosa et al.,

2019; Gagliardi et al., 2017). Core skills and competencies of community college presidents

were first introduced in a report created by the AACC leadership taskforce in 2001, *Leadership*

2020: Recruitment, Preparation, and Support. The use of transformational leadership theory and

the AACC core competencies has been documented in the literature as being relevant to

community college leadership development (AACC, 2018; Boggs, 2012).

In July 2004, American College Testing Inc. (ACT) submitted an AACC commissioned

report, *A Qualitative Analysis of Community College Leadership from the Leading Forward*

Summits, whose analyses led to the 2005 *Competency Framework for Community College*

Leaders (AACC, 2005). The third edition of the competencies is markedly different from the

previous two versions and reflects the work of the AACC Commission on Leadership and

Professional Development as well as input from broad constituency groups of boards of

directors, faculty councils, affiliate councils, and leadership preparation programs (AACC,

2018). The Commission identified 11 focus areas in specific categories significant to the internal

and external workings of the community college for faculty, mid-and senior-level positions,

aspiring CEOs, new CEOs in their first two years on the job, and seasoned CEOs. The 11 focus

areas are:

(1) Organizational culture;

(2) Governance, institutional policy, and legislation;

(3) Student success;

(4) Institutional leadership;

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(5) Institutional infrastructure;

(6) Information analytics;

(7) Advocacy and mobilization / motivating others;

(8) Fundraising and relationship cultivation;

(9) Communications;

(10) Collaboration; and

(11) Personal traits and abilities. (AACC, 2018)

The results of these studies, in the form of the AACC's Competencies for Community College Leaders, provide a relevant framework and application to guide emerging leaders. Iterations of the AACC competencies changed over the years (AACC, 2005, 2013, 2018).

The AACC competencies (2018) are widely accepted as a guide and framework for both new and established CEOs and the training of external constituents, including boards of trustees, external search committees, and college president preparation programs (Duree & Ebbers, 2012; McPhail et al., 2008). Although researchers tend to agree on the competencies of effective leadership needed to transform today's community colleges, some contend these competencies fall short in understanding the practices of a leader and the role of a community college president. Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) argued that "while the AACC competencies provide a baseline for learning about the duties of leadership in a community college – they do not adequately address the concept of what it means to be a leader or what it means to lead a community college" (p. 130). Given the drive in the literature to increase the number and diversity of qualified candidates in the pipeline to the presidency, the literature agrees on the urgency in constructing opportunities for diversifying the presidency, leadership development preparation, and the acquisition of proficiencies necessary to drive change.

Profile of Today's Community College Leadership

Historically, the archetype of community college leadership, including the presidency and the board of trustees, has been White males (ACCT, 2018; Gagliardi et al., 2017; McClenney, 2001; Stripling, 2011). Efforts from the AACC's 2001 national *Leading Forward* initiative on leadership sustainability and the pipeline to the presidency included strategies for professional development and succession planning by institutional leaders to address the looming leadership gap. McNair et al. (2011) suggested that the AACC competencies should be a foundation in professional development opportunities, hiring, development of succession plans, and evaluation of community college leaders. Other researchers emphasized the key role board of trustees played in reshaping institutional culture and in redefining what leadership looks like. Amey, VanDerLinden, and Brown (2002) argued a critical need for boards of trustees and search committees to clearly understand and rethink the structure of their search process, indicating a need for education regarding changing definitions of requisite experiences for leadership and new definitions of leaders (Amey et al., 2002). McPhail et al. (2007) stated, "Few voices have proclaimed the importance of understanding the role of the trustee within the context of creating change for community colleges" and their role in "rethinking, redefining, and restructuring their institutions" (p. 2). The literature suggests a critical need for boards of trustees and search committees to understand their role in the search process and in redefining assumptions of what leadership is, considered beneficial to minorities and women in the community college presidency. A recent article by Leske and Pendleton (2020) titled *How a Search Committee Can Be the Arbiter of Diversity* argued:

> If higher education is to be intentionally successful in increasing the numbers of underrepresented minority community college presidents/CEOs and recruit a more

diverse pool of campus leaders, it's going to need to pay a lot more attention to creating

diverse search committees and rethink how they operate. (p.1)

Community college trustees play a pivotal role in meeting the changing educational needs of the

community and in ensuring consistency of missions and goals, formulating policy, and ensuring

effective leadership and responsible use of resources. Based on the AACC competencies

framework for an era of change demanding improved leadership, Aspen (2014) produced a guide

report, *Hiring Exceptional Community College Presidents*, for boards of trustees, search

committees, consultants, and persons involved in selecting community college presidents. A

2018 survey of community college boards of trustees by the Association of Community College

Trustees (ACCT) concluded that of more than 1,100 respondents, over half were male; 76

percent were White, 7 percent Black or African American, and 6 percent Hispanic or Latino (p.

2). The profile of today's community college presidents and boards of trustees is evolving

slowly. A review of the literature relative to the demography of the community college

presidency and that of the profile of community college presidents and boards of trustees

suggests a failure in the continuum of responsibility to diversify the community college

presidency in an era of change that demands improved leadership.

The literature has identified leadership opportunities created by the retirement crisis,

focusing on three major areas. The first opportunity is racial and gender diversification of the

presidency as evidenced in the AACC and ACCT's (2018) *Executive Leadership Transitioning

at Community Colleges*, ACE's (2019) *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education*, ACE's (2017)

American College President Study, AACC's (2001) *The Critical Impact of Impending

Retirements on Community College Leadership*, and Vaughan's (2004) "Diversify the

Presidency" in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The second opportunity is formal leadership

preparation to develop aspiring leaders as evidenced in the AACC's (2018) *Competencies for Community College Leaders, 3rd Edition*, Deloitte and Georgia Tech's (2017) *Pathways to the University Presidency: The Future of Higher Education Leadership*, Eddy and Garza Mitchell's (2017) "Preparing Community College Leaders to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges" in the *Journal for the Study of Postsecondary and Tertiary Education*, and Vaughn and Weisman's (1998) *The Community College Presidency at the Millennium*. The third opportunity is pathways that feed the pipeline to the presidency as evidenced by Beckwith, Carter and Peters' (2016) "The Underrepresentation of African American Women in Executive Leadership: What's Getting in the Way?" in the *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly* and O'Callaghan and Jackson's (2016) "Exploring Gender Disparities in Senior-Level Position Attainment in the Academic Workforce: Does Evidence Suggest a Glass Ceiling?" in the *Journal of the Professoriate*. Racial and gender diversification, formal leadership preparation and pipeline development toward the presidency were common elements derived by researchers and the literature. They speak to an underrepresentation of minorities and women in the community college presidency and the pathways, preparation, and competencies required for them to achieve the position.

The composition of the community college presidency has been slow to change. Perrakis et al. (2009), citing minimal increases in presidential hires among individuals of color, stated that "previous research on community college CEOs and college presidencies in general focuses on the individual rather than examining the context in which the individual proceeds toward the presidency" (p. 8). The literature is replete with studies focusing on leadership preparation and succession planning, desired competencies of new leaders, and trajectories toward the presidency pipeline to mitigate leadership vacancies. Though researchers have indicated a need to address diversification of the presidency, studies of the causes of diversification remain absent. Trends in

community college enrollments reflect a minority student population consistently outpacing that of the community college leadership that remains overwhelmingly White and male (Gagliardi et al., 2017). The annual average turnover of community college presidents is supported by a diminishing pool of qualified candidates in the presidential pipeline (AACC, 2012; Dembicki, 2018). A review of the research based on numerous longitudinal studies related to the community college presidency shows inadequate progress in the diversification of minority-serving community college presidents by race and gender, particularly among men (ACCT, 2018; Seltzer, 2017). An analytical review of existing literature reveals a different picture with regard to minorities and women of color and the college presidency.

A Graying Presidency

Presidency turnover has been rising with the wave of retirements. The graying of the college presidency has been well documented and is an issue across higher education (ACE, 2013; Hartley, 2009; Stripling, 2011). In reporting on earlier studies by the ACE, an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2007) titled "Presidents: Same Look, Different Decade" revealed a slow rate of diversification in the president's office evidenced since the late 1990s. The article reported, "According to the study, 86 percent of presidents were white and 77 percent of them were male in 2006. In 1986, when the study was first conducted, 92 percent were white and 91 percent were male" labeling the profile of a typical college president as a graying white male and reflecting on "how little has changed over the last 20 years" (June, 2007, p. 33).

Studies by the ACE (2013) have been explicit about the phenomenon of the "graying" presidency, reporting the average age of college presidents in 2006 was 60, up from the 1986 average of 52. These studies also reported that many faculty and chief academic officers, the typical pathways to the presidency, were aging and found no interest in pursuing the presidency.

A leadership void that threatens the stability of institutions and the ability to fill the pipeline with qualified prospects is a major concern. Analysis of previous research concluded that the community college presidency is aging and remains predominantly White.

Traditionally, the profile of a White male college president is not endemic to community colleges alone but also to the nation's universities. Findings from the American Council on Education's (ACE) 2017 American College President Study (ACPS), which surveyed colleges and universities, indicated the demographic profile of America's college and university presidents remains largely the same as in 1986: an older White male (as cited in Gagliardi et al., 2017). A 2019 status report on *Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education* by the ACE reported that in 2016, 83.2% of college and university presidents were White, compared to 91.9% in 1986 (as cited in Espinosa et al., 2019). Data in the literature support the notion that colleges and universities prioritize experience over other factors when hiring new presidents.

Despite many studies reporting on the need to increase diversity in the community college presidency, recent studies conclude that the archetype of an older white male president still persists today. Hartley and Godin (2009) concluded, "The graying of the presidency suggests that programs to prepare potential presidential candidates" are "important to the health and vitality of the presidency" (p. 22). Seltzer (2017) observed, "Despite years of talk about increasing diversity, chatter about interest in hiring from outside academe and buzz about a coming wave of retirements, college and university presidents in 2016 looked much like they did five years before. They still tended to be aging white men. And they kept getting older." This practice of maintaining and hiring older white male presidents serves as an impediment to the hiring process for otherwise qualified and more diverse candidates in the pipeline.

The graying also presents an opportunity to change the composition of the leadership. Stripling (2011) suggested that some higher education observers view the prospect of increased turnover in college presidencies as an opening for greater diversity in a position long dominated by white men. Others view the phenomenon of the graying presidency as an indication that institutions may attribute value to past presidential experience and be reluctant to change cultural norms and practices associated with White male leadership. Gagliardi et al. (2017) argued that prioritizing experienced presidents' colleges and universities further skews the pool of candidates toward White men, thus working against efforts to diversify the presidency. Such thinking suggests that colleges need to move beyond the structural barriers and social constructs that tend to favor men as the dominant model of leadership. Addressing the many challenges facing institutions today requires changes in structural approaches to leadership (Eddy & Mitchell, 2017). For community colleges to evolve into relevant and transformative 21st century institutions, institutional culture and the leadership that informs it must drive that change.

Community College Leadership Preparation

Community college leadership-development programs are not a new phenomenon (Boggs, 2012; Cohen et al., 2014). In response to concerns about the rapid expansion of community colleges in the 1960s, sometimes opening at a rate of 20 colleges per year, and the predicted scarcity of administrators and college presidents, universities began to add community college leadership programs to their education departments (Cohen et al., 2014). The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has sponsored community leadership programs since the 1960s, and AACC's Learning Forward initiative notably resulted in the competencies framework. This initiative also supports other studies to explore how community college leadership-program (CCLP) approaches differ from those of the Kellogg junior college leadership-program era of the

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1960s (Amey, 2006). George Boggs, former president of the AACC, states that "future leaders need opportunities to learn, develop, and practice leadership skills through simulations, internships, and mentorships; consequently, leadership programs should be structured to provide opportunities for skills development" (2003, p. 20).

Historically, the type of leadership required for change in community colleges has shifted from traditional curricular programing to that emphasizing formal leadership preparation to develop aspiring leaders (AACC, 2018; Selingo et al., 2017; Eddy & Mitchell, 2017; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). Amey (2006) noted, "[M]ost of the early programs served primarily white males" (p. 1). College leadership programs funded in the 1960s were predominantly university programs for community colleges. Eventually, organizational leadership-development programs emerged as institutions, state systems, and national associations looked to create leadership development programs targeting aspiring leaders, mid-level leaders, and women for the presidency. However, studies of leadership preparation programs have not all reported measured results.

According to Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017), "research on the effectiveness of community college leadership training programs has received scant attention" (p. 135). Amey (2006), in a study of six university-based community college leadership programs, concluded that the university-based programs represented an excellent effort in meeting the challenges outlined in AACC's *Leading Forward* efforts to combat the leadership crisis. In raising concerns of program viability and longevity, the report noted "their issues of sustainability, though serious, represent the realities common to graduate degree programs closely connected to fields of practice" (p. 23). In a review of the same study, Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) found "when graduates are queried about their experiences, they are unequivocal in their conclusion that a

mismatch exists between their needs and the program's curricula" (p. 135). The importance of practical leadership preparation and development of community college leaders for the presidency cannot be overstated. Kezar and Holcombe (2017) in their report *Shared Leadership in Higher Education: Important Lessons from Research and Practice,* conducted by the ACE, emphasized the importance of evolving leadership competencies for a changing environmental context in higher education that requires new leadership skills and approaches. "Given this current era of significant change in higher education, there is growing attention to the importance of understanding the leadership required to guide campuses successfully, and a growing concern that existing approaches to leadership are ineffective" (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017 p. 1). The literature contains many types of leadership development preparation programs. Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017) drew the following conclusions: "Understanding better how to prepare leaders to face the challenges now facing community colleges requires questioning current practices and building different leadership development programs" (p. 140). In tracing the emergence of leadership competencies, they noted "the skills lists fell short," recommending professional development opportunities "for individuals to stretch their roles and responsibilities as a process to learn how to lead" (p. 138). They observed, "The opportunity to recast what community college leadership looks like is upon us. However, the pull of traditional, hero-like leaders remains strong despite evidence that new forms of leadership are required" (p. 139). They also recommend an intentionality for and "[t]hus, attention to the leadership pipeline [that] can result in change. But key here to obtaining a widening of the leadership ranks is intentionality" (p. 140).

Studies of leadership development programs have emerged that focus less on conceptual leadership models and more on characteristics and skills needed to be successful in today's

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community college leadership paradigm. AACC (2016, 2018) identified the types of leadership programs and models sponsored by state and national organizations:

- Master's level degree programs — to prepare community college administrators (Amey, 2006);

- Doctoral CCLP — to prepare both administrators and community college presidents (Mathis & Roueche, 2019, pp. 253–258);

- Grow-your-own (GYO) — defined as institutional-based or state-based programs that focus on developing future college leaders from among the existing ranks of mid-level administrators and faculty (AACC, 2016; Reille & Kezar, 2010);

- Leadership institutes for emerging and current leaders (AACC, 2016);

- Mentored Fellowship and Applied Leadership Model (ACE, 2019);

- Executive Leadership Fellowship (Aspen, 2017);

- Structured Doctoral Cohort Leadership Model (McPhail et al., 2008).

Reviewing such programs, researchers have concluded there is no single model or approach that addresses the complexities of leadership acumen and the experience required to meet the demands of leadership (Eddy & Garza Mitchell, 2017). The authors further concluded "the opportunity to recast what community college leadership looks like is upon us" to develop a cadre of leaders who have "diversity—in thinking, in experience, in worldviews—that allow for a wider consideration of solutions" (Eddy & Mitchell, 2017, p. 139). As community colleges transform themselves to remain relevant to the needs of diverse students and provide local workforce and training needs, an understanding of the complexities of leadership acumen and the experience required to transform and diversify leadership is paramount.

In summary, the role of modern-day community college presidents is constantly

evolving, and the challenges are becoming increasingly complex. Leadership development

programs have evolved from traditional pedagogy models to formal leadership preparation

programs and institutes to equip the next generation of leaders with an understanding of the

complexities necessary to lead the institutions forward. Throughout the literature, many

researchers have called for the need to diversify the presidency, including Boggs (2003), Gillett-

Karam et al. (1991), Troutman (2018), Vaughan and Weisman (1998), and Zamani (2003).

Though researchers have indicated a need to address diversification of the presidency, studies of

the causes of the lack of diversity and representation by minorities remain absent. Review of the

literature on the profile of the American community college presidency reveals an

underrepresentation of minorities and women in that role. Concerns highlighted in the research

support the need for examination into the phenomena by the current study.

Organizational Change and Culture

As institutions of higher education have changed over time to address the educational

needs of their communities, the literature is full of exhortations to change the traditional

architectural structure, processes, leadership, and learning methodologies required to advance

America's community colleges (AACC, 2012; Bailey et al., 2015; Boggs & McPhail, 2016;

O'Banion, 2019). Community colleges are complex environments that are adapting to external

and internal socio-political forces requiring college leadership to be more agile and responsive to

change. Colleges should be agile in sustaining access, success, and inclusion that are not "time-

bound, place-bound, bureaucracy-bound, and role-bound" (O'Banion, 2007, p. 713), nor should

they have limitations placed on their ability to move forward and respond to change (Boggs &

McPhail, 2016). This core shift in traditional thinking also requires an understanding of and

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change in culture: "Facilitating dialogue about the impact of organizational change is a major undertaking for the president and the senior leadership team" (Boggs & McPhail, 2016, p. 144). A dichotomy exists between the demography of institutional leadership, including the board of trustees, and that of the student body which plays an important role in transforming organizational culture and values, including re-evaluating equity-minded policies and practices that reinforce slow diversification of minorities and women in the presidency (ACCT, 2018).

Building diversity in the presidency and leading diverse student bodies to success requires more than leadership preparation and race and gender equality. Steps include "taking a hard look at institutional culture and values and weaving goals for improvement into the strategic plan" (Troutman, 2018, p. 12). Community college cultures can be deep-seated, pervasive, and complex. Organizational culture refers to the values and beliefs within an organization. Edgar Schein (2004) described culture and leadership as dynamic, multi-faceted and "two sides of the same coin in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organizations. Once cultures exist they determine the criteria for leadership and thus determine who will or will not be a leader" (p. 22). According to Schein, the concept of culture and its relationship to leadership within organizations includes several key tenets explained throughout his work that can be categorized into three distinct levels as artifacts, espoused values and basic underlying assumptions. Schein (2004) defines the culture of a group as

> The pattern of basic assumptions, which a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 17)

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Leaders, including presidents and trustees, can shape organizational culture (AACC, 2018). They must provide guidance when new avenues need to be pursued or when changes in the environment require new responses (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 2004).

Institutional fit and the relevance of culture and contextual competence, defined as "the understanding of college culture and the context of what is valued," connect with leaders' experiences (Eddy & Mitchell, 2017, p. 133). Leaders' schema and core leadership constructs inform the cultures and systems of community colleges, which are framed by the leaders' identities, traits, and experiences. Schein argued that "organizational learning, development and planned change cannot be understood without considering culture as the primary source of resistance to change" (Schein, 2004). Values reinforce the culture of organizations and institutions provide the social context for the desired change in actions and behaviors that follow. The AACC 21st Century Commission report highlights a sense of urgency for community colleges to change. In a joint statement of commitment to equity, diversity, and excellence in student success and leadership development (2016), The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) agreed that "the advancement of community colleges is fostered, in part, by applying principles of equity and diversity within their organizations and promoting these values within member colleges. This responsibility can be achieved best when colleges are governed and led by individuals who are attuned" to what is best for the multi-cultural student populations they serve (p. 1). Walter Bumphus, President of AACC, stated,

Community colleges cannot be strong by being the same. Certain values remain constant: opportunity, equity, academic excellence. As the Commission report asserts, if community

colleges are to enact those values in the 21st century, 'virtually everything else must change.'

(as cited in AACC, 2014, p. 3)

The joint statement by the AACC and the ACCT communicates their value proposition on equity and diversity within their organizations. For culture to be transformed, leadership composition and competencies must change. Most educators agree that attention to leadership preparation, training, and competencies is necessary to address the graying of the college presidency and prepare qualified candidates for the leadership pipeline. A consensus of previous research on organizational change and culture suggests it is necessary to pay attention to leadership. An analysis of research reveals that many educators conclude that attention to the leadership pipeline is paramount.

The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways

Discussions of the community college leadership pipeline mention increasing the number of qualified candidates, leadership preparation deficits, and institutional initiatives toward succession planning. While succession planning is a good start toward adding more persons to the pipeline, Selingo et al. (2017) found that "more than half of the presidents in our survey believe that external candidates make better presidents" (p. 19). The study also found that many of the presidents surveyed were apprehensive about the number and quality of candidates in the pool to succeed them (Jaschik & Lederman, 2019). Among the recommendations for attracting the next generation of college presidents, the study recommended;

    (a) targeted development aimed at prospective college presidents;

    (b) alignment of governing boards' goals for presidents for the short- and long-term;

    (c) a better understanding of the role of presidents among search committees;

    (d) a willingness to look beyond traditional backgrounds; and

(e) relationships with various stakeholders, particularly external ones who are gaining

increased influence on campuses.

Although many initiatives are underway to address the leadership pipeline shortage, several studies reveal that these efforts have yet to translate into a population of community college presidents that reflects the United States' gender, racial, and ethnic diversity (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Boggs (2012) appropriately concluded that

Cultivating a diverse leadership corps is difficult for most industries and

institutions, especially given the lingering educational inequities that face our

country. However, the current rapid and profound turnover of personnel at

community colleges presents a unique opportunity to bring greater diversity and

new energy into their leadership. The challenge facing the colleges and their

leaders is to find ways to inspire and prepare a diverse group of candidates with

the qualifications to be successful. (p. 105)

He further describes the significance of the AACC and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Joint Statement on Leadership and Diversity signed in July 2008. The statement derived from a 'National Call to Action' from the AACC Commission on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity, comprising college presidents and "representatives from the AACC's Affiliated Councils that support leadership development programs, many of which receive support from both AACC and ACCT to enhance diversity in leadership on national scale (p. 105).

The review of literature supports the need for examination of the phenomena which the current study proposes to investigate. The need to look at opportunities to attract candidates to the presidency and consider non-traditional feeder routes is also reflected in previous research.

Traditionally, the most common feeder positions for community college leaders have been the academic ranks, senior administration, and faculty. The pathway to the community college presidency is changing, and the path toward it is not so clear. Selingo et al., (2017) concluded that the traditional academic route is no longer the only route and that to meet short-term needs institutions are looking inward to graying presidents and outward to private industry. Research on pathways to the presidency indicates a need to consider alternate pathways.

Studies indicate a critical need to create opportunities for underrepresented groups to enter the presidential candidacy pool and diversify senior leadership roles. Boggs (2003) stated, "[C]ommunity colleges have not been as effective as they need to be in diversifying their leadership by ethnicity" (p. 16). Duree and Ebbers (2012), in a review of studies on the community college presidency, concluded similarly that "even more striking in the survey data is the lack of significant increase in the number of presidents of color" (p. 43). As calls for accountability in higher education and for diversity among presidents persist, the time is ripe to reevaluate the leadership development process and hiring and selection processes. In examining African American women in higher education, Zamani (2003) stated, "[A]lthough gender is salient in shaping identity and defining various facets of women's educational experiences, race also has an influence that often differentiates experiences and opportunities" (p. 7). Diversity, as defined by race and ethnicity, within the ranks of the community college presidency is a topic that continues to warrant attention.

Gatekeepers to the Presidency

Boards of trustees can be gatekeepers to the presidency. The literature supports the pivotal role college boards of trustees and presidential search committees play as gatekeepers to the community college presidency (ACCT, 2018; Aspen, 2017; McPhail et al., 2007). Aspen

(2017) considered boards of trustees, college presidents, and national associations as stakeholders that "must be willing to invest in the college presidency to ensure that a healthy supply of talent can be identified, cultivated, and supported" (p. iii). "Presidents are hired by a board and report to a board" (Selingo et al., 2017, p. 22). The relationship between trustees and presidents is vital to the governance, culture, and sustainability of the college. Their relationship influences "not only who is hired, but how the individuals interpret their positions and roles in leading an institution" (Smith & Miller, 2015, p. 88). Trustee boards exercise considerable responsibility and power to promote learning and the sustainability of community colleges (McPhail et al., 2007; Smith, 2015). Such boards are well-placed to promote diversity and inclusion among the ranks of the senior leadership and presidency (ACCT, 2018; Gagliardi et al., 2017). Vaughan (2004) argued, "To diversify, the presidency will require strong, inspired leadership from current presidents and trustees" yet questioned if they "[a]re willing to deal with the true crisis in community college leadership?" A review of the literature supports the need to understand the role community college trustees play in the pathways to the presidency.

It is equally important that diverse and talented leaders are groomed to ascend to the presidency and that executive search firms and boards of trustees also prioritize diversity (Jaschik & Lederman, 2019; McPhail et al., 2007). The Aspen (2017) report on the future of the college presidency identified three areas of focus for developing tomorrow's college leaders. The areas address the imminent leadership retirements, along with presidential new hire criteria and identification of qualifications that prepare future leaders for the demands facing institutions of higher education in the United States today. The three areas are:

(1) expanding and improving professional development and peer learning opportunities for new and veteran presidents, (2) providing boards with greater and more integrated

assistance to set institutional goals and to hire, support, and work with presidents, and (3)

advancing new and expanded ways to identify and develop a diverse presidential talent

pool. (pp. iii-iv)

Implied in the literature is a need to consider on a structural level the cultural context that

perpetuates a lack of diversity in senior leadership at institutions of higher education. According

to *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce,* a report by the U.S. Department of

Education (2016), "Despite the suggested benefits of diversity, the elementary and secondary

educator workforce is still overwhelmingly homogenous. The number of potential teachers of

color decreases at multiple points in the teacher pipeline" (p. 31). The same is true of higher

education. "The lack of diversity in senior leadership at elite colleges and universities is a

pervasive and growing concern among many scholars and intellectuals" (Gasman et al., 2015, p.

9). A 2018 report titled *Left Out: How Exclusion in California's Colleges and Universities Hurts

our Values, Our Students and Our Economy* sounded a call to action, concluding, "The

demographic composition of faculty and senior leadership in California's public higher

education colleges, universities and systems — including the state's 114 community colleges —

[is] not sufficiently diverse to represent the racial and gender diversity of our students"

(Bustillos, Siqueiros, & Bates, p. 45). The lack of diversity in senior leadership among

community colleges today is less about demographics and more about institutional culture and

how the lack of diversity in leadership is directly correlated to student success. Bustillos et al.

(2018) concluded, "We are confident with the findings that our campuses are not diverse enough,

do not reflect the student bodies served, and that this hinders student success" (p. 55).

The extant body of literature on minority serving presidents/CEO reveals an inadequacy in mechanisms employed to diversify the presidency, and it is that disconnect that this study aims to bring attention to.

The role of the college presidency has grown more complex. It has become increasingly important that boards of trustees understand the complexity and the context in which presidents work "to accomplish public purposes and institutional goals in a rapidly changing environment so they both fulfill their fiduciary duties and also position their presidents and institutions for future success" (Aspen, 2017, p.10). Mellow and Heelan (2008) reported that while very little scholarly activity, research, or analysis existed on community college boards of trustees, there are community college trustee standards created and promoted by national and state organizations. Leaders tend to create cultures of thought that reflect their individual experiences and backgrounds. Community college practitioners and scholars have coined the term 'rogue trustee' to describe trustees who put their own self-interests before the best interest of the community college (O'Banion, 2009). Boards of trustees play a critical role in "selecting, supporting, and positioning their institution and new presidents to thrive" and have a responsibility to create cultures of diversity and inclusiveness that support student success (AACC & ACCT, 2018, p. 3).

Dowd (2007) has called community colleges "both the gateways and gatekeepers of American higher education" that provide "access to groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in and underserved by four-year colleges and universities (p. 2). According to the AACC, community colleges educate over 12 million students, with 51% identifying as a race/ethnicity other than White (2020). A key finding from the 2018 survey by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is that "the demographic backgrounds of trustees,

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particularly with regard to gender and race and ethnicity, are starkly different from the backgrounds of community college students" (p. 1). Community colleges serve a large share of the country's non-White undergraduates: 56% of Native Americans, 52% of Hispanics, 43% of African Americans, and 40% of Asian/Pacific Islanders (AACC, 2018). In contrast, of the over 1,100 trustee participants surveyed, "76 percent were White, 55 percent were males and 49 percent of all trustees are age 65 and over" (ACCT, 2018, p. 2). Given the pivotal role of trustees and governing boards, colleges must reflect diversity in their students, faculty, and leaders (Eddy, 2012). Boards of trustees play a key role in the hiring and governance processes.

Search committees and trustees play a crucial role in bridging the diversity gap of community college presidents that are hired. The characteristics sought by search committees and trustees and the rubric used to evaluate new candidates must change if the candidacy pool is to evolve: "To ensure that community colleges can fully support their students, trustees must recognize this difference and that their former experiences as college students may not mirror the experiences of today's students" (ACCT, 2018, p. 1). Institutional hiring boards, committee search firms, and boards of trustees tend to hire leaders that look like themselves, which traditionally has meant White men. Eddy (2012) contends the small proportion of leaders of color serving in community colleges exists partly because boards of trustees often act as gatekeepers to presidential positions. To start, "trustees can act by promoting diversity on their own boards and advocating for equity minded policies and practices to support their students" (ACCT, 2018, p. 1). Given these findings, further studies into this phenomenon could inform and improve practice.

Women in Community College Leadership

Community college culture continues to be dominated by male-oriented leadership styles, working relationships, and expectations as a result of its long tradition of male leadership (Amey, 2006; Cohen et al., 2014). In *The Community College Presidency at the Millennium,* a review of studies by Vaughan and Weisman (1998), data revealed that women were advancing in greater numbers, yet the data were less encouraging for minorities pursing the presidency. The narrative regarding women college presidents at two- and four-year institutions has mainly focused on increases in representation from 9% in 1986 to 30% in 2016 (Gagliardi et al., 2017). While this assessment indicates advancement, an analytical review of the narrative shows that women of color fall short of their White female counterparts (Gagliardi et al., 2017). Although there has been progress in efforts to advance minorities and women to the American higher education presidency, the numbers do not show significant gains relative to the community college presidency specifically, indicating the presidential pipeline for higher education continues to be slow to change (Aspen, 2017; Gagliardi et al., 2017). Despite the landmark legislations of Brown v. Board of Education and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 establishing opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities and women to pursue top leadership positions in the public and private sectors in the U.S., there persists an underrepresentation of these groups in the community college presidency (Espinosa et al., 2019; Gagliardi et al., 2017).

Historically, women have not held executive leadership positions at institutions of higher education, including community colleges, at the same rate as men (Hartley & Godin 2009; Hill et al., 2016; McNair et al., 2011; Shults, 2001; Wheat & Hill, 2016). Studying the career patterns of college presidents, Hartley and Godin (2009) found that 30% of community college presidents were female and were more likely than men to be hired internally through the academic routes (pp. 1–2). Until the late 1970s, the literature on leadership did not take into account persons of

ethnicity or women (Bass, 2008). Racial and ethnic diversity in higher education is unimpressive where women of color fill a small percentage of the leadership positions. Amey et al. (2002) stated that

> In many of the positions we studied, women were better represented than in 1985, although in some areas women remain severely underrepresented. This would seem positive for increasing leadership diversity, but the advancement of women into presidencies is not yet the same as their male counterparts. (p. 586)

Indeed, "even the most well-qualified and experienced women presidents are impeded by models, values, and expectations based on male norms" (Bornstein, 2008, as cited in Wheat & Hill, 2016, p. 2). The literature supports that "[o]rganizational, cultural, economic, and policy barriers shape both men's and women's choices and opportunities. Women's underrepresentation in leadership has been framed as a deficit in which something is holding women back from becoming leaders (Hill et al., 2016, p. 15). A gender disparity persists in the community college presidency.

Although the number of minority college presidents slowly increased over the last 30 years, women of color remain the most underrepresented in the presidency. The literature regarding female college presidents has focused on the increase in their representation from 9% of all post-secondary institutions in 1986 to 30% in 2016 (Kim & Cook, 2012; Gagliardi et al., 2017). While this assessment rightfully touts significant development in representation over the years, a different picture emerges with regard to women of color and the college presidency.

Despite efforts to close the gender gap in presidential leadership, the higher education leadership pipeline has failed to produce an increase in the representation of female presidents of color at a rate comparable to their female White counterparts (Beckwith et al, 2016; Espinosa et

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al., 2019). Women represent 51% of the population in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2018) and so are not a numerical minority. Categorically, women are not a minority group, but the two are often referred to interchangeably. The status of women as a subordinate group leads many social scientists to study them as a minority group. Women are considered a minority group because, like people of color, they lack equal access to power. The intersection where White women enjoy a privileged status in U.S. society based on their race is referred to as intersectionality (Cho et al., 2013). Intersectionality is a socio-cultural theoretical tenet of Critical Race Theory (CRT) that focuses on the interlocking system of race, gender, and social class (Crenshaw et al., 1995). Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" to describe when race, gender, and social class converge to form dynamic, interlocking systems of privilege and oppression (Cho et al., 2013; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Wheat & Hill, 2016). Female leaders of color navigate multiple borderlines of identity construction based on both their gender and their race or ethnicity. For women of color, their dual role of being both a woman and a minority adds complexity to their role as leaders. Oikelome (2017) posited that intersectional discrimination and systematic exclusion from power may affect the ability of women of color to achieve leadership positions.

Some researchers have examined the complexities of how minority men and women rise among the ranks to achieve the presidency. Hartley and Godin (2009) concluded that presidents of color, aggregated as a category of minority or non-White, represented a modest increase of only 6% from 1986 to 2006. Wheat and Hill (2016) found that "women of color face both gender-and race-normed expectations that give rise to even more complex challenges in achieving top leadership roles and leadership legitimacy" (p. 4). The dearth of minorities in senior leadership roles in community colleges has become a prominent issue. As researchers Hartley and Godin (2009), Cho (2013), Crenshaw (1995), and Wheat and Hill (2016) have

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observed, a glass ceiling contributes to the gender gap of women and women of color in the community college presidency. Duree and Ebbers (2012) asserted that the ongoing development of women in the leadership pipeline "should continue to be a priority" and "opportunities should be provided to advance to the presidency on a pathway free of gender-biased roadblocks" (p. 43).

The Underrepresentation of Minorities in Community Colleges

A review of the literature leads to the conclusion that there is a persistent racial and gender leadership gap contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. The historical prototype of a White male community college president remains dominant (Espinosa et al., 2019). A racial and gender gap persists in the community college presidency (ACCT, 2018) because the presidential pipeline for higher education continues to be slow to change (Aspen, 2017; Gagliardi et al., 2017). A crisis in leadership was identified (Shults, 2001). A response to turn the crisis into opportunity resulted in the development of many leadership development and preparation initiatives (McClenney, 2001). Studies have reported that today's college presidents do not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of their students and communities (ACE, 2013; Pritchard & McChesney, 2018; Vaughan, 2004). Vaughan (2004) concluded that "progress in filling presidential vacancies with minority leaders has been relatively slow" (p. 1).

Yet barriers to diversity, clear pathways, and leakage points from the pipeline to the presidency have received little attention (Scholder et al., 2019). Studies indicate a glass ceiling that prevents women and persons of color from ascending to senior leadership and the presidency (Beckwith et al., 2016; Jackson & Harris, 2007). A major concern has been a lack of senior leadership that reflects the needs, expectations, and talents of the diverse populations that community colleges serve (Amey et al., 2002; Aspen, 2013). Further study of the diversification

of the presidency has long been needed: "The fact that minorities have not achieved a substantial increase in the percentage of community college presidencies requires further study" (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p. 25). The Aspen (2013) report on aligning the community college presidency with student success stated

> a unified vision of who these leaders are and what they do, so that everyone involved in hiring and preparing community college presidents— trustees and leaders of state systems, universities, and associations—can consider the extent to which their assumptions and practices ensure that strong presidents are chosen and effectively trained to lead colleges in ways that meet the aspirations of every student as well as the critical goal of significantly improving student outcomes. (p. 2)

Previous studies show that there is a racial and gender disparity in community college leadership that needs to be explored. Many studies are dedicated to the preparation of and the desired competencies required of community college leaders. Negligible attention has been devoted to understanding the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents.

Theoretical Frameworks: Critical Race Theory and Glass Ceiling

Critical Race Theory

The underrepresentation of minority community college leaders is examined through several theoretical lenses and conceptual frameworks, including CRT and the Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT). This study employs a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework to explore the perceptions of minority community college presidents/CEOs. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) define CRT as "a framework or set of basic insights, perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions" (p. 25). CRT tenets have had several different

interpretations over the past decade, of which five themes are relevant for this research: counter-storytelling, the centrality of experiential knowledge, interest convergence theory, intersectionality, and use of an interdisciplinary perspective (Crenshaw, as cited in Iftikar & Museus, 2018; Hiraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2013; Yosso, 2005). Through the lived experiences and perceptions of sitting or retired minority leaders, the present research explores the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges.

Origin of Critical Race Theory

During the 1970s, a critical legal studies movement gave rise to CRT, which evolved out of the work of several legal scholars who reexamined the persistence of racism in America, the absence of racial reform in traditional civil rights legislation, and the traditions of the legal system (Bell, 1980; Yosso, 2005). Derrick Bell Jr., Alan Freeman, Charles Lawrence, Lani Guinier, Richard Delgado, Mai Matsuda, Patricia Williams, and Kimberle Crenshaw ignited a growing movement that has spread beyond the legal world into areas such as education, sociology, ethnic studies, and women's studies (Hiraldo, 2010; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). CRT challenges dominant ideologies where "traditional paradigms act as a camouflage for the self-interest, power, and privilege of dominant groups in U.S. society" (Yosso, 2005, p. 73). There is also a commitment to social justice, which seeks as its primary purpose the elimination of "isms" in society such as racism, classism, and sexism, as well as "empowerment of people of color and other subordinated groups" (Yosso, 2005, p. 74).

CRT's scholarship is not rooted in abstract ideas or legal rules but is marked by specific themes referred to as tenets. Bell's scholarship of CRT in legal studies has expanded into a comprehensive analytical framework to assess inequities in educational theory, research, and

practice (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Major components of CRT's originating legal tenets include:

(a) racism as ordinary: "colorblindness" and promoting meritocracy of the status

quo;

(b) interest convergence: support of social justice when the interests of Whites

converge with those of non-Whites (Bell, 1980);

(c) the social construction of race: the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Dred Scott

v. Sandford declaring Negroes as non-citizens (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013);

(d) the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity, class, and sexuality inequality; and

(e) storytelling as counter-narratives to illustrate and underscore broad legal

principles regarding race and racial/social justice. (Ladson-Billings, 2013)

Scholars have used CRT as a foundation for legal scholarship, ethnic studies, and K–20

education as follows:

(a) Bell's critiques reported in the field of law, particularly the landmark civil rights case

Brown v. Board of Education;

(b) Ladson-Billings and Tate's work toward a critical race theory of K–12 education;

(c) women's studies and the intersectionality of overlapping systems that oppress women

of color (Crenshaw, 1995; Hiraldo, 2010);

(d) counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for providing a counter-narrative for

minority students in education (Delgado-Bernal, 2002);

(e) race-gendered epistemology as applied to specific ethnic groups (Delgado-Bernal,

2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002); and

(f) sub-genre themes as applied to specific ethnic groups: AsianCrit (Iftikar & Museus, 2018), Latina/o CRT (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), and Tribal CRT (Calderón, 2019). In summary, CRT frames how dominant structures maintain racial inequalities and oppression in various sociopolitical contexts (Bell, 1980; Ladson-Billings, 2013). Researchers describe how CRT is a widely applied framework.

Critical Race Theory in Education

Initially, CRT in education was applied as an analytical framework to assess different forms of social inequity in education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), and it has since been expanded to analyze educational research and practice (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) have argued that CRT is an evolving methodological, conceptual, and theoretical construct that attempts to disrupt racism and dominant racial paradigms that exist in the American educational system. Ledesma and Calderón (2015) divided CRT into K–12 education and higher education. In the area of K–12 education, the authors identified these themes: (a) curriculum and pedagogy, (b) teaching and learning, (c) schooling, and (d) policy/finance and community engagement. In higher education, they identified the following themes: (a) colorblindness, (b) selective admissions policy, and (c) campus racial climate (p. 207). Ladson-Billings (1998) posited that policies and school finance highlight inequity and racism and that this inequality is a direct function of the institutionalized racism that CRT attempts to address. Although the U.S. has made advances toward abolishing legalized discrimination, the legacy of institutionalized racism in the form of systems, structures, processes, and procedures that disadvantage and disenfranchise persons of color, particularly African Americans, has regressed as indicated by the recent civil and social unrest instigated from the highest office of leadership in the country as occupied by a greying White male.

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) argued that CRT for education is different from other frameworks because it simultaneously attempts to foreground race and racism in the research as well as challenge the traditional paradigms, methods, texts, and separate discourse on race, gender, and class by showing how these social constructs intersect to impact communities of color. Previous research shows there are multiple uses for CRT in education so that it lends itself as an appropriate theoretical framework for this study.

Critical Race Theory in Pedagogy

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) conducted seminal work in developing a framework for examining curricula through the lens of CRT as an approach to understanding curricular structures, processes, and discourses. CRT has also been useful in establishing pedagogical practices that Lynn (2004) defined as "an analysis of racial, ethnic, and gender subordination in education that relies mostly upon the perceptions, experiences and counterhegemonic practices of educators of color" (as cited in Ledesma & Calderón, 2015, p. 154). Other authors used CRT to explain how interest convergence shapes the field of curricula. Ledesma and Calderón (2015) concluded that the purpose of Critical Race Pedagogy (CRP) is to "engage experiential knowledge in a critical manner," which cannot occur "without using a pedagogical framing of the racialized contexts that give rise to the experience" (p. 209). Other scholars have also contributed to the field of Critical Race Pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lynn, 2004).

Yosso's (2002) framework for creating a Critical Race Curriculum (CRC) recommended the following imperatives:

1. Acknowledge the central and intersecting roles of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of subordination in maintaining inequality in curricular structures, processes, and discourses.

2. Challenge dominant social and cultural assumptions regarding culture and intelligence,

language and capability, and objectivity and meritocracy.

3. Direct the formal curriculum toward goals of social justice and the hidden curriculum

toward Freirean goals of critical consciousness.

4. Develop counter-discourses through storytelling, narratives, chronicles, family

histories, scenarios, biographies, and parables that draw on the lived experiences students

of color bring to the classroom.

5. Use interdisciplinary methods of historical and contemporary analysis to articulate the

links between educational and societal inequality. (p. 98)

Culturally responsive teaching and learning through the lens of CRT has emerged as a

framework for Critical Race Pedagogy that has been widely applied to train teachers, close the

achievement gap of minority students in K–12 and higher education, and change institutional

culture (McPhail et al., 2001; McPhail & Costner, 2004; Portland, 2019). Critical Race Pedagogy

provides leaders and educators a culturally relevant mechanism to transform current practices in

curricula, pedagogy, teaching, and learning. McPhail (2001) in *Culture, Style and Cognition:*

Expanding the Boundaries of the Learning Paradigm for African American Learners in the

Community College concluded, "culturally mediated education" enriches the conceptual basis of

the learning, or student-centered, paradigm" as an alternative to the teacher/content-centered,

paradigm (p. 1). In *Seven Principles for Training a Culturally Responsive Faculty*, McPhail and

Costner (2004) stated, "[C]ulturally responsive professional development principles promote the

inclusion of culture into faculty's pedagogical methods and curriculum" (p. 1). Through the lens

of CRT, educators instruct students to examine interest convergence within the curriculum

teacher/content-centered, paradigm by creating environments that include the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that learners bring to the educational setting (Portland, 2019).

Critical Race Theory's Emphasis on Structural Paradigms

Structural forms of racial inequality persist within organizations including American higher education. According to Ivery (2013), Chancellor of the largest urban community college district in Michigan, although legalized discrimination has been largely eliminated and significant progress has been made in achieving social equity, "the legacy of systematic repression is not so easily or quickly exorcised from culture, behavior and attitudes" (p. 24). CRT frameworks have been applied to examining structural paradigms. Figure 2.1 depicts the intersections of influence into CRT in higher education. The direction of the arrows shows the interplay between educational research, multicultural education curriculum, and culturally relevant pedagogy, along with the interplay of the civil rights movement and critical legal studies that informed the development of Critical Race Theory as a whole (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Figure 2-1. *Intersections of Critical Race Theory in Education*
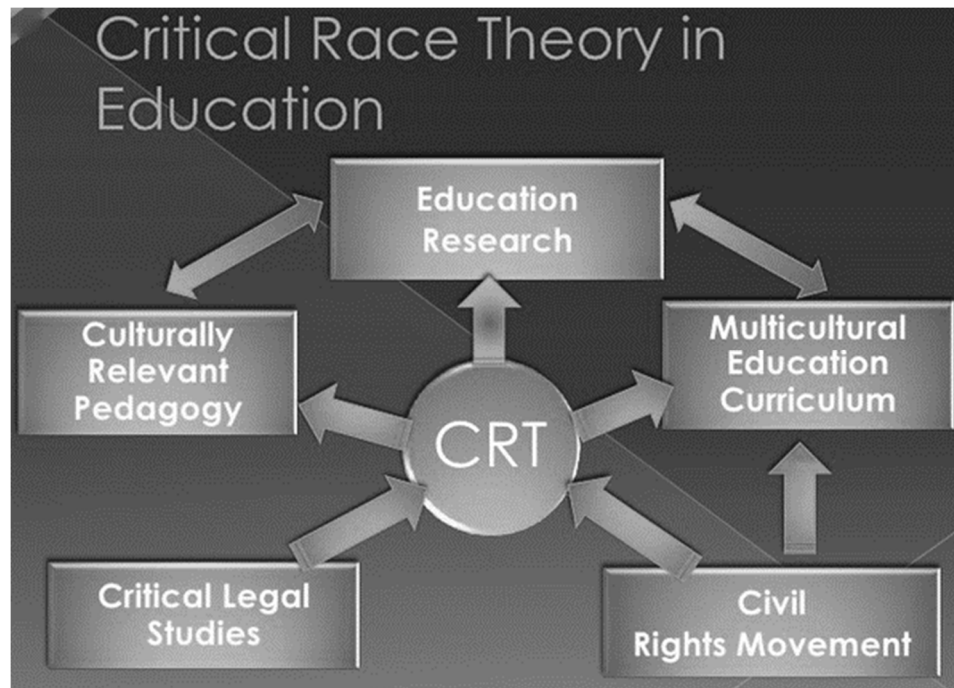
Note: This figure depicts the intersections of CRT's influence in education beginning with critical legal studies work on legislation impacting the civil rights movement, multicultural educational and culturally relevant pedagogy and expansion to other forms of education research.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) provided three central premises of CRT when examining the dynamics of race and power structures in society and organizations:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in the U.S.;

2. U.S. society is based on property rights, rather than human rights;

3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can understand social and consequently school inequity. (p. 48)

Inequity across multiple disciplines, including education, can be understood through the lens of race. Scholars often apply CRT to explaining racial discrimination in the formalized structure of the American educational system. Hiraldo (2010) and Solórzano and Yosso (2002) define five

primary components of CRT relevant to higher education. For the purposes of this research, the following tenets of CRT are considered relevant:

1. *Counter-storytelling*: personal, composite stories or narratives of persons of color (Delgado-Bernal, 2002) in analyzing higher education's climate; "provides a voice to tell their narratives involving marginalized experiences" (Hiraldo, 2010).

2. *The Centrality of Experiential Knowledge*: CRT acknowledges and legitimizes the appropriateness of counter-stories and lived experiences of people of color in researching and analyzing racial subordination and society's role in the perpetuation of said subordination, either by presumption of neutrality or denial of the assumed privileges of majoritarian culture (Delgado-Bernal, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

3. *Interest Convergence Theory*: racism is interconnected and intersects with other forms of discrimination and systematic subordination, including those based on gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, culture, or any other status protected by law (Bell, 1980; Hiraldo, 2010).

4. *Intersectionality*: understanding how aspects of one's social and political identities (e.g., gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, etc.) intersect to create unique modes of discrimination (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015).

5. *The Interdisciplinary Perspective*: CRT "extends beyond disciplinary boundaries to analyze race and racism both within historical and contemporary contexts drawing on scholarship from ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, law, psychology, film, theatre and other fields" (Yosso, 2005, p. 74).

Some institutions have attempted to support the work of CRT at the institutional level. According to Portland Community College's mission and value statement on equity and

inclusion, since 2014 the college has adopted "a strategic plan that encourages the use of CRT as part of our business practice and policy-making" (Portland CC, 2019). Portland's model embeds the use of CRT in (a) strategic planning and action, (b) infrastructure, (c) environments, (d) curriculum, (e) pedagogy, (f) financing, and (g) policies to reduce the promotion of racism and inequalities (Portland, 2019). By employing a vision strategy through the lens of CRT, institutions "[seek] to practice racially conscious systems of analysis, including CRT, to examine and dismantle systems of inequality at the college" (Portland CC, 2019).

Critical Race Theory Applied to Gender and Ethnic Subgenres

Race is a social construction. A *New York Times* article by Tavernise (2018), "Why the Announcements of a Looming White Minority Makes Demographers Nervous," quoted the chief statistician for the U.S. from 1992–2017 in categorizing race as "a social category that shifts with changes in culture, immigration, and ideas about genetics" (p. 1). The social construction of race has been used as a political tool to subjugate disenfranchised persons of color, including women of color. Ladson-Billings (2013) argued persuasively that Whites, particularly White women, benefit from affirmative action through civil rights policies initially implemented to offer equal opportunity to persons of color. Various social movements, including the women's rights movement when aligned with the civil rights movement, serve as examples of CRT's Interest Convergence.

CRT proponents argue that "civil rights activists must look for ways to align the interests of the dominant group with those of racially oppressed and marginalized groups" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 38). A policy example of interest convergence that shifted social categories to benefit other groups, thereby reducing the impact on the intended groups, is the series of revisions to U.S. affirmative action policies. President John F. Kennedy's 1961 equal opportunity

Executive Order 10925 required affirmative action when approving governmental contracts to ensure "applicants are employed, and employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 38). Later, President Lyndon Johnson amended the order to include sex and gender as protected categories. According to Ladson-Billings (2013), "That one move changed affirmative action from a racial justice policy to an interest convergence whose major beneficiaries are White women—and by extension other Whites—men, women, and children" (p. 38). The predominance of race as a social construction and its requisite convergence on policy has impacted all facets of society, industries, institutions and culture.

CRT's roots are embedded in legal studies. Originally employing a Black and White binary, it has expanded to include other socially marginalized ethnic groups. As CRT expanded to include other fields of study such as education, it has also broadened to capture the distinct racial identities and experiences of these groups: (a) Asian Americans (AsianCrit), (b) Latina/os (LatCrit), (c) Native Americans (TribalCrit), and (d) women (FemCrit). Scholars consider each to have a strong relationship with the original CRT theory.

Building on Asian critical studies as well as CRT scholarship, Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit) consists of seven interrelated tenets that seek to understand specific racialized realities. The first four tenets integrate CRT scholarship with knowledge of Asian American racial realities, with the latter three reiterations of original CRT tenets critical in the examination of Asian American issues and experiences:

(1) *Asianization* - refers to the reality that racism is a pervasive aspect of American society and highlights ways in which racialization operates to re-shape laws and policies that affect Asian Americans and influence their identities and experiences; that society

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racializes Asian Americans in distinct ways and is a common mechanism through
which society racially oppresses Asian Americans (Museus, 2014). One example of
racial construction of Asianization is the 'model minority stereotype' which has
influenced societal perspectives and decisions on national policies and programs.

(2) *Transnational context* - acknowledges the importance of analyzing race and racism of
Asian Americans using interdisciplinary methods that place them both in a historical
and contemporary context; that conditions of Asian American people and communities
are informed and shaped by both national and transnational contexts, including political
and social processes "such as imperialism, the emergence of global economies,
international war and migration" (as cited by Takaki, 1998, in An, 2016, p. 251).

(3) *(Re)constructive history* - seeks to transcend invisibility and silence to create a
collective historical Asian American narrative and "reanalyze existing histories to
incorporate voices and contributions of Asian Americans" that are critical to developing
a pan-ethnic identity and consciousness (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 940).

(4) *Strategic (anti)essentialism* – encompasses the notion that "race is a socially
constructed phenomenon that can be shaped and reshaped by economic, political and
social forces;" that these forces impact the way in which Asian Americans are
racialized and categorized in society; and how Asian Americans engage in actions that
affect these processes. (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 940).

(5) *Intersectionality* – acknowledges the intersection of systems of oppression and
exploitation to mutually shape the conditions in which Asian Americans exist.

(6) *Story, Theory and Praxis* – asserts the counter-stories and experiential knowledge of
Asian Americans serves to challenge dominant epistemological perspectives of racial

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privilege towards informing positive transformative purposes of theory and practice (Museus, 2014, p.27).

(7) *Commitment to Social Justice* – that advocates eliminating sexism, heterosexism, capitalist exploitation and other forms of oppression and racism (Iftikar & Museus, 2018).

Latina/o Critical Race Theory (LatCrit/o) seeks to "examine experiences unique to the Latina/o community" (Pérez Huber, 2010, p. 77). Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) has developed "a framework to understand the complex experiences of Indigenous peoples in education" (*Calderón,* 2019). Feminist Critical Race Theory (FemCrit) stems from the work of Crenshaw (1989) on feminist theory, which seeks to analyze the intersection of race, sex and biases around the social construction of women of color, women's rights and patriarchal perspectives of law. Scholars consider each subset to have a strong relationship with the original CRT. The proliferation of CRT in other fields of study including education and other socially marginalized ethnic groups makes it a relevant framework for this study.

Together CRT, expanded Latina/oCrit, AsianCrit, TribalCrit, and Glass Ceiling Theory have evolved into relevant theoretical frameworks to understand the limited representation of minorities in higher education leadership. According to Iftikar and Museus (2018), the AsianCrit "framework leverages both the strengths of critical race theory and in-depth knowledge about Asian Americans' specific racial realities and racialized experiences" (p. 945). LatCrit "examines experiences unique to the Latina/o community (Perez-Huber, 2010, p. 77), whereas TribalCrit was developed as "a framework to understand the complex experiences of Indigenous peoples in education" (Calderón, 2019, p. 1). Collectively, CRT expands the existing constrained forms of scholarship, literature, and discussions about race and racism. CRT as a framework

provides an avenue for participant counter-storytelling. One example of a question using the CRT framework is, "How do community college presidents of color describe their ascension to the presidency?"

Applied Critical Leadership and CRT Theory

Applied Critical Leadership (ACL) in education is a model of culturally responsive leadership stemming from CRT, critical pedagogy, and transformational leadership practices to address academic, cultural and socio-economic gaps and roadblocks of learners (Santamaría & Jean-Marie, 2014). ACL borrows from the diverse traditions of CRT in law, sociology, ethnic studies, and other fields to formulate a critical analysis of race and racism as a social, political, and economic system of advantages and disadvantages accorded to social groups based on their skin color and status in a clearly defined racial hierarchy. Educational leaders who propose ACL as a model in education "consider the social context of their educational communities and empower individual members of these communities based on the educational leaders' identities (i.e., subjectivity, biases, assumptions, race, class, gender, and traditions) as perceived through a CRT lens" (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2015, p. 6). An empirical study of strengths-based leadership practices for social justice and equity using an ACL framework revealed a need for new approaches for educational leadership, finding "leaders from underserved groups might lead differently to the hegemonic mainstream – share a common moral imperative of raising student achievement – and challenge the educational system by abating the alarming disparities in opportunities and educational outcomes among all students" (Jayavant, 2016, p. 21). An understanding of applied critical leadership models of education stemming from CRT is relevant to understanding the social context of race and racism as a social, political and economic system.

Figure 2.2 describes elements of the ACL model of culturally responsive leadership in education developed by Santamaría (2014).

Figure 2-2. *Applied Critical Leadership in Education Framework*

Transformational Leadership (Principles)
- Individualized Consideration
- Intellectual Stimulation
- Inspirational Motivation
- Idealized Influence
- Principle Centered

Critical Race Pedagogy (Practice)
- an analysis of racial, ethnic, and gender subordination as a social, political and economic system.
- Advantages and disadvantages accorded to social groups based on skin color and status in a clearly defined hierarchy.

Critical Race Theory (Lens)
- A theoretical framework in the social sciences that uses critical theory to examine society and culture as they relate to categorizations of race, law, and power.

Applied Critical Leadership Model in Education
- Transformational Leadership Principles and Critical Race Pedagogical practices through a Critical Race Lens.

Note: This figure describes influencers of the ACL framework based on the work of Santamaría (2014) and the intersection of studies that informed it, including Critical Race Theory, Critical Race Pedagogy and Transformational Leadership principles.

The application of CRT as a theoretical framework for examining the perceptions and experiences of minority community college presidents is appropriate to this study. Scholars have attempted to explain this phenomenon and social inequity through several lenses, including CRT, social equity, and glass ceiling theory. To date, no single factor can conclusively account for the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. What scholars and activists alike agree upon is the need for more diversity among the senior executive ranks of academia, including the college presidency, if higher education institutions are to achieve a more

equitable, culturally inclusive, and diverse learning environment that is representative of the communities they serve.

Glass Ceiling Theory

Another theory informing the present study is the Glass Ceiling Theory, a framework researchers have used to examine the pathways of minority groups and leaders. A report by The U.S. Department of Labor on the glass ceiling initiative (1995) defined the term 'glass ceiling' as "the artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals, including those who are non-White, from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions" (p. 1). Through the Civil Rights Act of 1991, The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission was formed with a mandate to identify the glass ceiling barriers that have blocked the advancement of minorities and women, as well as the successful practices and policies that have led to the advancement of minority men and women into decision-making positions in the private sector (U. S. Department of Labor, 1995). The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission's report (1995) was a comprehensive, analytical study "on barriers, opportunities, policies, perceptions, and practices as they affect five target groups that historically have been underrepresented in private sector top-level management—women of all races and ethnicities, and African American, American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic American men" (p.3). Conclusions from the Commission's report were groundbreaking in that they included ethnic groups' perceptions of being labeled a minority, affirmed a glass ceiling that is not gender-specific to women only but includes women and men of color, and contributed stereotypes, prejudice and bias as factors to the glass ceiling. In explaining the need to examine the issue of a glass ceiling, the Chair of the Commission offered, "There seemed to be an invisible—but impenetrable—barrier between women and the executive suite, preventing them

from reaching the highest levels of the business world regardless of their accomplishments and merits" (p. iii). Studies on glass ceiling theory are relevant to understanding the underrepresentation of minorities among the community college presidency.

The Commission report included research findings on the perception of African American, Asian and Pacific Islander American and Latino/Hispanic American participants of a glass ceiling, citing stereotypes, prejudice and bias as contributing factors to the barriers to advancement. The report noted each ethnic group ascribed negative connotations when associated with the word minority. African American men held a strong resentment to being labeled as a minority: "They perceived it as a label used to imply inferiority" (p. 69). Like the African Americans, none of the participating Asian and Pacific Islander American men in the study identified as minority, considering the term pejorative and meaning "a lack of acceptance or a noticeably different appearance" (p. 103). Hispanic men "considered the term 'minority' manipulative and part of a deliberate attempt to slow them down or relegate them to a lower position" (p. 122). Recognizing racism as a social construct, the word minority, used to categorize and often subjugate ethnic groups, is an outdated and inaccurate term of reference.

The final report by the Commission concluded substantially that a glass ceiling exists for ethnic groups and is a barrier to advancement to senior level roles. In reporting on participants' perceptions, African American women "tend to feel they are laboring under the double burden of racism and sexism" (p. 67). African American men used the metaphor of an impenetrable wall to explain the ceiling that exists, perceiving "this barrier as virtually impenetrable for most Black men" (p. 69). The Asian and Pacific Islander participants agree there is a glass ceiling, but "they consider themselves more assimilated and accepted," with older members hopeful toward the future and younger participants expressing "greater frustration at their inability to crack the glass

ceiling" (p. 103). Both male and women Hispanic participants believe there are barriers, characterizing the glass ceiling as 'opaque' and believing it is "keeping them from moving beyond a certain level and they feel that they are always being watched and judged" (p. 122). Based on these findings, the Commission concluded a glass ceiling exists for persons of color.

Finally, the Commission concluded stereotypes contribute as a barrier toward ascending to senior level leadership roles for ethnic groups. The Commission wrote, "Research papers presented to the Glass Ceiling Commission identified stereotypes of African Americans" along with prejudice and bias as barriers to job advancement the commission referred to as 'the concrete wall' (p. 71). Stereotypes perceived African American men as "lazy/ undisciplined/ always late/ fail to pay their taxes/ unqualified but protected by affirmative action/ violent/ confrontational/ emotional/ hostile/ aggressive/ unpredictable/ unable to handle stressful situations/ threatening/ demanding/ militant/ loud/ and less intelligent than other racial or ethnic groups" (p. 71). Stereotypes for African American women perceived them as "incompetent/ educationally deficient/ aggressive/ militant/ hostile/ lazy/ sly/ and untrustworthy," leading the commission to recommend, "Stereotypes must be addressed because they imply factual bases for glass ceiling barriers" (p. 71). Asian and Pacific Islander participants of the study "perceive themselves as smarter and harder working than their white counterparts" and confident they outperform them (p. 103). The commission further concluded Asian and Pacific Islander American CEOs, in "interviews consistently identified stereotypes, along with prejudice and bias, as a major barrier to job advancement" (p. 104). Research in the report on Latino/Hispanic women, drawn from 1993 and 1994 Aspen Institute Seminars, found "being both a woman and a Hispanic in Corporate America meant carrying a double burden because of resistance to them first as Hispanics and then as women" (p. 121). Stereotypes reported to the commission on

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Hispanic males portrayed them as "chauvinist/ domineering/ arrogant/ prone to violence/ unwilling to learn English/ not patriotic toward the U.S. / and heavy drinkers and drug users who don't want to work" (p. 124). Hispanic women fared equally as poorly, being "seen as strong and stoic/ self-sacrificing/ tied to family and community/ under the domination of husbands and fathers/ passive/ overly emotional and educationally deficient" (p. 124). Finally, the Commission included evidence that African Americans, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, Hispanic Americans, and American Indians presented additional stereotypes affecting women of color, with these women laboring "under a double burden of race or ethnicity and gender" (p. 148). The Glass Ceiling framework is appropriate to understand race and racism contributions to racial and gender underrepresentation in the community college presidency.

The glass ceiling is a long-standing metaphor for the intangible systemic barriers that prevent women from obtaining senior-level positions across all sectors and industries, including the academy. Cotter (2001) and researchers studied the notion of a glass ceiling effect in leadership progression for women and African Americans to consider the existence of racial or gender disadvantages distinguishable from other types of inequality that affirm a glass ceiling exists. The researchers defined four specific criteria that must be met to conclude a glass ceiling exists; this later evolved into the Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT). They defined the following criteria:

    (1) a gender or racial difference that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee;

    (2) a gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome;

    (3) a gender or racial inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels, not merely

the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels; and

(4) a gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career. (pp. 656-661)

The researchers concluded a glass ceiling effect existed for women, particularly women of color, but the correlation among African American men was not as prominent. Weaknesses identified in the study include considerations for causal factors explaining the inequalities, degree preparation, and a failure to consider other minority populations that may be affected by the glass ceiling.

Subsequent studies on the glass ceiling attempted to understand causes and challenges related to race, gender and ascension in leadership roles including higher education (O'Callaghan, 2016; Davis & Maldonado, 2015). A study by Davis and Maldonado (2015) titled *Shattering the glass ceiling: the leadership development of African American women in higher education* considered the intersectionality of race, gender and social class on women leaders' development in the academy. The researchers noted, "With the current pipeline already lacking female leaders, the issues of supply and demand have long-term effects for women breaking through the glass ceiling" and the dualistic roles of being both a women and minority create role incongruity (Davis & Maldonado, 2015, p. 50). According to O'Callaghan (2016), research has suggested the following causes of a glass ceiling for men and women:

(a) overt gender discrimination in hiring and promotion processes;

(b) the influence of gender on the decision makers in hiring and promotion processes;

(c) the lack of qualified women for positions of leadership, which conjures the leaky pipeline analogy; and

(d) gendered leadership styles that poorly serve women (p. 33).

Various causes were identified as contributing to a glass ceiling for men and women of color.

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A review of literature affirms the existence of a glass ceiling that impacts women and men of color in pursuit of leadership positions in higher education (Davis et al., 2015; Johns, 2013). A report by the American Council on Education (2017) titled *Pipelines, Pathways and Institutional Leadership: An Update on the Status of Women in Higher Education* collected and reported on data revealing patterns of bias for women in higher education leadership positions including faculty, deans, chief academic officers and presidents. The study found that perpetuating a bias by individuals, organizations and policies regarding "the idea that there are too few women qualified (e.g., degree holding) in leadership positions" is a pipeline myth and that "the pipeline is preparing women at a greater rate than men" (p. 2). Data in the study concluded that although women across all degree-granting postsecondary institutions hold a greater share of entry-level service and teaching-only positions than their male counterparts, women are not ascending to leadership roles as progressively, with the trend exacerbated for women of color (p. 3). Researchers found that although women have higher education attainment levels than men, "women of color outnumbered men of color in lower-ranking faculty positions, but men of color held full professor positions more often than women of color" (p. 5). The study also presented data on chief academic officers (CAO), which is often a feeder to the pipeline to the presidency. Data on CAOs was noted of particular interest in benefitting associations of governing boards of universities and colleges, given "the important role of these bodies, which determine the strategic direction of higher education institutions and have oversight in selecting, hiring and appointing key academic leaders" (p. 10). Understanding the pipeline and pathways to the presidency by minority community college presidents will add to the literature and inform practice.

An article by Johns (2013) titled *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Structural, Cultural and Organizational Barriers Preventing Women from Achieving Senior and Executive Positions*, in exploring reasons for the gender gap between women and senior leadership positions, reported several causes from the literature, including societal barriers associated with opportunity and attainment, prejudice and bias, and cultural, gender and color-based differences. The same study recommended, "[E]ducational institutions must create and implement leadership development programs that include development issues concerning gender diversity and transformational leadership in order to change preconceived ideas, bias, and assumptions about women's leadership abilities" (p. 8). Glass ceiling theory suggests that when all things are equal, a ceiling exists based on social and cultural barriers pertaining to organizational norms and perceptions surrounding gender congruity and stereotypes that impede progression in leadership ranks. The Glass Ceiling Theory is an appropriate framework to consider for this study, which can inform "search, promotion and tenure committees, and governing boards can use this information and related research to inform the hiring and promotion of faculty and administrators in an effort to chip away at the glass ceiling" (Johnson, 2017, p. 14). The theory has been applied in understanding the shortage of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Latinos in leadership levels within higher education. An example of a question that utilizes both CRT and the glass ceiling theory is "How do presidents describe factors affecting their ascension to the presidency?" Both CRT and GCT inform this question, which is at the core of the present study.

Additional Themes Added Post-Research

Stereotype of a Model Minority

Model Minority stereotypes were established as a geo-political tool to sustain racial oppression and inequality after World War II and the Civil Rights movement, setting Asian

American and African American ethnic groups against one another to portray one as more favorable (Museus & Kiang, 2009; Wu, 2013). According to Museus and Kiang (2009), "[t]he model minority stereotype suggests that Asian Americans are universally successful and do not face racial challenges" (p. 937). The racist socially constructed stereotype reinforces racism, masks inequities within the Asian American communities, falsely suggests they are impervious to racial challenges, fuels resentment and serves as a divide among other ethnic groups. Many argue that mainstream media's caricature of Asian Americans as an invisible, monolithic, apolitical, hard-working, quiet, and super-intelligent group postulated a red herring fallacy in an attempt to distract persons from the heinous nature of institutionalized racism and to absolve society from addressing its complexities (Chow, 2017; Wu, 2013). The model minority stereotype is an example of social construct's design to subjugate persons of color. Similar stereotypes further exploit and create an illegitimate divide that delegitimizes the struggles of African Americans toward societal change in ending systemic racism, as exhibited in today's current Black Lives Matter movement, the largest social protest movement against racism in U.S. history (Buchanan et al., 2020). Movements reshaping contemporary views of systemic racism, stereotypes and bias are now drawing public support from the corporate sector, e.g., NASCAR and the NFL for Black Lives Matter, and there is required implicit bias training for school and state employees in Michigan, Ohio, and Connecticut. Stereotypes of a model minority for Asian Americans contribute to racist views in the workplace and hiring.

Historian Ellen Wu (2020) recently noted that the concept of the model minority "continues to shape the way Americans address racism, our understanding of what it means to be a citizen. And it's a damaging narrative that many scholars, historians and Asian Americans say upholds White supremacy" (Wu, 2020). Other studies have examined the effect of the

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perpetuation of the minority model myth on students in secondary and higher education. The stereotype perpetuates the perception of universal success among Asian Americans placing pressures to achieve academic and occupational success. According to Museus and Kiang (2009), "[t]he model minority myth can also function to pit Asian Americans against other communities of color," creating a false narrative that in reality Asian Americans are typically invisible and voiceless in US history (p. 944).

According to Assalone and Fann (2017), "the model myth's racist underpinnings and the societal pressures to perform at a higher standard academically can have detrimental consequences on the academic success of Asian American community college students as well as others who do not conform to the stereotype" (p. 423). The model minority stereotype is used to minimize the role racism plays in the persistent everyday struggles of racial/ethnic minority groups, including the African American, Asian American Pacific-Islander, and Latino/Hispanic CEOs under investigation.

Tokenism

Tokenism has been defined as the policy or "practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort," as to desegregate, to be inclusive of, or to give advantage to satisfy members of minority groups in order to present the appearance of racial and gender equality and fair treatment for fear of social, political, or legal reprisal (Oxford English Dictionary, 2020). According to the Merriam Webster online dictionary, the word 'token' was popularly used during the 1960s, with protracted origins steeped in American society and commonly referenced by prominent civil rights activists at the rise of the civil rights era. The reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. noted,

Those who argue in favor of tokenism point out that we must begin somewhere; that it is unwise to spurn any breakthrough, no matter how limited . . . There is a critical distinction, however, between a modest start and tokenism. The tokenism Negroes condemn is recognizable because it is an end in itself. Its purpose is not to begin a process, but instead to end the process of protest and pressure. It is a hypocritical gesture, not a constructive first step. (1964, p. 17)

Conversely, Malcolm X (1963) decried early desegregation victories of tokenism as hypocrisy, declaring that "integration in America is hypocrisy in the rawest form. One little student in the University of Mississippi, a handful of students in Little Rock, Arkansas, a couple of students going to school in Georgia is hypocrisy and make your image worse; you don't make it better" (p. 1)).

The concept of tokenism also served as the cornerstone of civil rights legislation in U.S. desegregation policies such as Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act that required employers to promote and hire based on a person's ability vs. the use of standardized aptitude or other arbitrary test practices that promoted exclusion. In 1971, the NAACP Legal Defense successfully argued *Griggs v. Duke Power* before the U.S. Supreme Court. The case argued on behalf of African American employees at a power-generating facility in North Carolina who alleged discriminatory employment practices as a result of unequal and inferior segregated education available to blacks in the state (NAACP, 2018). A unanimous decision by the high court ruled the actions of the Duke Power Company in placing artificial and unnecessary requirements for upward mobility had a disparate impact on black employees. The landmark decision was the cornerstone of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and subsequent amendments including Title VI, prohibiting "discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and

activities receiving federal financial assistance," Title VII, prohibiting employment "discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin," and Title IX, prohibiting "discrimination on the basis of sex in employment and employment practices in education programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2020). What followed were disparate impact judicial legal theories allowing challenges to employment or educational practices that are non-discriminatory on the surface but have a disproportionately negative effect on members of legally protected minority groups. Discrimination on the basic of ethnicity and gender is systemic and takes many forms.

Social scientist and Harvard Business School Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter's seminal work *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977) contributed to the theory of Tokenism. The study documented how corporate culture discriminates against token employees and affects organizational culture for minority groups contributing to their heightened visibility, isolation, and limited opportunities for advancement. Kanter (1977) referenced token employees as part of a socially skewed group of minorities being less than 15% of the total employee population of the workplace, highly visible among staff, and subject to greater pressure to perform their work at higher production standards of quality, volume, and behavior in an expected stereotypical manner. Antipathetic consequences of inequality and blocked opportunities for minorities gave way to affirmative action policy change.

Tokenism in its many forms has a protracted history of overt and covert systemic racism embedded in institutional and educational policies that continue to reinforce bias in hiring practices. A review of the literature concludes there is a racial and gender leadership gap contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Table 2-1

reflects each of the topics in the Literature review and the corresponding research question the topic aligns with.

Table 2-1: Literature Review Topics Alignment with Research Questions

Topics in the Literature Review	Research Question Aligned
Historical Overview of American Community Colleges	RQ1
Overview of Milestones and Key Legislation for Community Colleges	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Generations of Community College Development	RQ2
Generations of Community College Leadership Styles	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Overview of Leadership Theories	RQ3
Framework for Community College Leadership	RQ3
- Profile of Today's Community College Leadership	RQ1
- A Graying Presidency	RQ1
Community College Leadership Preparation	RQ2 & RQ3
- Organizational Change and Culture	RQ2 & RQ3
- The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways	RQ2 & RQ3
Gatekeepers to the Presidency	RQ1 & RQ2
Women in Community College Leadership	RQ1
The Underrepresentation of Minorities in Community Colleges	RQ1
Theoretical Frameworks: Critical Race Theory	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory in Education	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory in Pedagogy	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory's Emphasis on Structural Paradigms	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory Applied to Gender and Ethnic Subgenres (AsianCrit and LatCrit/o)	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Theoretical Frameworks: Glass Ceiling Theory	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Additional Themes Added Post-Research	
- Stereotype of a Model Minority	RQ2
- Tokenism	RQ2

Summary – Chapter 2

This chapter reviewed and summarized the relevant literature on the underrepresentation of minority presidents/CEOs in community colleges and on the theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory and Glass Ceiling Theory. It was strategically organized around each research question and the corresponding theoretical framework as; (1) How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents? (2) How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency? and (3) How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

The overview of the development of community colleges in the U.S. was necessary to fully understand the community college presidency and the forces that shaped its development, leadership, and culture. The background provided on the racial and gender representation of minorities in community college leadership and knowledge of the pathways and preparation of minorities in higher education is imperative to understanding the long-standing and continuing problem of underrepresentation of minorities in leadership positions. Investigation of existing literature reveals a significant gap in explaining the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. The number of research studies examining experiences of persons of color in leadership roles and the corresponding effect on the community college presidency is relatively low. Past research generated information on leadership in higher education and to some extent community colleges but lacked in-depth studies of persons of color in leadership roles in community colleges. Although studies of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges have been few during the last 10 years, the purpose of the present study is to explore minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles in

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community colleges. The research questions and understanding of theoretical constructs that

informed them are relevant to the present study.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges. This chapter provides an introduction to the study, including the primary research questions and methodological procedures used to conduct the research. Also included are the data collection procedures and analysis, followed by the population, sampling procedures, and context of the study. The last section concludes with instrumentation, researcher positionality, trustworthiness and academic rigor, ethical considerations, and chapter summary. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT) informed the research questions for this study, which are as follows:

1. How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?

2. How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?

3. How do the participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

Rationale for Qualitative Inquiry

This study is grounded in qualitative research. The researcher used phenomenological inquiry as the methodological approach for the collection and analysis of primary data. It is the best approach to use when investigating a problem which is not clearly defined or has not been studied in-depth or when no previous research has been done to help understand the problem more efficiently (Creswell, 2014; Suter, 2012). Suter (2012) supported this practice, stating, "To

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understand a complex phenomenon, you must consider the multiple realities experienced by the participants themselves" (p. 344). The researcher used data garnered from interviews about the lived experiences and perceptions of participants, from their individual perspectives, to explain the phenomenon under investigation.

This study explored the lived experiences of the participants using CRT counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for this research. Counter-storytelling, a tool CRT scholars in education use, "offers a biographical analysis of the experiences of a person of color, in relation to U.S. institutions in a socio-historical context" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 33). CRT counter-storytelling is an effective method of gathering data for the study. Counter-storytelling by participants provided a broader understanding of factors associated with the racial and gender disparity of minorities serving in presidential roles in community colleges.

The slow progress of racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency suggests a silence in the literature and a lack of understanding of the phenomenon (Gagliardi et al., 2017). CRT methodology argues that race is both a social construct and a category of identity that subjects people to a racial hierarchy (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). As defined by Merriam-Webster (2020), 'social construct' is "an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society." Concerning race, Ladson-Billings (1998) stated, "Despite the scientific refutation of race as a legitimate biological concept, and attempts to marginalize race in much of the public (political) discourse, race continues to be a powerful *social* construct and signifier" (p. 8). In examining wages and compensation for African Americans, the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission concluded, "Human capital theory suggests that individuals are rewarded in their current jobs for their past investment in education and training. The research indicates that race and gender affect the evenhanded application of this theory" (p. 80). Understanding race and

gender in the community college presidency through a CRT/GCT analytical framework is critical to understanding the phenomenon.

Phenomenological inquiry, using semi-structured interview questions from a CRT and GCT framework, is a pedagogical tool allowing counter-narratives to reposition the silence in the literature. Data collected from participants' counter-storytelling will provide evidence for the social construction of race and the racial experiences encountered by participants on their journey to the presidency. Phenomenological narrative inquiry is the methodological approach for the collection and analysis of primary data.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation for the research study is semi-structured, open-ended interviews. The researcher conducted interviews by teleconferencing and videoconferencing with participants. Interviews contained a demographic portion for descriptive analysis. The use of audiotape and videotape to capture qualitative data ensures descriptive reliability and allowed the interviewer an added layer of accuracy in decoding. The phenomenological data collected comprise a series of narratives elicited using open-ended questions and paraphrasing techniques common to phenomenological research. A list of the interview questions used is included in Appendices C. The researcher recorded all interviews for later transcription.

Data Collection

The data collections for this study included semi-structured interview questions, review of relevant documents, narrative scripts and artifacts. Methods for the study are defined as "specific techniques used in the research process, such as data gathering and analysis" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 38). Data collection for this study involved gathering interview data and artifacts, followed by coding to determine emerging themes for analysis.

Interviews

The chief method of data gathering used interviews of study participants recorded by the researcher and analysis of related themes following the interviews. A brief demographic questionnaire, using semi-structured interview questions conducted during a single interview with study participants, formed the basis for data collection. Interviews were conducted via videoconference and teleconference sessions with the participants using Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms. Semi-structured, open-ended questions, including at least two free listing questions, provided the foundation to engage participants in the conversation and to describe the phenomenon being studied during the interview process. The use of paraphrasing and restating free listing statements with participants during the interview provided reliability.

Semi-structured interviews, where the researcher seeks information about the participants' experiences, perspectives, beliefs, or preferences regarding the central topic, was the approach selected for the study. Semi-structured interview questions, the use of an interview protocol, and analysis of relative secondary data or visual materials are common forms of qualitative data-collection (Creswell, 2014; Given, 2008; Suter, 2012). Smith et al. (2009) affirmed interviews are an important tool for data collection in phenomenological studies because they allow participants an opportunity to "tell their stories, to speak freely and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length" (p. 56). Semi-structured interviews are useful when the research is exploratory, little is known about the phenomenon under investigation, and the collection of respondents' attitudinal information such as opinions, judgments, emotions, and perceptions cannot be measured by other means (Creswell, 2014; Given, 2008).

Free listing is a tool of cultural domain analysis (CDA) to extract meaning from contextual situations by having participants "list as many of X that they can think of to describe the phenomenon under investigation" (McGaha & D'Urso, 2019, p. 589). Creswell (2014) explained that data collection from interviews should be based on the sources of data in the research questions guiding the study.

Research questions that guided the study also informed the interview questions and subsequent probes. The use of probes during interviews was a strategy to elaborate on an original response or follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee. Given (2008) explained that "artifacts become data through the questions posed about them and the meaning assigned to them by the researcher" (p. 25).

Free listing was combined with semi-structured interview questions to collect data. Examples of free listing questions for the interview are provided in Appendix A. Archival articles, published works, and other archival records were also used to collect artifacts for the study since Yin (2009), as reported in Suter, states "evidence may come from sources as diverse as archival records, documents, structured or open interviews, various types of observation (in which the researcher may participate), and physical artifacts" (Suter, 2012, p. 366). Data collection for this study included incorporating interviews and comparing relevant reviews and artifacts, followed by coding for themes, refinement for emerging themes, and counter-narratives for analysis.

Participants were told the interview protocol, how the interviews would be conducted, the modality of the interview (i.e., telephone interview or face-to-face asynchronous videoconference sessions), how the interviews would be recorded, stored, and analyzed, as well as the steps taken to maintain anonymity. Each step was outlined and provided in the consent

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form, along with a space for the individual's signature of agreement. All participants were

informed of the purpose and scope of the study and the semi-structured interview questions for

the study prior to the scheduled teleconference interviews. Figure 3.1 illustrates the alignment of

the primary research questions guiding the study, the interview questions supporting the primary

questions, and the theoretical frameworks corresponding to each interview question:

Figure 3-1. *Research and Interview Questions Alignment*

Research Question 1 How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?

Interview Questions		Theoretical Framework
IQ1:	Describe your experience as a minority community college president.	CRT/GCT
IQ2:	Based on your experience, what factors do you believe have contributed to the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents in the United States?	CRT/GCT
IQ3:	Using brief descriptors, describe the factors that you believe contribute to racial and gender disparities among community college presidents today?	CRT/GCT
IQ4:	To what extent do you believe that race and racism contributes to racial and gender underrepresentation in community college presidents?	CRT/GCT
IQ5:	Please describe an incident where race and gender have positively influenced your career.	GCT/ Intersectionality
IQ6:	Please describe an incident where race and gender have negatively influenced your career.	GCT/ Intersectionality

Research Question 2 How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?

Interview Questions		Theoretical Framework
IQ1:	Describe how race and gender played a role in your pursuit to the community college presidency.	CRT/Intersectionality
IQ2:	Describe any challenges or barriers you navigated on your journey to becoming a community college president.	CRT/GCT
IQ3:	Using brief descriptors, please provide a list of examples of perceived gatekeepers that exist for minority's ascending to the community college presidency.	CRT/GCT
IQ4:	Tell me about your views on why these gatekeepers exist for minority's pursuing the community college presidency.	CRT/Interdisciplinary

Research Question 3 How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

Interview Questions		Theoretical Framework
IQ1:	Please tell me about your leadership preparation towards the presidency.	CRT/Experiential Knowledge
IQ2:	Which of these do you believe were most beneficial to you.	CRT/Experiential Knowledge
IQ3:	Which of these do you believe were least beneficial to you.	CRT/Experiential Knowledge
IQ4:	Using brief descriptors, list the leadership competencies most relevant to being successful as a community college president today.	CRT/Experiential Knowledge
IQ5:	Please describe how your experience and training are valued by different stakeholder groups in community colleges.	CRT/Interest Convergence

Data were collected in a cyclical manner, commencing with data from the interviews, followed by coding for themes and refinement as necessary to determine emerging themes. Suter (2012) explained that the cyclical nature of data collection is characteristic of qualitative research, where inductive reasoning from data collected guides further data collection until a point of saturation. The researcher was mindful of reaching saturation, the point where continuous data collection signals little need to continue because additional data will serve only to confirm an emerging understanding (Patton, 2015). The cyclical collection of data until saturation serves as an effective reliability measure. To augment data collected for the study, the researcher reviewed résumés, biographies, published articles, and reports of research participants. These artifacts in the public domain were analyzed to determine if there was a connection to or influence on participants' ascension to the community college presidency.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an operational procedure that constantly evolves based on the data collected. The researcher used the literature review, coupled with participants' experiences, to discern categories and themes. Given the cyclical nature of qualitative research, the researcher analyzed data during the collection phase. Multiple steps were used to conduct the data analysis, including free listing used in the interviews and counter-stories from participants that formed narratives. The counter-narratives were examined using a modified interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) as well as systematic coding steps to analyze the data. Phenomenology "is a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants" (Creswell, 2014, p. 42). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was the

method of analysis used to formulate meanings from free listing, counter-narratives, and emerging themes to study the phenomena under investigation. The researcher employed a CRT narrative in examining data from participant narratives. Creswell (2014) supported the use of theory-oriented inquiry like CRT as "providing an overall orienting lens for the study of questions of gender, class, and race" (p. 98). The researcher used CRT in two ways: (a) in the use of tenets as a guide in the formulation of the interview protocol and questions, and (b) in the analysis and use of counter-storytelling. Counter-stories are created from data gathered from the research process itself, including individual interviews.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) method has tools and mechanisms that make it possible to conduct a richly descriptive and interpretive research study (Alase, 2017; McGaha & D'Urso, 2019). The best approach for data analysis in this study is an adapted IPA strategy which uses free listing cultural domain analysis (CDA) for validation. CDA is "a cognitive anthropological technique that extracts code, as defined by the participants, about a phenomenon or social construct, and reduces it to themes representative of its conceptual domain" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 588). An adapted model of IPA combined with free listing of the semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to analyze data through a series of systematic coding steps until a saturation point was reached and no further analysis was deemed necessary. Seven steps were used in the adapted IPA:

1. Transcriptions were reviewed.

2. Significant statements were identified and noted separately by transcript number.

3. Significant statements were converted to formulate meanings.

4. Formulated meanings were sorted into categories and clusters.

5. Clusters were reduced to emergent themes.

6. Thematic mapping was evaluated and reduced to consider the structural characteristics of the phenomenon and enhance the exhaustive description of it.

7. Reliability was tested by CDA using the excluded free listing data from the phenomenological analysis to provide a more accurate comparison for validation and prevent contaminating each data set. (Alase, 2017; McGaha & D'Urso, 2019)

The researcher used rich, detailed descriptions to depict information in multiple data sources across the participants' varied narratives. Free listing validated findings in both data reduction and data display by identifying frequency and ranking prominence as significant features, thereby establishing salience.

Organization of Coded Data

The researcher initially favored using the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) model but instead, after considerable alignment of data, expanded the concept model for the coding and analysis of the significant amount of data. To present the information with accuracy and particularity, precise attention was given to mastering and ensuring organization, tracking, and retention of participants' authentic voices for counter-storytelling. Audio transcripts of each participant's interviews were assigned alphanumeric pseudo-codes prior to transcription for ease of code tracking.

The researcher created a system of data collection and analysis for the study. Nine steps were involved in the researcher's data collection system:

1.) Transcribe each interview with 48-56 hours of interview (*using Rev.com transcription service*);

2.) Review transcribed interviews line by line while listening to the audiotaped interview to ensure transcription accuracy and reflect intonations of interviewee;

3.) Create a personalized macroinstruction template for each participant, populating fields with alphanumeric, ethnicity and gender pseudo-codes;

4.) Identify and define rich, thick descriptions from transcribed interview for extraction;

5.) Import rich, thick descriptions into the personalized macroinstruction template created by the researcher for the participant;

6.) Review all extracted rich, thick descriptions in the personalized macroinstruction template, assigning an initial level of coding labeled as Open-Code 1 for each;

7.) Add researcher field notes into the personalized macroinstruction template that corresponds to each rich, thick description and Open-Code 1;

8.) Continue coding progression by reviewing each rich, thick description, initial open code, and researcher field notes, condensing to axial and selective codes;

9.) Assign the CRT and GCT frameworks that correspond to each rich, thick description and selective code.

Coding

The researcher created a personalized macroinstruction template using current free add-ins and macros by DocTools (Fredborg, 2020) as a coding efficiency tool for use in Microsoft Word. Data were exported from Microsoft Word for use in Microsoft Excel to divide the data into meaningful units for categorization and additional coding levels. Figure 3.2 describes the personalized macroinstruction template as part of a system of data collection and analysis created by the researcher. Each personalized macroinstruction template included eleven columns, which allowed for the sorting, review, and analysis of data to include the following:

1.) research question;

2.) transcript line;

3.) page number;

4.) in vivo coding as rich, thick description;

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5.) reduced specific statements as axial codes;

6.) selective codes;

7.) thematic coding;

8.) pseudonym naming conventions;

9.) ethnic group and gender;

10.) field notes and artifacts review comments; and

11.) corresponding theory matrix

The creation of the macroinstruction was pivotal to the researcher and allowed for ease of reviewing, sorting, and confirming data validation and creating data model analysis forecasts and graphs. Figure 3.2 illustrates how the eleven columns in the personalized macroinstruction template correspond to the nine steps of the system of data collection and analysis for the study created by the researcher.

Figure 3-2. *Researcher Created Personalized Macroinstruction Template*

Note: Example of a macroinstruction template created by the researcher and used for data coding the study.

The researcher-created system of data collection and analysis constitutes the primary

analysis tool to code and analyze data for thematic coding and alignment of the theoretical

frameworks that correspond to each interview question. Columns A-C identify the research

question, page, and line number as it appears in the participant's transcript. Columns D-G

describe the levels of coding as a rich, thick description of a participant's statement, with the

next levels of refined coding by the researcher reduced to brief data tag themes as findings.

Columns H-I identify participant characteristics for voice tracking and are sorted and labeled by

author/date codes and gender. Finally, columns J-K include researcher field notes and artifacts,

followed by the corresponding theoretical framework the data align with.

Yin (2011) referred to "the nature of initial codes as Level 1 codes or open codes" which

are used at the outset by the researcher to generate categories and their properties (p. 187). Other

columns reflect three phases of coding progression through a process in research to condense

codes. The open, axial and selective coding phases reduced the data into themes with rich

description. This process and the personalized macroinstruction template created by the

researcher allowed the researcher as investigator to effectively manage the data for IPA

interpretation. Yin (2011) describes it as "the process of integrating and refining categories" (p.

187).

Codes were extracted from Microsoft Word and imported into the macroinstruction

template in Microsoft Excel to translate the data into programmable patterns to map subsequent

sequences of code levels. Formulated meanings from free listing and clusters reduced to

emergent themes were used as a reliable form of thematic coding of concepts identified

throughout the research process and for application across cases. Given (2008) defined in vivo

coding as "the practice of assigning a label to a section of data, such as an interview transcript,

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using a word or short phrase taken from that section of the data" (p. 472). Codes are methods to identify, label and categorize qualitative data for analysis and are associated with the early stages of collection, when concepts and categories are being identified and developed. For the present study, in vivo codes, labeled as open code 1, were used as the first level of coding, primarily to capture rich, thick descriptions for use later in the study. In vivo coding emphasizes using the actual voices of participants to extract meaning from contextual situations and "to ensure that concepts stay as close as possible to research participants' own words or use their terms because they capture a key element of what is being described" (Given, 2008, p. 472).

Naming conventions were created for each participant to track their voice as the researcher moved along the adapted IPA analysis continuum, advancing incrementally to higher conceptual levels as new categories were recognized from the coding. Numbers were assigned to each of the thirty-four participants and labeled author dates. Pseudo labels were assigned for ethnicity and gender groups, using abbreviations for each. Ethnicity group labels included African American as A2-M/F, Asian Pacific Islander as API-M/F, and Latino/Hispanic as LatH-M/F. The researcher created pseudonyms based on popular Motown singing groups for the all-participant composite group and gender groups. The composite group was named The Miracles, the women's group named The Supremes, and the men's group named The Commodores.

The researcher analyzed interviews line by line, reduced each to thematic levels of coding, correlated with artifacts review, and sorted and categorized data by ethnicity, gender and all-participant composite group. Braun and Clark (2006) defined thematic analysis as the process of "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data" (p. 79). What follows is the disassembly and reassembly of the data using a matrix designed by the researcher and informed

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by CRT and GCT frameworks to draw conclusions and make relevant interpretations of the data. Each of these prescripts allowed for the transferability of trustworthiness in the study.

Population

The population for this research study is Minority community college presidents/CEOs.

Sample Participants

Participants for the study were current and former minority community college presidents/CEOs from public, technical, or urban/suburban community colleges throughout the United States. Minority community college presidents/CEOs are defined by ethnicity as community college presidents or chancellors serving at institutions identified by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) as member colleges. The criteria for selecting participants were that they are current or former minority community college presidents/CEOs or chancellors at a member college identified by the AACC. Additionally, participant minority community college presidents/CEOs must self-identify as belonging to one or more of the following groups: American Indian/Native American, African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic/Latina/o. The researcher surveyed current or retired minority leaders of community college presidents in the United States as of the 2019–2020 academic year for use in this research study.

Interviews for the study were conducted via videoconference and/or by teleconference. Individual interviews of participants allowed information to be gathered relative to the study questions. Community college leaders referred to in the study are limited to those from public and private not-for-profit two-year institutions affiliated with the AACC. The participants served at multiple types of institutions including urban, suburban, single campus, multi-campus, system, and non-system community colleges.

Sampling Procedures

Purposeful sampling was used to identify participants for the study. Participants for the study were current and former minority community college presidents/CEOs from public, technical, or urban/suburban community colleges throughout the United States. Participants were identified and selected based on their accessibility to the researcher via affiliated council membership review, artifact reviews, and/or leveraging network referrals, thereby creating a prospective participant target list. Participants included a cross-section of representation by ethnicity and gender, which allowed the researcher to address the absence in the literature related to minority community college presidents.

Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or that have experience with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2014). To obtain this sample, the snowballing technique was used to gather participants through an initial outreach to affiliate councils of the AACC in addition to leveraging persons in the field. Email outreach and telephone confirmations were the primary sources of outreach and participant confirmation.

Researcher Positionality

A fundamental consideration in qualitative research is the positionality of the researcher in relation to the study conducted. Positionality refers to the positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political contexts of the study, community, organization, or participant group (Given, 2008). When conducting qualitative research it is important to discuss researcher positionality because of the values, beliefs, assumptions, and history the researcher brings to the research process. This section will discuss the history of the researcher and my value relationship to the topic.

History of the Researcher

The investigation experience allowed the researcher to analyze my position(ality) within the study. Creswell (2014) acknowledged that close links exist between the philosophy we bring to our research and how we develop our framework to proceed with the research. The researcher is an African American woman who is a career educator who has amassed over 28 years in post-secondary higher education and held progressive levels of leadership at R1 and R3 public and private universities and community colleges in the state of Michigan. As such, I recognize that my role as researcher is based on my personal history, race and gender, and social class that do not completely separate me from participants and the challenges I seek to understand in my research.

Trustworthiness and Academic Rigor

Trustworthiness

Qualitative reliability is how the researcher checks for accuracy of the findings from the standpoint of the participant by employing certain procedures that address trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell, 2014). Setting a clear research design and methodology enabled the researcher to confer reliability of data. Trustworthiness demonstrates that results are sound, based on strong results, and contain robust procedural descriptions (Creswell, 2014; Hammarberg et al., 2016; Suter, 2012). Qualitative reliability, the dependability and credibility of the research methodology, and data collection are important to strong content analyses. To assure credibility (internal reliability), the researcher used triangulation for multiple methods of data collection and analysis, including open-ended questions, free listing, and paraphrasing. To establish transferability (external reliability), the researcher used rich, thick descriptions. Suter (2012) defined triangulation as "a method used in qualitative research that involves

crosschecking multiple data sources and collection procedures to evaluate the extent to which all evidence converges" (p. 350). Reliability approaches were used for this study to indicate consistency, increase transparency and trustworthiness, and decrease opportunities for researcher bias, thereby establishing academic rigor for the study.

Reliability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) created four criteria to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research: transferability, dependability, confirmability, and credibility. The same criteria informed this study to establish trustworthiness. Transferability is the extent to which evidence findings can be applicable to other settings, contexts, times, and populations. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state about transferability that "it is, in summary, not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability, it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers" (p. 316). The researcher provided thick, rich descriptions of the participants' experiences, the range and number of participants and descriptions of the setting with rich context as a technique to facilitate transferability decisions to other contexts or settings. Dependability is an evaluation of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis and theory generation. Evidence gathered to support dependability included rich documentation and triangulation. Thematic coding allowed for rich data to compare and contrast the experiences of the participants and reveal emerging themes. Multiple sources of information and artifacts were reviewed in support of dependability.

Academic Rigor

Academic rigor refers to the basis of any claim as trustworthy knowledge to establish credibility. Credibility in qualitative research refers to the confidence of the data and how well

the data and analysis address the focus of the study. The methodology and researcher's background in interpreting the data is a lined 'roadmap' to the focus of the study. Suter (2012) stated that credibility is related to construct reliability, "uncovered by evidence revealing that the construct being studied is the same one theory presumes exists" (p. 363). Free listing was one tool used in cognitive anthropology and by the researcher to elicit thick, rich qualitative data by participants (Creswell, 2014). As an added structural corroboration and reliability procedure, interview questions included cultural domain analysis (CDA) free listing to "increase the overall trustworthiness of a study" for coding reliability (McGaha & D'Urso, 2019, p. 589). To assess reliability, the researcher focused on three streams of activity: data reduction (simplifying complex data by decoding recurring themes), data display (including rich stories and descriptions from participants), and conclusions (through open-ended questions and paraphrasing).

The researcher used open-ended questions and paraphrasing to adduce conclusions. Although member checking is widely used as a validation method for interpretative phenomenology analysis (IPA) studies, it is not flawless. McGaha and D'Urso (2019) noted a drawback of member checking is that "interpretation can be altered based on the context in which it is reviewed and may allow for participants to control the study" (p. 586). Therefore, the use of open-ended questions and paraphrasing as a validation tool was the best method for this study. Crosschecking multiple data sources and collection procedures towards convergence demonstrates triangulation.

Confirmability is the last criterion of trustworthiness addressing the level of confidence that the research study's findings are based on narratives and words of the participants rather than potential researcher biases. To control for confirmability in researcher bias, the researcher used open-ended interview questions, free listing, and paraphrasing for accuracy checks. The

extensive double-checking confirmed the evidence collected. Paraphrasing in member checking, rich description, and clarification of bias are multiple approaches the researcher used to ensure trustworthiness and academic rigor.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns arise in qualitative research with respect to the well-being, anonymity, and confidentiality of the study participants. Researchers must be sensitive to personal information shared and transparent with regard to the purpose of the research, the intent for its use, and the ethical considerations that accompany such disclosures (Creswell, 2014). Several precautions were in place to mitigate undue harm to participants in this research study. An introductory email to participants outlined the intent and guidelines of the study. A participant consent form (Appendix C) detailed the same, informing participants in writing that they could opt out and withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, a list of semi-structured interview questions, a statement of researcher positionality, and IRB approval to conduct this research were provided. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant and personally identifying information was removed. Open-ended questions and paraphrasing during the interview were validation tools to reduce and control for participant and researcher bias. McGaha and D'Urso (2019) support this method of validation: "To eliminate the need for member checking (and its inherent concerns), the literature recommends probing, open-ended questions, and paraphrasing to clarify participants' thoughts in real-time (p. 586). All collected data, including interview and researcher notes, were and remain stored in safe and protected formats on the researcher's personal computer, which is only accessible to the researcher. Finally, all data collected during the study will be kept for a span of three to five years from the date of collection, after which they will be destroyed.

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Summary – Chapter 3

This chapter discussed the content and design of the qualitative research, the research questions that guided this study, and the methodological procedures used to conduct the research including the data collection and analysis procedures. The chapter further detailed the population, sampling procedures, and context of the study, including the instrumentation, researcher positionality, trustworthiness and academic rigor, and pertinent ethical considerations. Analyzing the data using an interpretive phenomenological analysis allowed the researcher to identify overarching themes. Themes thus identified are a form of data collection that constitutes the counter-narrative of the phenomenon that could inform practice.

Chapter 4 - Analysis and Summary of Research Findings

Introduction

Chapter 4 provides a presentation and analysis of the findings of the study. It begins with

an overview of participant characteristics by demographic groups representing each of the

participating minority community college president/CEOs. This study explored presidents'

perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges.

An analysis of the research questions and findings will be presented by research questions and

organized by ethnicity, gender and characteristics of all-participant composite group with

relevant themes that emerged from each. The chapter concludes with the chapter summary.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?

2. How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?

3. How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

Overview of Participant Characteristics

Thirty-four CEOs of color participated in the study. The participants were categorized

into six distinct groups as a methodologically rigorous process to analyze data and support the

trustworthiness of findings. The six groups were: 1) African American, 2) Asian Pacific Islander,

3) Latino/Hispanic, 4) Women of Color, 5) Men of Color, and 6) All Group Composite. The goal

for reporting the findings of the data by ethnicity, gender and composite group was to understand

the perceptions of community college CEOs of color, in the context of their unique experiences

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and retain the authentic voice of each participant. Reporting the data by ethnicity, gender and all-participant composite groups helped to understand the study under investigation. An all-group composite of participants by demographics, regions of service in the U.S. and identification by generational era of community college leadership development style and brief synopsis profiles follows.

Demographics of Study Participants

Thirty-four CEOs of color participated in the study representing diverse ethnic backgrounds including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic. Eleven identified as Chancellor and twenty-three as President. The gender representation of participants was twenty-two men and twelve women. Each ethnic group includes at least one male and female in the role of Chancellor. Participants identify as African American, Asian Pacific Indian, bi-racial including Asian Pacific Indian and Black, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic/ Latino, Latino & White, Mexican American, and Bi-cultural respectively as well as identifying as gender and bi-sexual. The CEOs include 1st generation immigrants, refugees and, 1st generation college graduates with 41% of leaders reporting as bi-cultural and bi-lingual.

Participants Service Area in the Four Regions of the U.S.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2020) considers there to be four regions of the U.S. which are subdivided by geographical area as: the Northeast (Middle Atlantic and New England), Midwest (West/East North Central), South (West/East South Central and South Atlantic) and West (Pacific West and Pacific South and Mountain). The service area of the thirty-four participating CEOs was represented in twelve states in each of the four regions of the U.S. Of the three ethnicity groups 29% of all participants serve in the West and 29% serve in the South. 100% of

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Asian Pacific Islanders and Latino/Hispanic participants serve in the South and West (Pacific West and Pacific South) regions. African American participants served in all four regions. Participants by ethnicity group includes n = 20 as African Americans, n = 9 as Latino/Hispanic and n = 5 as Asian Pacific Islander. Both the Asian Pacific Islander and Latino/Hispanic participants serve exclusively in the Pacific West and South regions of the U.S. The African American participants serve in each of four regions of the U.S. with 18% of the African American leaders serving in the Pacific West and 14% serving in the Midwest. None of the participating Asian Pacific Islander or Latino/Hispanic leaders serves in the Midwest or Northeastern region of the U.S although student demographics are represented in those regions. Figure 4.1 illustrates participants by census regions and division of the U.S.

Figure 4-1. *CEOs by Regions of the U.S.*

Note: Image Map of US Census Bureau's (2020) geographical regions of the United States.

Participants represented all four generational eras of community college development leadership and style including the youngest and least studied fourth generation Gen X/Millennials I leaders as defined by Deegan and Tillery (1985) and Sullivan (2001). In describing the generational era of community college, 21% are first generation Silents/Baby Boomers I, 41% are second generation Baby Boomers II, 29% are third generation Gen X and 9% are fourth generation Gen X II / Millennials. 62% of leaders are influenced by the 3rd generation Collaborator style, 29% have a 4th generation Transformers style who came of age during the Learning-Centered College age. 9% of participants are in the 5th generation style as Equity Achievers who operate from an equity-centered leadership vision towards student success and achievement.

Participating CEOs come from multiple pathways of entry to the presidency including 40% of leaders from the traditional academic ranks as deans, provost, and faculty. Another 40% of leaders are represented in the student affairs divisions as vice presidents of registration, financial aid, and student success. 20% of leaders are from a non-traditional pathway from the Business sector including as accountants, business owners, finance officers in the public sector for state and governmental agencies, diversity equity and inclusion officers or workforce development industries. Leaders in the study are highly educated, holding credentials and terminal degrees in Economics, Education Leadership, Engineering both Aerospace and Chemical, Finance, Juris Doctorate Law and Doctor of Specialized Medicine. They also have broken gender barriers include the 1st woman and woman of color CEO in a male-dominated technical field and industry. Participation of the thirty-four CEOs in the study allowed for adequate saturation by composite, ethnicity, and gender group and development of a robust and valid understanding of underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency.

Each of the CEOs represented in the study as African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic comprise a diverse data composite providing rich counter-stories of the phenomenon under investigation.

Characteristics of the Composite Group

Composite Years of Experience and Ethnic Identification

The Composite as an all CEO group of participants includes three ethnicity groups with a gender representation of twenty-two men and twelve women. 29% of chancellors and presidents have between 10-15 years of experience followed by 23% of leaders serving 3.5-5 years. 12% of participants served 15+ years and 12% identified as serving 7-10 years, 5-7 years, and 0-3 years. Figure 4.2 reflects all leaders by the role of chancellor/president as well as the years of experience as CEOs.

Figure 4-2. *CEOs All Group Composite by Years of Service*
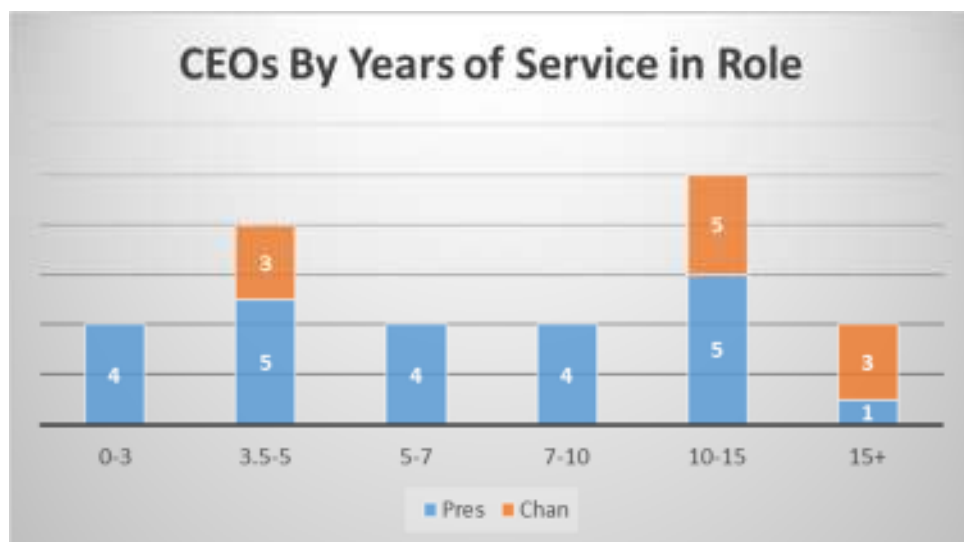
The composite group identifies as African American, Asian Pacific Indian, bi-racial including Asian Pacific Indian and Black, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic/ Latino, Latino & White, Mexican American, and Bi-cultural respectively as well as identifying as gender and bi-sexual.

The Composite are 1st generation immigrants, refugees and, 1st generation college graduates, bi-cultural and bi-lingual. They are 1st Chancellors and Presidents of color and by gender in the history of their respective institutions as well as a 1st presidency at the age of 36. They include the 1st as woman CEOs in a male-dominated technical field and are highly educated, holding credentials and terminal degrees in Aerospace Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Economics, Finance, and Medical Doctor. They represent all four generational eras of community college development leadership and style including the youngest and least studied fourth generation Gen X/Millennials I leaders. Each of the thirty-four CEOs that comprise the composite group serves in twelve states across all regions in the United States. The breadth of years of service and representation across all regions of the U.S. provided rich counter-narratives into the phenomenology under investigation.

The Composite Generations of Community College Development Leadership Style

The generations of community college development leadership style classification used in the research study was developed by the researcher to classify and understand participant's era of community college development and style of leadership. Additionally, the researcher labeled generations of community college leadership and styles to correspond with Pew's (2020) generation definitions as well as naming conventions to describe the evolution of focus during the era as referred to in Appendix A. Generation ranges are based on the Pew Research Center's classification of generations by name, age, values, and the norms they align with. Using the Pew Research Center's classification and name of generations as a guide, the researcher aligned each participant by both generations of the American community college development (Deegan and Tillery, 1985) as well as generations of community college leadership style (Sullivan, 2001).

The generations of community college development leadership style were developed by the researcher to better understand influencers of participating CEOs' approach to leadership based on their age, years of experience, and formal leadership preparation. Table 4.1 reflects the thirty-four participants as an all-group composite categorized by their role of chancellor/president and by their generational of community college leadership development style classified by age.

Table 4-1 CEOs by Generation of Community College Development Leadership Style

The different voices of the Leaders are based upon their leadership development generation and style which adds rich descriptions to the study from various perspectives of the balcony. The highest proportion of presidents at 39% are Baby Boomers II followed by 35% as Gen X and 13% respectively both as Silents/Baby Boomers I and Gen X II / Millennials I. 82% of Chancellors reflect both the Silent/Baby Boomers I and Baby Boomers II followed by 18% of chancellors as Gen X. Synopsis profiles for each of the three ethnic groups follows.

Participant Synopsis Profiles by Ethnicity Group

Thirty-four CEOs of color participated in the study with group characteristics organized by ethnicity, gender and composite. The three ethnic groups were: 1) African American, 2) Asian Pacific Islander and, 3) Latino/Hispanic. The ethnicity groups contain a; 1) group overview, 2) participant description and characteristics, 3) generations of community college leadership development style representation and 4) synopsis biographical profiles. Finally, the gender group includes participant characteristics and generations of community college leadership development style representation.

About the African American (A2) Group

Twenty participants represent the African American ethnicity group comprising three Chancellors, seventeen Presidents including thirteen in their first and/or only presidency and seven CEOs having served in the capacity two or more times previously. The African American group is the largest of the three ethnicity groups with a gender representation of eleven men and nine women.

A2 CEO 1 is a Chancellor and a seasoned leader with large community college systems in the Pacific and Midwest. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style is reflected as a third Gen X with a 4th generation Transformers style of leadership.

A2 CEO 2 is a Chancellor and veteran CEO amassing over three decades of experience serving at one of the nation's largest multi-college community college systems in the southwest. The Chancellor's generation of community college leadership style is classified as a Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 3 is an accomplished Chancellor and veteran CEO serving in diverse state systems in both the southwest and northeast. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators.

A2 CEO 4 is the 7th President of large community college in the Pacific Southwest. The veteran leader is classified as a Silents/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 5 is a 1st-time college President of a college in the suburbs of a large state university system in the Northeast and is classified as a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer style of leadership.

A2 CEO 6 is a veteran two time College President with a diverse professional background serving in senior leader in the Eastern, Northwest, and Northeast Central regions of the U.S. This CEO identifies as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 7 is a seasoned leader identified as a Baby Boomer II with a 36-year career in community colleges in the Northeastern, Southeast, and Pacific Northwest regions of the U.S. This CEO identifies as a 3rd generation Collaborator style of leader.

A2 CEO 8 is a first-time community college President in a non-traditional pathway of student services at institutions in the regions in the Pacific west and Southwest. The leader is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 9 is a Gen X -II / Millennial I, 5th generation Equity Achiever style leaders who are a 1st time, community college President, with bachelors and master's degrees from private research and liberal arts universities in the Midwest and a terminal degree from a public university in the south.

A2 CEO 10 is the 1st President of color appointed and the 4th person installed as leader of an institution in the largest state college and university system in the Midwest. The President identifies as a Gen X -II / Millennial I, 5th generation Equity Achiever style of leadership.

A2 CEO 11 is a 1st-time community college President overseeing multiple campuses in the Midwest with a Gen X, 4th generation Millennial Transformers style of leadership.

A2 CEO 12 1st time community college President, who served more than a decade in the role with broad experience in the private sector. The leader is a Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 13 is a trailblazer as a 1st-time community college President in the largest state college and university system in the Midwest in an underrepresented field of manufacturing, engineering, technical trades, and workforce education. The Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators.

A2 CEO 14 is the 1st African American appointed as the 10th college President in the 100+ years of the institution of service and a veteran with over 25 years of experience in higher education at both 4-year universities and the community college. The leader is classified as a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer.

A2 CEO 15 is the 1st African American President, by gender, of a premier community college in the Northeast with a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer's leadership style.

A2 CEO 16 is in their 2nd Presidency in the community college having served for more than a decade at institutions primarily in the Pacific West and identifies as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 17 is a seasoned leader currently serving in the South region with previous Presidencies at colleges in the Midwest amassing more than two decades in higher education administration. A Gen X, 4th generation Transformers generation of leadership.

A2 CEO 18 is a 1st time President of a community college in the Midwest and the institutions' 1st President by ethnicity and gender in the colleges' history. The leaders is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators.

A2 CEO 19 is a 1st-time community college President with 25+ years of combined experience in research, teaching, and executive leadership in higher education with a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer style of leadership.

A2 CEO 20 is a veteran 1st-time community college President, the institution's 1st President by ethnicity and gender with the longest tenure serving at a large multi-college district in the South Central region. The leader is a Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

About the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Group

The Asian Pacific Islander ethnicity group of community college CEOs represents four states, two chancellors, and three generations of community college leadership development styles.

API CEO 1 is the Chancellor of a diverse community college, in a university and college system in the Pacific Northwest with over three decades of experience in higher education. The CEO is Gen X, 4th generation Transformer community college leadership development style.

API CEO 2 is the Chancellor of a multi-college, urban/suburban district, with prior experience as a community college president and has over 25 years of experience in higher education including 4-year universities. This CEO identifies as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborative leadership style.

API CEO 3 serves as the 3rd minority President in the 44-year history of a diverse community college in the Southwest and is a 1st time President with from the traditional academic pathway. The leader identifies as biracial (Asian Pacific Islander and African American), is a Baby Boomer II of the 3rd generation Collaborators.

API CEO 4 is a 1st-time college President of a comprehensive community college in the Pacific Southwest classifying as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborator community college leadership generation style.

API CEO 5 is a 1st-time college President serving in one of the largest multi-campus districts in the south with extensive leadership experience in rural, urban, suburban, and large systems colleges spanning three states from the west to the Midwest. The leader is a Fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials I with a 5th generation Equity Achiever leadership style.

About the Latino/Hispanic (LatH) Group

The Latino/Hispanic (LatH) group of community college CEOs of color includes six chancellors and three presidents. This amazing group of trailblazing CEOs are persons who are the first of many to include one leader whose 1st and only role as Chancellor, the 1st and only Latino/Hispanic male and female serving as chancellor and president, are founding CEOs of learning-centered campuses and represent the youngest Gen X/Millennials I generation of community college leadership development style.

LatH CEO 1 is Chancellor Emeritus of one of the largest multi-college, urban/suburban districts in the Pacific West coast region. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents the Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

LatH CEO 2 is a Chancellor with the distinction of being both the 1st CEO by ethnicity and by gender for one of the largest community college systems in the southwestern region of the U.S. The Chancellor's generation of community college leadership style is classified as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators n.

LatH CEO 3 is Chancellor leads the 4th largest community college district in the state. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents the Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd generation Collaborator.

LatH CEO 4, a 1st generation community college graduate with a terminal degree in economics, this Chancellor is one of the most decorated and tenured CEOs in office. The leader's generation of community college is a Silent/Baby Boomer I with a 3rd generation Collaborator style leadership.

LatH CEO 5 is a veteran educator including two tenures as President in large districts, before the current position of Chancellor of one of the nation's largest urban community college districts in the Pacific west. A Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborator.

LatH CEO 6 is the Chancellor of a large multicultural community college district with a broad portfolio of experience in community colleges spanning 30+ years including ten years as a college president. The CEO falls into the Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators.

LatH CEO 7 is the President is a founding CEO of a learning-centered campus dedicated to non-traditional STEM learners with a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer style of leadership.

LatH CEO 8 is also a Gen X, 4th generation Transformer leader and a 1st generation college student.

LatH CEO 9 is a bilingual/bicultural community college President, with twenty years' experience on the non-traditional side of the house in international trade and workforce development. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd generation Collaborators.

This section provided an overview of participant's characteristics and demographics for the composite group. The following section presents an analysis and summary of the research findings by ethnicity, gender and all-participant composite group.

Research Question 1 Findings Presented By Ethnic, Gender & Composite

This section contains the findings of the qualitative study conducted, an analysis of the research questions, and a summary of the research findings for this study. The presentation of findings is presented by each of the three research questions as well as the corresponding interview questions for each. The data is presented in alphabetical order by ethnicity groups as African-American (A2), Asian Pacific Islander (API), and Latino/Hispanic (LatH), by gender, and concluding with the all-group composite. Each research and interview question label is abbreviated by numbers as well as the interview questions and reflected as R1-3 = Research Question and 1Q = Interview Question that corresponds with the research question.

Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" The researcher asked six interview questions to query participants about their perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents as follows:

- IQ1: Describe your experience as a minority community college president.

- IQ2: Based on your experience, what factors do you believe have contributed to the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents in the United States?

- IQ3: Using brief descriptors, describe the factors that you believe contribute to racial and gender disparities among community college presidents today?

- IQ4: To what extent do you believe that race and racism contribute to racial and gender underrepresentation in community college presidents?

- IQ5: Please describe an incident where race and gender have both positively and negatively influenced your career.

Themes that arose from participants comments by ethnicity, gender and composite groups for research question one follows.

Research Question 1: African American

African American (A2) - Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" African American participants described factors based on their experience and understanding of racial and gender disparities as race and racism and incidents of race and gender that may have positively or negatively influenced their career. Themes that arose in the African American group for question one include; a) lack of clear pathway to the presidency, b) a flawed hiring process c) structural impediments, and d) effects of systemic racism in the forms of biases, or stereotypes.

Lack of Clear Pathway to the Presidency

African American CEOs indicated there was no clear or direct pathway to the community college presidency albeit traditional, non-traditional pathway, degree and credential requirements, preferences, and other factors. Leaders described inconsistent views on what constitutes a direct pathway to the presidency contributing to the underrepresentation. Some described a low representation by persons of color in the traditional pathway as a contributor to the underrepresentation. An African American leader observed, "I think you've got the old traditional track of academics, and coming up on that side of the house. And we're just not as represented there" (Female Gen X). Another described it as a preference stating, "That's why you have to have some kind of academic experience that you can talk the talk because they really have a fascination with that [traditional vs. non-traditional pathway] (Female Baby Boomers II). Participants in the study matriculated from various pathways to the presidency. One participant identified, "I came up through student services. Someone else might have come up through workforce development" (1st time Third Gen X Female President). Participants described an

inconsistent bias in the value and preference of presidential candidates having matriculated from a traditional academic vs. non-traditional pathway including student affairs, workforce development or diversity and inclusion. One female leader with broad experiences in multiple regions described:

> What I have seen in this system is that there is a tendency to promote presidents from the instruction side, and yet when I look at a lot of the leadership roles for folks of color they're in student services. So until we began to either broaden where people come from, so recruiting from the student services side of house for community college presidencies, valuing the role that a former chief diversity officer will have in being a college president, really thinking more strategically about how do we sort of change that directory of who actually is qualified to be a community college president. (Female Baby Boomers II Generation)

Others described hope in external drivers of change on the academy's attachment of value and preference in hiring persons from a particular pathway. A leader stated:

> A significant one that I think is starting to change as the context changes, but the traditional path to a college presidency, through the academic side of the house, which is traditionally the faculty through academic administration, chief academic officer to the presidency. That's been the traditional pathway. I think that's one thing that creates struggles for anyone who is non-majority stepping into this space, is that they oftentimes don't come to that traditional pathway, and rightly so and should be, I think that's one of the biggest contributors. We're starting to see changes in that. (Gen X Female President)

The lack of a clear pathway to the community college presidency was clearly identified.

The Hiring Process

Great detail was given to describe the hiring process referred to as flawed, corrupt, leaky, and full of chuckholes. Participants described challenges in the hiring process including a coded position description, human resource officers, or associates responsible for procuring the credentials packet, internal and external search committees, faculty, search firms, the board of trustees, community groups, and philanthropic donors with influence. Ineffective

biased/prejudicial hiring processes was identified by a majority of participants as a contributor to

the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Many leakage points were

identified throughout the pipeline to ascension including the type of credential one possesses. In

describing credentials as a factor, one male leader stated, "I believe the first one is the degree.

Traditionally it's the Ph.D [as preference], followed by the Ed.D. Sometimes a JD [Juris

Doctorate] gets in depending on what the institution is looking for, that's initially the right

credential" (Baby Boomers II Generation). The leader further described:

> Next would be the path of which you are in. Are you in student services? Are you
> in finance? Are you in fundraising? Are you in academics? The institution that
> you may seek may not be the path that you're in. What does that mean?" [The
> researcher understood the statement to question the rationale institutional
> gatekeeper's use on advancement or as a barrier to advancement to the
> presidency]. (Male Baby Boomers II Generation)

Another leader emphasized the point that any terminal degree should be considered

competitively equal stating "That was helpful from the perspective of understanding that I could

do it [successfully apply for the presidency] and that my credentials were a match for anybody

who thought they could become a college president" (1st Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I

Male). The importance of credentials by faculty in the selection process were described as, "The

faculty want those credentials and experiences related to what they do" (Baby Boomers II

Generation Male). One leader described an incident where his credentials were left out of an

article on final presidential candidates where he was the only person of color in the final three.

He described:

> This is another bit of racism, I think, that shows how things go. When I applied
> for this job, I had more years of experience as a vice president and as an academic
> than the other two finalists combined. So, there was a newspaper article written
> about the three finalists. I held my doctorate longer than the other two combined
> with the other two having just finished their doctorates and they were
> administrators. So, when the article was written, the newspaper article left out the

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fact that I was Dr. Statesman. They included my bachelor's degree, my master's degree. I called the person who wrote the article and said, "Why didn't you put all my degrees in the article? You missed that I have a PhD in Law, Policy, and Society from [a private research university in Boston, Massachusetts]! (1st Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I Male)

Compensation was another finding identified by participants in the hiring process. One leader noted, "Not being paid a lot, sometimes I think is a deterrent" (Silents/Baby Boomers I Male). Another described, "It's a very tough job that does not pay very well in the scheme of things. You can enter the business sector for the same responsibilities and make much more money" (Female Baby Boomers II President). A candidate's credit rating was another finding in the data. One participant described how poor credit is a factor in successfully matriculating through the hiring process describing:

> There's one other one item that we don't often think about, and that's paying your bills. You have to have strong credit. Many don't know that until it's the time to get the job. And if you have a messed up credit history when they check, you will not get that job. And the philosophy is, how can you manage the college if you can't manage your own resources? (Veteran Male Baby Boomers II President)

Participants described non-competitive compensation and a poor credit history as factors in the hiring process contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Another leader noted, "Colleges aren't going in the right areas, and they're not using the right tools to conduct searches that would yield more people of color as successful candidates" (1st Generation Male). Participants described the hiring process as leaky, inconsistent standards of evaluation pertaining to credentials, traditional vs. non-traditional pathway and compensation contributing to the underrepresentation.

Impediments to the Presidency

African American participants described various impediments in ascending to the presidency including institutional culture, inconsistent expectations and standards of the role for

persons of color, the lack of a pipeline development strategy and data that supports further

inquiry of investigation of the underrepresentation. *Institutional culture* in the form of biased

perceptions of leadership, community readiness and campus cultures receptiveness to diverse

representation in leadership were themes in the data identified as impediments and gatekeepers.

One Gen X leader described underpinnings of systemic racism in institutional culture as a factor

contributing to the underrepresentation of minorities among the community college presidency.

The leader described:

> It's easy. The reason you don't see a lot of people of color in the presidency is the
> same reason you don't see them typically at CEO positions and Fortune 500
> companies. Institutional barriers that make our journey often times two and three
> times as difficult, or we have to be two to three times pristine or perfect in our
> roles. Politics in our boards and communities. There's these political realities that
> have not gone away, are not spoken explicitly, but you look at postings and you
> look at the demographics of the student body, the demographics of the board, you
> can almost guess who's going to get the job. (Third Gen X Male)

Participants described challenges in shattering biased perceptions that the traditional archetype of

a community college president can be different as a man or woman of color. A seasoned leader

stated, "I think it is harder because people don't see you as being college presidential material"

(Female Baby Boomers II Generation). Another leader attributed the board of trustees'

receptiveness for diversity in leadership stating, "board members when they're looking for the

best for their communities, they may not recognize that the best could be somebody that's

culturally different from them" (Female Baby Boomers II). Another stated, "They still want to

have the same type of individual, a white male, to serve the community college" (Third Gen X

Female). Leaders described a desire for sameness in hiring the same type of president they are

used to seeing. One CEO coined the phrase, 'The Replication Factor' to describe institutions

hiring persons that look the same as the previous leader whom often is a white male. In describing the replication factor, the leader described:

> I'm going to go back to the board of trustees because they continue to want people that look like them to serve students that don't. One of the factors is the fact that institutions believe in replication. And what I mean by that is you're hiring your own. So if you have an all-white board, you generally hire those that look like you, sound like you, come from the same educational backgrounds as you, experience as you. So the replication factor. You're just making more of the same. (Third Gen X Male)

Leader's descriptions of the replication factor to describe the propensity of institutions to hire persons that are majority and white was identified in the data. Another described the community's influence on perpetuating the status quo as a gatekeeper in the hiring process stating:

> Perpetuating the status quo may have worked in times when you had a swell in enrollment. It may have worked when you had a solid economic base of support from your local service areas. Staying in the status quo was very helpful to perpetuate sort of the nepotism that takes place in many communities where this person in the community gets a job because they know that person at the college. (Third Gen X Male)

Probing beyond institutional culture is an institution's fertility and readiness for change requires active work to create. The role of the board of trustees in creating climates of diversity and change was described as essential to the process. In describing current efforts of one leader's college to transform institutional and cultural readiness the leader stated:

> The board is engaged at the national level and talking with members of the American Community Colleges Association for Trustees. So the ACCT is engaged in cultivating that type of readiness for the boards to begin looking at candidates other than the individuals that they grew up with or hung out with. (Female Baby Boomers II President)

One veteran leader reflected on tensions and adjustments by others when the institution hired its first African American chancellor. Many individuals had trouble adjusting to change in the CEO

role that was different from what they were accustomed to. The leader reflected, "They just were not used to having an African American or Blacks in leadership roles" (Male Silents/Baby Boomers I). A Gen X leader identified the board of trustees inability to understand a leader that is not a white male as a contributor to the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents in the U.S. The leader described:

> Boards of trustees are not ready for the next generation of black leaders. They're not ready for the millennials. They're not ready for the Gen Xers because we don't look like a traditional president, nor do we come up the traditional trajectory to get to the presidency. I came up through student services. Someone else might've come up through workforce development. The board of trustees, if they're looking for the same thing they had before, a white man or a white woman who was older who came up the traditional route, that's not what they're going to get. (1st time college President)

Community members were also identified as stakeholders of the process that influence and drive change. One participant described:

> Think about the roles of leaders within communities. Most presidential searches have community members, because of the connections with the community college and the community. Sometimes, you have folks who are representing areas who are thinking about the area in which they live in, and could not see a person of color being a leader within their own communities. (Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I Male President)

Findings in the study by the African American group concluded the current community college presidency remains predominantly white male [as discussed in the literature review ACE, 2013; Gagliardi et al., 2017]. A seasoned leader described, "in general, when I talk about the tenure of community college presidents, until approximately the 2000 [year] timeframe, the majority of presidents that were in those seats were white" (1st Generation Silents/Baby Boomer I Male CEO). Participants identified the community college presidency as slow to change agreeing there is an underrepresentation of men and women of color in the presidency.

Some attribute a *lack of Data on CEOs of Color* to understanding the phenomenon. Participants identified an absence of data that reports true numbers reflecting the number of minorities that serve as CEOs in American community colleges. In describing an understanding of the numbers, one leader stated, "We have 147 black CEOs right now, out of 1200 community colleges" (Gen X, Female CEO). Another described:

> And then the numbers have not changed very much over the last 25 years and I believe is still around that 7%, 8% range of African American leaders of the 1,700 plus Community Colleges nationally. So not much has been done to motivate African American leaders. (Seasoned Male Baby Boomers II Generation President)

A Third Gen X participant observed while the numbers for African American and Asian Pacific Islanders remains low or unchanged, representation is increasing for Latino/Hispanics. The leader stated, "What we're seeing, except for in certain areas, is the insurgence of diversity now is among Latinx" (Female President). Participants believe more work needs to be done by formal associations to address the underrepresentation. On leader stated:

> I'm going to stay on this [subject] of board of trustees because ACCT, they have got to start addressing this. AACC, they've got to start addressing this. Until they do, we will continue to have less than 1% of women of color serve in the presidency. Actually, there are more Hispanic men being hired now than black women or black men. Less than 1%. AACC has over 1,100 community colleges, right? And this is why your study is so important because it will put the truth right in front of them. (Third Generation Gen X Female President)

A theme identified in the data was a deficiency of data reporting on the number of currently serving minority community college presidents.

Institutional culture and readiness for leaders of color was identified as a factor in the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. A challenge in redefining an institutions readiness to embrace change was the hurdle of, "I'm going back to the board of trustees because they continue to want people that look like them to serve the students. They still

want to have the same type of individual, a white male, to serve the community college" (Third

Gen X Female). Candidates also have a responsibility in understanding the institutions and

communities they seek to serve and assessing their fit and ability to drive change. A leader

described:

> Race and racism is as American as Apple pie. And as a result of that, it is endemic
> in everything including what roles people are going to apply for. When I mentor, I
> talk about Fit and Fit is often times dictated by the competence and awareness of
> that community in terms of it receiving a person of color or woman in the role [of
> president]. If the predecessor is a white male who's been president for 25 years,
> and that community has very few people of color or women, who are in
> leadership roles. Are you prepared for what that means? You may become the
> first black president, the first woman president, the first gay or lesbian president,
> the first president with unique abilities, the first president under 50, etc. So you
> have to know how all of that is going to influence what you bring into that space.
> (Third Gen X Female Two-time President)

New leaders must be adept in transforming institutional culture while building a vision and

momentum for change. A change that many board of trustees and communities may be ready to

embrace. Leadership has its natural highs and lows. Many described being a leader of color in

the community college presidency an honor that yields exciting moments. A seasoned leader

described:

> Being an African American leader in predominantly white institutions, which still
> has challenges in its own. Especially when my immediate charge from my board
> was to guide change and change is not well received for perhaps persons who
> have been doing things one way and they're not interested in changing it. Being
> able to still engage, encourage and motivate the team to embrace the change and
> those perhaps who may not make the necessary decisions to do what's in the best
> interests of the college. So there's been some unpleasant moments, but then there
> have been many exciting times in my presidency as an African American leader.
> (Baby Boomers II Generation)

One Male Baby Boomers II CEO described:

> Part of the problem with Black Lives Matter is that the majority of my board doesn't support it. I support it but the majority of my board doesn't support it and the majority of my board is white. The majority of my board are white males. Okay, what's changed? So if you've got people sitting on the board from Iowa, and Utah, and Wyoming, the Dakotas, even places like Washington State, it can be a challenge as a leader of color to promote change. (Male Baby Boomers II Generation)

Another 1st Generation Silents/Baby Boomer I stated, "in general, when I talk about the tenure of community college presidents, until approximately the 2000 [year] timeframe, the majority of presidents that were in those seats were white" (Male Chancellor). A female leader described:

> I've served on a board where it was all white male, and they couldn't hear me and they couldn't see me. So I had to kind of battle to get people to listen to me. So it was an adjustment for them to how I work". (Baby Boomers II Generation)

Participants in the African American group identified various impediments along the journey to the community college presidency including institutional culture and biased perceptions of what leadership referred to as the replication factor and the propensity of institutions to hire the same type of leader. The role of the board of trustees in creating climates of diversity and change, cultural competency stakeholders that influence and drive change and institutional readiness were findings. Participants provided counter-stories describing the number of CEOs of color at community colleges in the U.S. The inconsistency of numbers supports a deficiency in data reporting as a finding.

Structural Barriers

A myriad of factors related to the underrepresentation identified as structural barriers by the African American group included the lack of a pipeline development strategy, role models, access and opportunities to leadership development experiences and location of institution. In identifying the *need of a pipeline development strategy* one leader described:

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If you don't have a pipeline development strategy that says "We've got to get those brand new faculty members on a permanent track, and we've got to get them administrative opportunities that create opportunities for them to get deanships and vice presidencies and provosts and president positions" Because there's no structured ladder when the pathway is through to provost. There's no structured ladder necessarily when the pathways even through the vice president of student affairs. There's no structured pathway for when it comes out of vice president of finance administration or the other areas. (Third Gen X Male President)

Participants described the role of mentors as a part of that strategy to identify, encouraging and develop prospective candidates towards a pathway to the presidency. A first-time president stated:

We need to give more attention to the pipeline so that we can start having some of these searches, and search firms seeing all of these candidates of color. I feel like we need to do more to get more of us out there and into the presidency. (Third Gen X Male President)

The need for a pipeline development strategy was identified in the data by the African American group.

An indirect consequence of the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents is the lack of *role models*. Participants described the importance of role models in considering the presidency as a career pathway. A female leader stated, "In a kind of long tangential way, what inspired me to go into education was my first and perhaps my only African-American female teacher" (Baby Boomers II Generation). Another stated, "I think people, particularly women of color, men of color, probably less so, but they underestimate themselves all because they don't see models of that" (Third Gen X Female President). In acknowledging the career pathway crisis for leaders of color, one participated stated, "first of all, you need to understand that minority males specifically, or minorities as a whole, sometimes would not look at higher education as an avenue for a career choice" (1st generation Male CEO). Others attributed having leaders of color as role models as a form of social capital. A participant stated,

"what I'm getting at is, is the biggest difference between being Black or White in this instance is being Black, we need social capital" (Fourth Gen X II/Millennials Male). Role models as leaders of color was a finding identified as important and a contributor to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents.

Access and opportunity to develop leadership experiences and networks are structural barriers that operate as a gatekeepers was identified in the study. One male leader defined it succinctly as, "I think some of the gatekeepers are things that don't allow you to get the experiences you need. Internal barriers that don't allow one to move up" (Veteran Female President in the Southeast). In describing access to education, one leader stated, "The ability to go to college and then go on and get advanced degrees and so forth. Not everybody has that opportunity" (Female Baby Boomers II). Lack of or limited resources to complete education is an example of a structural barrier in the form of a gatekeeper to the presidency.

Access, opportunities and *exposure to leadership experiences in senior level roles* were themes identified by African American participants. One leader stated it plainly, "I think that along with the role and how difficult it is, is some the opportunity to develop experiences in senior level roles that is not available to them or supported" (Two-time, Baby Boomers II Female). Another leader of the same generation was more emphatic stating, "Oftentimes, the comment is, "Well, you don't have experience." Well, we'll never have experience if I don't have an opportunity. But I have the potential to do the job and educational foundation to support the job if provided" (Two-time veteran Male leader serving in the Northeast). Participants described a perception of low numbers of persons of color in the traditional academic pathway which includes roles as faculty, deans, department chairs and provost which presents a structural barrier.

The *traditional vs. non-traditional pathways* was identified as having inconsistent standards for evaluation. Leader's described how elitist perceptions negate pathway experiences and non-traditional pathways forming a structural barrier and serving as a gatekeeping to the presidency. Participants described limited access and opportunities to matriculate to the academic track for persons of color stated by one leader, "you have to have a certain set of experiences that oftentimes we're not afforded in our pathway toward that role" (1st Time Gen X Male President). Others argued if the academic pathway is the gatekeeper to the presidency and persons of color are disproportionately represented in that pathway, then it becomes a structural barrier to the presidency. A leader stated, "if that was the traditional track [academic pathway] or the expected track and if we're not getting to that level, how could you be expected to go onto the presidency?" (Male Baby Boomers II Generation CEO). Participants described perceived structural barriers that inhibit persons from gaining the credentials and experience necessary to obtain the presidency. A lack of financial resources and support were described as barriers and gatekeepers to the presidency.

The importance of *mentors, allies and support networks* often garnered through formal and informal leadership development experiences was a finding in the data. Another agreed stating, "one of the things that come right to my mind is access to networks [the researcher understood this statement to reflect a barrier to ascendency]" (Male Baby Boomers II Generation). The inability to garner these experiences in the form of access, opportunity and exposure to networks and experiences is a structural barrier that contributes to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents.

The *location* of a college and amenities available within the surrounding community was described as a challenge when attracting talent to certain college areas and a finding that

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contributes to the underrepresentation. Participants described the prominence of basic amenities including arts and culture, shopping malls, hair and barber salons to the attraction of serving in metropolitan areas opposed to rural communities which lack the same amenities. One Gen X leader described, "I think part of what is contributing to some of the racial and gender disparities, particularly racial, is some of the locations of the community colleges" (Male President). Many leaders of color described a preference of serving in metropolitan centers vs. rural communities. One participant observed, "A lot of the colleges are in rural areas. Most of the colleges are not in urban areas" (Baby Boomers II Generation Female). The ability to attract talent was a finding in the study and the location of an institution was identified as contributor.

Findings in the data on why location impedes attracting talent include a desire for basic amenities for persons of color. A leader described the challenge in attracting minorities to certain areas as:

> It ties into when you mentioned location. So some of the factors are, again for both men and women and persons of color in particular, where do you get your hair done? Are you the only other? Are there shared experiences? Where do you go to church? I pulled away from certain things because even though I wanted to go and live in certain areas, I just felt like it wasn't appropriate [for me]. (Female two-time President)

The lure of the college's location and diverse student demographics in attracting candidates of color to certain regions was identified as a negative position to defend in hiring practices. A leader described:

> In this region, people see this institution as an HBCU [historically black college or university]. This is the only experience I've had where all the applicants for senior positions produced a dominantly Black candidate pool. I did an executive search for one position that yielded about 80 applicants, another position with a similar amount and they all were African American candidates except three. Now, what do you want me to do? Do you want me to keep going out till I find a more balanced candidate pool? I can't apologize for that. That talent is attracted to this

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campus because of who we serve. I won't apologize for that. (Two-time Third
Gen X Male President)

In diversifying the community college presidency, candidates should be open to relocating to communities of need including rural communities that desire but may not be ethnically diverse. A leader serving in the rural Midwest described:

> I listen to people being choosy about where they want to be a president at. They are not open to those opportunities [rural, communities not as diverse] as well. I think it goes both ways. Or being in an area where there is different majority community. They only want to be in an institution where the students and the community is just as diverse as they are. (Female Baby Boomers II Generation 1st-time President)

Institution's that advocate for diverse and inclusive change are often wary when too much change occurs at once. All leaders formulate their vision by assessing the institutional needs and staffing mix. One new leader described an incident where efforts to transform a struggling unit was interpreted negatively and perceived as disruptive by the new leader of color. They described:

> It's going to always be an issue when it comes down to issues of hiring people. Two examples. One, in my first presidency, Workforce Development was an area we were struggling with at that institution. I met and hired a very talented young woman, who was leaving the industry around '07, '08 after the financial crisis. I hired her part-time and she was processing grants and partnerships, just running circles around the others. An anonymous letter was sent to the president of the board of trustees, the chancellor and our chief HR director stating I hired this woman unfairly. (Gen X Male President in the South)

Participants described structural barriers to the presidency including lack of a pipeline development strategy, few role models of color, and financial resources in support of an educational foundation. Valuing leadership experiences in non-traditional pathways, an institution's location in isolated rural areas, their proximity to metropolitan areas and lack of amenities for persons of color were findings.

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How Race and Racism contributes to Racial and Gender Disparities in the Presidency

Race and racism in its subtleties was identified as a contributor to racial and gender underrepresentation in the community college presidency. Interview questions three and four asked leaders the extent they believe race and racism contributes and to describe factors they believe contributes to racial and gender disparities among community college presidents today. A Third Gen X male described the nuances and subtleties' of race and racism on the understanding describing:

> I'm a big believer that I'm given the position that I applied for. I like to ask the question, "What can I do better in the process," And that question, part of it is my own growth. Part of it is challenging that organization to verbalize why they didn't give me the job. If they can verbalize that with the facts, awesome, you chose a better person. That's great. You know, I need to improve on X, Y, and Z. But if you can't really answer that question with good information, good data then you need to rethink how you go about doing things. So, I think in that regard, can I say it was because of my skin color. No, I can't tell you that for sure. Do I suspect that has something to do with it? Very much so. (Male President)

Participants described biases, preconceived perceptions of a leader's competency and ability to lead given all things equal, having to prove oneself, invisibility, silence, and the absence of diverse voice contributions at the table. Race and racism are a toll to being a leader and a person of color in a presidential role.

One's *ability to lead* and competence to serve based on prejudicial ethnic and gender bias of persons of color was a finding. A veteran male leader stated, "People have preconceived notions of people's ability before they get there, simply because they're minorities" (1st Gen Silents/Baby Boomer I CEO). A lack of diversity and experiences with persons from other ethnic groups and cultures informs institutional culture. A leader observed, "If it's an overwhelming majority Caucasian [institutional culture and leadership], it's very difficult for them to see that you would be someone that would be good for them to have to lead you" (1st-time Male

President and Baby Boomers II). A lack of diversity and diverse experiences informs one's

cultural competence. A lack of cultural competence informs preconceived perceptions,

stereotypes and bias which is the byproduct of racism as a social construct. Lack of

understanding leads to fear. A Male CEO described perceptions and bias contributing to the

underrepresentation describing:

> I would say the color of your skin, the perception of where you grew up, like
> Chicago or something like that, Detroit. When people hear those things, they start
> formulating mental models. I would also say the language that you use. When I
> went away to school and in Iowa, and then came home the first time, people said,
> "You're talking white." It's like most of us. We don't realize how our vocabulary
> changes in the environments that we're in. If you cannot change it, your
> mannerisms, the way you dress, people will get that first impression, and they will
> start filling out their own little check card. To me, I think it all leads to their
> preconceived perceptions about who you are and how you think, and what you
> will do that may be disparaging to them, and a threat to them. I think those are
> some of the issues. (1st Gen Silents/Baby Boomer I).

Participants described *gender bias* as a factor contributing to a racial and gender disparity among

community college presidents today. One participant described serving on a selection committee

where another member's biased evaluation of a female candidate's mobility influenced other

committee members precluding the female candidate from moving forward. The Female CEO

recalled:

> I have been in search committees where people will say things about women, they
> don't dare ask the same questions about men. Like 'She has small kids, would she
> really want to do this job?' or, 'She has small kids, what is her ability to accept
> the role? (Second Generation Baby Boomer II)

Gender bias was a finding identified as contributing to racial and gender disparities of

community college presidents of color.

Racism is a social construct. Stereotypes reinforce a need to subdue members of ethnic

minority groups that are built on racialized biases. Where minorities are perceived as a threat to

power, bias, stereotypes and preconceived notions reinforce the threat and with it a need to neutralize their power. Findings in the study identified the social construction of racism as contributing to the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. Leaders described the toll of having to disprove stereotype threats including having to prove one's competency, battling low expectations of leadership, invisibility, absence and silence of voice contribution and the perception of inheriting distressed vs. healthy institutions.

Leaders described *having to prove their competency* and justify their ability to lead. A female leader described:

> That bias about competency and then the assumptions that people make about folks of color and women. It's almost like you have to prove yourself. Many of those institutions are run by White men, and as a woman and a person of color, I go out into those settings and have to constantly prove myself, over and over again. (Baby Boomers II President)

A dominant theme in the study by the African American ethnic group was the constant need to prove and justify one's competency, ability and qualifications to be viewed as legitimate contenders in leadership roles, including the presidency. A 1st Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I described:

> Those who are not in the position of Chancellor who believe that others who follow them should look like them, should act like them, we don't deserve that, even if you've proven yourself in other places. I just think that I've spent my career getting credentials so they couldn't say I didn't have a credential. (Male CEO)

Participants described their experiences in having their credentials scrutinized and experiences marginalized. Leaders reported having their qualifications and competence as leaders challenged and in comparison to their white counterparts. Descriptors in the data supported ethnic marginalization, cultural devaluation and psychological effects of Tokenism and the Imposter Syndrome both by-products of racism.

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Others described *battling low expectations* of others. One veteran leader reflected, "I battled low expectations from others. Not low expectations of myself because I never had that, but I certainly had people who had low expectations of me in the role" (Third Gen X Male). Having to prove one's competency and low expectations of abilities was a finding in the study. The byproducts of stereotype threat's perception in loss of power is palpable and manifests itself in many ways. One CEO described:

> I think the whole equity diversity piece resonates greatly for us because we know of all the challenges that comes with being diverse or a person of color. It's more of taking the experience as a competent leader and bringing that to the situation because as a person of color and a president, it's always more challenging. The tragedy is many persons of color are limited, influenced and in some cases conditioned by all of these stereotypes making it difficult for them to deal with their circumstances in being disregarded. I've seen that time, and time, and time again and so have you. I think that that is part of that invisibility, credibility, it's part of the whole power piece because one of the things that people try to do to people of color is to lessen or buffer whatever power, authority they're supposed to have. That whole power concept, that even though you might be in the role, you don't have the power. (Male Baby Boomers II Generation)

Others described it in the form of slights, of being ignored and disregarded. In describing race and racism on the underrepresentation one participated stated, "I would label that as being invisible or disregarded. I think it's all that. I think it's the invisibility, I think it's the credibility. I think actually, it's just downright disrespect" (Veteran Baby Boomers II Male). Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation is based on the premise of persons desiring safety in the form of employment, belonging in the sense of connection to others and esteem in the form of respect, self-esteem, status and recognition as a basic human need. Racism, in all of its constructs dehumanizes persons of color. Denying one's existence as invisible or disregarding one's contribution is racist. A male leader described being disregarded in a statewide meeting stating:

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My first year, we had the statewide meetings with all the presidents, the state chancellor, and the vice chancellors out of 24 colleges. I walk in but, at the time, no one lifts up their head. They don't say anything, nor attempted nor gotten to know you. And, I got to a point one day when I walked in that room and I said, "You know, and they lifted up their heads," I said, "Where I come from, when White folks don't look at you and they stare at other things and don't acknowledge that you've come in, we've got to think that your racist. We think that you're not quite as interested in us." And I said, "It's no different if this room were all men and a woman comes in here every time and you don't look up." And, I'm like, "It's rude." And it shook the room, and they all felt some kind of way. (Male Gen X II/Millennials I President)

A female leader described treatment of being invisible and disregarded as:

You know, you've been enough settings and meetings where, both as a woman and African-American, you say something, it gets no play, somebody comes back there in the same meeting and says the same thing and they're going to say, it's the most-impressive idea heard yet. (Baby Boomers II Generation)

Some are hopeful that while the representations are low, the higher education culture is changing acknowledging a need for more diverse voices. One participant stated, "When I moved into my spaces, I think academia started to recognize that there was an absence of certain voices at the table" (Third Gen X Female President). Others are realistic as Another Gen X described:

I believe that until we can tell all the story, the whole story about the black woman's experience, about the minority woman's experience or about the roles of the presidency from a black person's perspective, until we can really tell that truth, give voice, the board members will still hire the same people that look like them. (Third Gen X 1st time President)

The voice contribution of persons of color was identified in the data as being silent, silenced, and a need for greater numbers of persons of color in the community college presidency.

Another finding was the perception by leaders of *a propensity for minorities to inherit distressed vs. healthy colleges*. A Gen X male described, "It's rare that we get an opportunity that's healthy. We get an institution when it's in trouble, we get the job no one wants". Another Gen X stated pointedly:

You have all these students of color who may have lots of different issues, why don't you consider a CEO who's a person of color?" Now on the one hand, that's great. That's wonderful because you want to have a CEO that meets the contemporary needs of the students. But you now still have to deal with the fact that the benign neglect of those years of diversification of the student body without any interventions and actions to address the needs of diversity as they were happening. So you now come in to address the cumulative effect of benign neglect. (Third Generation X Male)

Data from African American participants identified attributes of racism, gender bias and feelings experienced from Tokenism, the Imposter Syndrome and John Henry-ism contributing to the underrepresentation. Themes that arose in the African American group for question one included; a) no clear pathway to the presidency, b) the hiring process, c) impediments to the presidency, d) structural barriers and e) race and racism were identified as contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents.

Research Question 1: Asian Pacific Islander

Asian Pacific Islander - Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" They described factors based on their experience and understanding of racial and gender disparities including race and racism as well as incidents of race and gender that may have positively or negatively influenced their career. Themes that arose in the Asian Pacific Islander group for research question one include the a) hiring process, b) systemic inequities as barriers , c) what was referred to as a glass, bamboo or plexiglas ceiling, d) race and racism, e) effects of prejudicial stereotypes, f) the model minority and imposter syndrome.

The hiring process was identified as a gatekeeper contributing to the underrepresentation. Stakeholders of the process were identified as search, selection and hiring committees. Participants recommended a criterion for evaluation of candidates to reduce bias and an effort by institution to create a welcoming culture. One leader described:

> Absolutely, members of hiring and selection committees. And so that would be all of the involved beginning first with the CEO of the college who says to the search team, what are desired qualities that the individual that we want to bring in insisting that the committee creates reasonable criteria rather than criteria that they want to develop. But sometimes we have to insist on criteria that will bring about equity and inclusion. And then ensuring that the right individuals are part of that search process. And that there is a rubric as an example, created that aligns the interview process allowing for less margin of error, biases, and perception, but more alignment with what is it that the institution wants to achieve. And then down to hiring a supervisor who makes the job offer, and what does the onboarding look like? (Female Baby Boomers II)

Another leader argued the need for CEOs to create inviting cultures and have inclusive and diverse voices as part of the process. The leader stated:

> The processes and stuff with the hiring, how do we make individuals feel comfortable so that they then include others that look like them to be a part of the

institution and invite others and pay it forward. It has to be the entire system that works together. But I think it starts with the CEO, the president who insists that, that be in place. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Female)

The hiring process was identified as a contributor to the underrepresentation.

Systemic Inequities

The Asian Pacific Islander group identified challenges in the pipeline to the presidency that contributes to the underrepresentation described as systemic inequities. *A lack of cultivation* was identified and described by one leader as, "First the lack of nurturing or the nurturing and cultivating of the pipeline to ensure that more minorities see the presidency as a viable opportunity" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II). Others described a lack of representation in mid-level management and senior roles necessary to matriculate to the presidency. The need for persons of color as role models and in positions of leadership were described as essential to identifying and developing candidates in the pipeline. On the need for more opportunities for leadership development experience to diversify and procure perspective candidates a leader described:

> The most important key, is to get people in the pipeline, and where does that pipeline start? It starts as a student and you have to have people moving forward to those roles but you can only do that if you have leadership at the vice president's level, the dean's level, the assistant dean's level and beyond. (Fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials I Male)

Another leader described one form of systemic inequities and referred to as a ceiling. The CEO described:

> The first one is the pipeline. Particularly for Asian American Pacific Islanders. It's a growing population and we are definitely represented both at the students and at faculty and staff, but there's definitely a bamboo ceiling or a glass ceiling to take on more leadership roles. There's both internal and external barriers that contribute to that. (Third Generation Female)

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The ability for Asian Pacific Islanders to have access and opportunity for mid-level and senior leadership roles and experience was a factor contributing to low representation in the presidential pipeline. A Gen X leader stated, "It's the lack of the pipeline despite the fact that there's numbers". Data from the Asian Pacific Islander group identified factors in the pipeline as a barrier. Participants in the Asian Pacific Islander group described elements and stakeholders in the hiring process as a gatekeeper to the presidency. Leaders advocated for more criterion for evaluation of candidates to reduce bias and create welcoming cultures.

A Glass, Bamboo or Plexiglas Ceiling

Another inequity was referred to as a glass, bamboo or plexiglas ceiling and were themes identified as contributing to a racial and gender disparity among community college presidents. In addressing the complex properties of the *glass ceiling* a participant described:

> There's always a glass ceiling for people like us to help transcend institutions. There's definitely a bamboo ceiling or a glass ceiling to take on more leadership roles. Yes, there's a glass ceiling. Other [research on AAPI women in higher education] even described it as a plexiglas. A lot of minorities, you think you get there, and then you're bounced back. It even feels like plexiglas. (Third Generation Gen X Female)

Although leaders describe the phenomenon as a ceiling and contributor to underrepresentation, they perceive it as navigable. A leader described:

> People need to know that it's not easy for minority women. We all talk about and use the figurative language of the glass ceiling. Well, it is indeed there. But I think that it is navigable, and it is navigable through creating a network and chiseling away at it persistently and with small wins. (Baby Boomer II Female CEO)

Barriers in the form of a glass, bamboo or plexiglas ceiling and were themes identified by the Asian Pacific Islander ethnic group.

The community college presidency was noted as diversifying slowly. Representation by the Asian Pacific Islander group was noted as severely low with minuscule increase, the outlook

for leaders of color as a whole is promising. A leader stated, "In the last 15 to 20 years, we see minorities become college presidents. The numbers are changing, but very slowly" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II Male CEO). Data identified in the study by the Asian Pacific Islander group revealed the hiring process and systemic inequities of leadership progression and a glass, bamboo or plexiglas ceiling and slowly diversifying presidency as themes.

Race and Racism on the Underrepresentation

Participants described factors contributing to racial and gender disparities related to race and racism. The data identified biases, systemic racism, systemic inequities within institutional culture, and experiences of microaggressions because of stereotypes and prejudice. Leaders described systemic racism and racialized constructs perpetuated by racist societal stereotypes as a contributor to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Higher education is not immune. In describing systemic inequities of white privilege a leader described:

> Embedded in that is really systemically what we have, which we're beginning to undo, no more than in our society. It's just that recognition that higher education, including the community college system, though it's supposed to democratize our education is still built systemically with white privilege and the picture of white power. (Third Generation Gen X CEO)

The prevalence of *prejudicial stereotypes* is imbedded in societal cultural and institutional cultures. One leader observed, "It's been reshaped, but let's not forget where it came from, and that's from its roots, from its structured institutional stereotypes" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II Male CEO). Another leader reflected on biases and structural inequities contribute to a racial and gender disparity in the presidency stating:

> I would say too, even in this current environment there are the kind of inequities and the racism and stuff like that, I'm sure in your research you'll find a lot of these structural inequities and implicit bias. They certainly are there. They would apply to any minority, I would say. And so, there's a systemic and a structural thing that also is keeping more, I would say, minorities from leadership positions.

Participants argue the deep seeded nature and embeddedness of racism in social and institutional

culture as a reality of the landscape persons of color must navigate. A leader described:

> There are many factors. So for me, I think that one, as a nation, we may love
> progress in many areas from civil rights movement or women's rights voting, now
> to today. But the recent social justice movement clearly taught us, despite the
> progress we've made as a nation, minorities in this country still have a steep hill to
> climb. There are indeed, not just in higher education, there are structured biases,
> racism going on that sometimes is it's covered. That obviously plays into the
> higher education industry and particularly, minority presidents to become chief
> leaders to lead because the overall structure, the overall recognition that the
> minority faculty and administrators can become the CEO, can lead. So I think in
> the environment, the structural racism and stereotypes, that's probably the overall
> milieu if you will. The overall environment contributes to that. (Second
> Generation Male Baby Boomer II)

Prejudicial stereotypes were dominant themes reported in the study.

The evidence of allies, positive work by community college associations and others was

noted as being obscured by the prevalence of prejudicial stereotypes. Participants concede

progress in good efforts described as:

> Think the stereotypes, structure to racism, misunderstanding stereotypes about
> minority candidates and lack of supportive network for minorities, mentorship
> network. For minority women, if you were not in that network, it's hard to break.
> Our existing system, despite again, the progress … there are lots of good people
> out there. There are lots of good organizations, including ACCT, AACC. They're
> trying to do a lot of good work. But the network, the bias, it's so subtle. (Second
> Generation Baby Boomer II Chancellor)

A need for more role models mentors and support networks for minorities was a finding in the

study for the Asian Pacific Islander group to combat race and racism in the academy contributing

to the underrepresentation of minority presidents.

The role of *institutional culture* to impacting change was identified in the data. A female

leader described, "The culture of the institution, I think plays a large part in the placement and

the success of the president" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II). Another leader from the

same generation noted the impact shared governance in a majority white culture can have as positive or negative stating, "Community colleges are still built under the higher educational culture. They're still an academic hierarchy based on shared governance" (Female CEO). In describing how institutional cultures can be positively formed, a fourth Gen X II/Millennials I stated, "if you have the culture that has a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity, then that's the vision" (Male President). Data from the participants described institutional culture as a contributor to the underrepresentation.

Prejudicial Stereotypes Effect on Leaders of Color

Experiences of *Discrimination* based on stereotypes were identified by participants as factors of the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Leaders described experiences with being discriminated against based on *stereotypes of age, accent, stature, and being typecast* which they referred to as being 'pigeon-holed'. Findings in the data included experiences of prejudicial bias of a participants ability to lead as a result of their age. Preconceived notions of leadership experience related to age was described by a male leader:

> I experienced more discrimination based on age. I think it was harder for me to notice because I wasn't paying attention as much because more of the discrimination was based on age and the fact that I worked at places that promoted racial diversity, ethnic diversity. (Fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials I)

A dominant theme for API was discrimination based on persons speaking with an accent. Many found this form of discrimination bewildering given the rich diversity of the nation and our community colleges as one leader observed, "You hear accents all the time" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II female stated). Others described discrimination and microaggressions as a result of speaking with an accent. One leader described it as an impediment that informs preconceived notions of what leadership looks and sounds like. The leader stated:

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I have a very strong accent. I have a very strong Filipino accent. That also informed me. For us, AAPI, the command of the English language, it's a huge barrier. At the end of it, they just focus on your accent rather than the content of what you're communicating. (Third Gen X Female CEO)

Another described their efforts in working hard to overcome the language barrier given society's negative perceptions, discrimination and treatment of persons speaking with an accent. A CEO stated, "Because of my culture and my background, and the fact that I know the stereotypes the general community may have towards an Asian-American, an immigrant who came into this country, adjusted to this culture, who speaks with an accent" (Male Baby Boomer II CEO).

Many participants described incidents of blatant, overt and racist attacks, some in the form of microaggressions, merely because they were not a member of an ethnic group that is not of the majority. One leader described an experience on *how race and racism contributes to race and gender underrepresentation* in the community college presidency. The leader described:

To a large extent structured racism cultivates misimpression, misinformation and stereotypes. It erodes the confidence on the part of the candidate themselves, as well as the recruiting committees, recruiting taskforces, and the board of trustees who makes the final choices. This is a big issue. I'll share a personal story. Prior to the position, I spent almost a decade as a college president not including my tenure in other senior roles as a provost. A strategic planning Cabinet meeting was convened that included campus presidents from each college and faculty representing various disciplines that was being video streamed. After I reported out on one of the items a faculty member was overheard saying, "Huh? This is interesting. We have a college president who can't even speak English. He has an accent. How can he lead?" The college didn't say anything, did not confront, but the faculty just keeps walking and exclaiming, "This is a waste of time. He can't even say a sentence right. He has an accent and it's so hard to understand." Now, I know I speak with an accent. I know I don't speak perfect English but my English is not poor. Hardly, anybody tells me, "I can't understand you". The point is, often in the mind of people, when they look at a college president or CEO, they have in their mind an image that the persons standing there does not fit and hence, they cannot be a good president. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male)

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Others described that once persons of color successfully breach the top and become a community college president/CEO, they have an extra burden. A burden to work harder at disproving racist stereotypes and overcoming negative biases and mindsets of others at the institution. Participants described discrimination and lost opportunities based on preconceived notions of persons with accents. One leader described, "The fact that I was Asian-American, I appeared to be soft-spoken, and I appeared to be speaking with an accent, played a big factor and cause for me not to garner enough support to move forward." (Second Generation Male Baby Boomer II). Discrimination based on stereotypes of persons speaking with an accent was a dominant theme in the study.

Stature was a stereotype described as contributing to racial and gender disparities. In describing *statur*e, a participant noted, "stature and you hear accents all the time. Of course, you hear color those things that are visual, but stature? Would you think stature will play a role into, as you say, you typecast how you fit? Absolutely, it does" (Second Generation Female Baby Boomers II). Other forms of stereotypes described was stature, gender bias and being typecast.

One leader described an experience of multiple forms of stereotype in play including stature, ethnic neutral name and gender bias. A leader described:

> When the community member came in, because he only knew that the executive vice president's name was Dr. [Devonshire], he immediately reached over to my dean who was a tall white man, and who's originally from England. So he had an English accent and the man extended his hand said, "Hello, good morning, Dr. [Devonshire]. And so, 10 years ago I would have been highly upset, but it just amuses me now. Because not only am I 5'2 and a half, my last name doesn't coincide with the way I look. (Second Generation Female Baby Boomers II)

Stereotypes are racist societal constructs that when formed and acted upon result in discrimination and impediments to leadership advancement. In describing the *propensity to be typecast* based on the stereotype of a person's technical area of expertise, a leader described:

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Typically, if [minorities] are well-educated in certain areas, they have a Ph.D. in certain areas, they're considered good professors and teachers, and nothing more. An example was, 'Oh, she's great a great Science faculty member. She loves her subject and is really enthusiastic. Do I really want to pull her out of the lab and lead the Department as Chair or consider her as a Vice President? I don't think so. They tend to be pigeonholed in that area. (Second Generation Baby Boomer II Male President)

CEOs described their experiences of discrimination based on stereotypes of age, speaking with an accent, stature, being typecast and pigeon-holed into certain areas and denied opportunities for advancement, prejudices based on archetypal image of what leaders look like.

Microaggressions are by-product racism as a social construct that is informed by the types of prejudicial stereotypes and discrimination identified by participants in the study. The covert nature of microaggressions is a perplexing concept for many to comprehend. One leader in trying to understand stated, "Even myself, you will have Chinese scientists and researchers, but the command of the English accent, it's either micro-aggression or it's been really embedded in the system" (Second Generation Baby Boomer II Female). Findings from the study included microaggressions as a burden.

The Model Minority Stereotype and Imposter Syndrome

Themes in the data concluded all participants identified with preconceived stereotypes of a model minority and feelings attributed to the Imposter Syndrome. Leaders described a need to assimilate, feelings of discouragement, isolation, and self-doubt, invalidation and being discounted. They also described negative stereotypes associated with the Model Minority stereotype including invisibility and tokenism.

Assimilation was described as a strategy for survival in navigating the landscape. In describing *assimilation*, a female leader stated:

To get where I need to be, I have to assimilate, right? I have to adapt to this majority because that's the structure, that's the culture. But during that process of assimilation, the white culture, though it is entrenched systemically, there are also a number of allies. (Baby Boomers II CEO)

The pressures placed on persons of color is stressful, discouraging and identified as a factor in the underrepresentation. One male leader described it as, "Sometimes, a candidate is saying, "I don't want to do this. I need to be myself. I can't pretend to be someone who I am not. Some people just essentially step away and say, "This is not for me" [they are discouraged]" (Baby Boomers II President). Participants described assimilation as a theme in the study.

Participants described feelings of *isolation and self-doubt* which are byproducts of the Model Minority stereotype and the Imposter Syndrome. The Model Minority as a racist stereotype and the psychological effects of the Imposter Syndrome constructs of racism serving as tools used to subjugate ethnic groups and serve as socio, economic and political inequalities and barriers to advancement. In describing self-doubt, A Baby Boomers II CEO stated, "I had self-doubt. Sometimes I thought about just to stay where I am instead of moving on, but I overcame my self-doubt." Others described the toll constant disparaging incidents and slights of discrimination, racism and microaggressions have in eroding a person's self-confidence. A male CEO described:

The challenge has been, Asian minority often is not well-understood by people outside the culture. We tend to be, just like other minority stereotypes, whether it's African-American, Latino, or Native American administrators, Asians tend to be perceived as quiet and sometimes lacking leadership ability. We don't have the courage or the resolve to make difficult decisions. In my first presidency, people were saying, "He was hired because he was a minority, not because he had the ability." So even though there were some minor voices, the trust erodes your confidence in yourself. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II CEO)

One participant described transforming feelings of self-doubt and isolation into fuel for developing tools of inner strength noting, "So those were challenging [feeling of self-doubt and

isolation] things that I had to overcome because I knew no one else could do it for me and you, right?" (Female Baby Boomers II CEO). Participants described having a firm family and faith support network to overcoming self-doubt.

Feelings of being made to be invisible was a finding in the Asian Pacific Islander group. In describing the phenomenon of being *invisible*, a female asked, "how do you transcend the invisibility?" (Baby Boomers II). Data from the field notes described invisibility as being discounted, not recognized, and not validated. The leader further described:

> In this case, yours is invisibility and invalidation, and how it makes you feel to always have to come up against that as you move through". Another male CEO from the same generation described, "They may hear you, they may say hi, but you know they're not paying attention to you. It's almost like a snobbish thing. They don't really pay attention to you." In describing *a lack of support networks for minorities*, the same CEO stated there is a "lack of supportive network for minorities. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Female)

Findings in the data identified assimilation, feelings of discouragement, isolation, self-doubt, invalidation and being discounted as byproducts of race as a social construct.

The *Model Minority stereotype* was identified in the data as an instrument crafted to perpetuate negative stereotypes of Asian Pacific Islanders. It is a social construct of racism used to mitigate power of ethnic groups. It can be effectively devastating when stereotypes are perpetuated within organizational cultures of higher education and internalized by the individual to whom it is targeted. A male leader noted, "The reason we put limitations, we put a ceiling for ourselves is because of what the culture has taught us, what media has taught us, and that is expected (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male). Another leader considered transforming notions of the model minority stereotype into a catalyst for breaking out of the typecast and stereotype it portrays. The leader described:

Well, I'll say very personally, as an Asian American, I kind of have studied and now have really observed the theory of the model minority. I believe it's very accurate in terms of typically Asians and Asian Americans are quiet. And that to me fits almost right within the pattern of a modern minority as the ones to keep quiet. They're not going to rock the boat, they'll just accept it and deal with it. Well, in the community colleges on many, many fronts, you can when you're advocating for the budget when you're advocating for your most vulnerable students. It's only a certain piece of the pie, you've got to come out strong, and you've got to not take it as such. You have to be very assertive, you have to be vocal, and you have to be out there. Sometimes kind of being a catalyst, kind of stirring the pot. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male).

The model minority stereotype has proven to be an effective geo-political tool to sustain racial oppression among Asian Pacific Islanders.

Tokenism is another social construct of racism identified as a theme in the data for this group. A female leader described her introduction to the concept of tokenism when she was informed by an HR representative of her inclusion on a selection committee because her ethnicity as an Asian female, she was told, helped with the need to diversify representation on the committee. They also noted that these feelings and beliefs of having to assimilate to be successful is one strategy developed to navigate societal constructs they don't understand.

Themes that arose in the Asian Pacific Islander ethnic group for research question one included the a) hiring process, b) systemic inequities including lack of cultivation and development of the pipeline, c) a Glass, bamboo or plexiglas ceiling, d) race and racism's effect on an underrepresentation of women of color, e) effect of prejudicial stereotypes including the model minority & imposter syndrome.

Research Question 1: Latino/Hispanic

Latino/Hispanic – Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" They described factors based on their experience and understanding of racial and gender disparities including race and racism as well as incidents of race and gender that may have positively or negatively influenced their career. Themes that arose in the Latino/Hispanic group for question one included a) structural impediments including mentored guidance, opportunities, and the hiring process; b) used of coded language and inequitable standards of hire, and c) systemic forms of racism referred to as The Original Pandemic.

Structural Impediments Contributing to Disparities in the Community College Presidency

Structural impediments were themes contributing to a disparity and underrepresentation of leaders of color serving in the community college presidency. Findings included causes for the underrepresentation of Latino/Hispanic's in the academy, role models, opportunity for exposure, lack of a clear pathway to the presidency and the hiring process.

Participants in the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group affirmed there is an underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. Participants identified many causes for the disparity of minority CEOs in the community college presidency observing the disproportionate number of CEOs of color that has gone relatively unexplored and causes for a gender disparity for Latino/Hispanic women whom are nonexistent. One CEO described:

> There is a disparity. That's the general perception. More specifically, there are regions where you do have a representation of CEO's of color, but that's the exception rather than the rule. We have what? 1167 community colleges. And then you begin to look at the numbers, you can see the difference as to how the breakdown is and between African American men and women, there is a unique difference there too. (First Generation Male Silents/Baby Boomers I)

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Factors identified included Latino/Hispanics underrepresented in the academy as a whole, lack of a clear pathway, prejudicial bias in the hiring process and lack of role models.

Leaders described *a lack of representation of Latino/Hispanic persons in the academy* as a whole. A Gen X leader observed, "We're underrepresented in the Academy as a whole, regardless of the areas and sector. I think there are not enough minorities in the Academy as a whole whether it'd faculty members, staff members, et cetera" (Gen X Male President). Findings attributed to the lack of representation in the academy is the access to and affordability of education and a regression of affirmative action policies in the form of scholarships that make accessibility to education more affordable.

A by-product of the underrepresentation of Latino/Hispanic's in the academy and community college presidency produces a *lack of role models* that reflect images of persons of color in the career pathway. The need for more role models that reflect the diversity of the college's student demography was a finding in the study. Participants described low numbers of mentors and leaders that look like them and *a lack of mentored guidance* to consider the presidency as a career pathway, for intentional development and support in navigating the higher education landscape. In describing the need one leader stated, "What's led to a small number is that a lot of us are not being prepped and groomed for it. 25-year-olds, 30-year-olds who want to step up, but there's no one there to show them anything" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II). Role models and mentored leadership were identified as contributors to the lack of representation of Latino/Hispanics in the academy. Role models and mentors were identified as essential to help persons navigate the academy.

Opportunity for exposure for minorities to develop and advance was a dominant theme in describing underrepresentation among the community college presidency by the Latino/Hispanic

group. One leader stated, "One of the challenge that a minority has to get into leadership position is exposure" (First Generation Male CEO). Another described how lack of experience in mid-level and senior level roles precludes advancement to candidacy describing, "When you get to the interview level, the reason a lot of people of color don't do well is because they haven't had that experience" (Second Gen Male Baby Boomers II CEO). Access to opportunities for exposure and development as leaders in mid-level and senior administration were identified as impediments to the pipeline to the presidency.

The pathway to the presidency is unclear and lacks defining. One leader described, "There are rules, there are expectations, there are policies that are probably not supportive of people of color ascending to the job" (Second Generation Male Baby Boomers II). Participants described the perception that higher education is an elitist system with displaced values of leaders from a traditional vs. non-traditional pathway. On his perception of not being hired due to a preference of experience in the traditional pathway, a male Baby Boomer II described:

> For me, it was that the college and the committee [as a barrier] because I was turned down many times by a very closed-minded committee that still wanted the traditional route. They want somebody that has half of their life to have been dedicated to teaching or academics or students. Well no, I was immediately disqualified just to be a dean. It took a lot of work and convincing. That was for me the hardest. It was harder to become dean than a president. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II)

The Latino/Hispanic ethnic group matriculated from many diverse pathways including the traditional academic instruction pathway, student services, workforce development and private business industries. Undefined pathways to the presidency are forms of structural barriers that serve as impediments contributing to the disparity of leaders of color.

The Hiring Process was a dominant theme identified as a structural barrier that also serves as a gatekeeper to the community college presidency. Participants described complexities

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in the position description, marketing, screening process and stakeholders of the process including selection and hiring committees, faculty senates, presidents and the board of trustees in the hiring process. In articulating the complexities of the process one leader described, "You have to look at the job posting and where you post. You have to look at who's on the committees. You have to look at everything. So, there's a lot of stuff that goes into that" (Female Latino/Hispanic Baby Boomer II CEO). The lack of exposure to leadership experiences, the lack of a clear pathway to the presidency including biased perceptions of value for leadership experiences in non-traditional pathways and numerous perils in the hiring process were findings in the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group.

Coded Language

Coded Language was a dominant finding in the study. {The researcher understood the term 'coded language' to describe the substitution of explicit language, direction, or response that is implicitly implied though not plainly expressed. The use of coded language often converges at the intersection of fear or threat of personal, social, or political gain in the discourse of race relations}. The use of coded language was a common response referring to covert practices inherent in the hiring process serving as gatekeepers and impediments to the presidency. Participants described the use of coded language as a way of disguising forms of discrimination. The concept and understanding of coded language was an enigma to participants. One Third Gen X described coded language as, "it's like giving you the secret sauce type of approach" to describe inhibit learning and navigating institutional culture (Male President). The prevalence of racialized institutional and societal cultures underscored the need for mentors and role models of color to help prospective leaders navigate the higher education landscape successfully. One leader described coded language as a new language to learn:

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Informally my mentor and I built a bond through conversation. He was learning about Hispanics, as California demography was changing dramatically and I was learning about, I'll just say it this way, white speak. I didn't know what they were talking about, what it means. How they crafted language, how they crafted their arguments. That was all new to me. (Male Second Generations Baby Boomers II CEO)

Another participant described how a mentor helped them understand the dual meaning of words when developing as a mid-level administrator. The leader described:

I recounted the story of a time I made a report to the chancellor's cabinet. I was sort of an under league and relatively new to the institution. I made a report to the chancellor's cabinet. At the end of the meeting, the chancellor, said to the whole group, "Our Dean there, he has potential." So then my good friend and mentor turns to me and he says, "Hey, kid. Potential is a French word for you ain't worth crap. You're not producing." So he kind of breaks it down to size, you see, because these are the kinds of people you want to be honest with you. He explained, this is just your third or fourth year experience here. Yeah, you may have potential, but you haven't shown anything yet. (First Generation Male)

Coded language is used for many purposes including gender marginalization and aptitude. One participant described how coded language was used as a prejudicial gender bias to marginalize their leadership style. The leader noted:

Persons described me and my leadership as having "personality," People call it leadership. So, when you say, "Tell me what that is," and people begin to talk about it, you realize it's not really a leadership style, because no one is talking about how you made decisions, how you relate to people. They're talking about some traits. (Second Generations Female Baby Boomers II CEO)

Coded language was also described as a covert justification by institutions and communities to mask their unwillingness to embrace diversity and change. One participant described coded-language as a rationale for lack of diversity and opportunity:

Its coded language for we're not ready yet. We're not ready for a man and a woman of color, a woman to lead this institution. They fear it might signal something to the students that are enrolled, that it might impact foundations and private support, and philanthropic support to the colleges. That it might lessen

their legislative support for that particular institution. So there could be a variety of reasons that are codified, justifying. There's still a lot of coded language that occurs, and a lot of other kinds of I would say lack of opportunity. (Male Second Generations Baby Boomers II)

The use of coded language as a covert veil to mask the fear or threat of personal, social, or political gain was a finding in the study. Its application and use in the hiring process was identified as a finding in the study.

Coded Language as an impediment in the Hiring Process was described by the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group. Examples inherent in the hiring process were described as the position description as a form of gatekeeper, prejudicial practices in the screening process, and stereotype bias of the selection and hiring committees. One participant described the challenge of checking a box on the hiring application and its possible implication of consideration for hire based on an affirmative action quota vs competency and experience. The Gen X male leader described:

> One potential challenge that I have seen more recently is that if I apply to a position and I identify myself as a Hispanic, to what extent I am allowing, I don't know what term to use, but let's just say the affirmative action quota, for lack of a better term. The search committee or the search firm wants a diverse pool. When I check the boxes, I am, of course stating what it is by race and ethnicity classification and helping them segment those applicants in the proportions that the committee wants. (Third Gen X President)

Findings described the duality of positive and negative effects of the use of demographic information in hiring practices.

L*ack of clear and defined standards and pathway* to the presidency by members of the hiring and selection process was identified. One participant described faculty's preference of candidates from the traditional pathway as coded language and as a gatekeeper to the presidency stating, "The faculty may say, "Oh, we want an academic degree, a PhD." Again, this is implicit

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bias. This is coded language" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II). CEOs gave numerous

examples describing the challenges in understanding coded language as an explanation for

rejection of hire. A male CEO described:

> The famous one, CharMaine, and this is the one that is perhaps the most biased,
> the most coded language of all. Is when they talk about, "Well, this candidate
> wasn't a good fit for our college." what does that mean?" (Second Generation
> Baby Boomers II)

Inequitable standards of hire and compensation were findings in the data and used in the form of

coded language. In describing lack of advancement or more compensation in contract

negotiations, one participant described:

> It's sort of a code language when you're there too long. It's a code language for
> why is this [Ethnic & Gender President] making so much money? So yes, I think
> the fact that I had been in leadership for such a long time, and I had a lot of profile
> in the city, the county, nationally. That's a code for we need change when change
> is not needed. There was no proven need or an atmosphere that would create a
> change just for the sake of change. So coded-language is often used in contract
> negotiations [as justification for not granting pay increases or termination of
> contract]. (Veteran First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I Male)

Participants described tools they learned born through what one First Generation Silents/Baby

Boomers I described as "a lifetime of racist realities" that they viewed as a form of cultural

strength that makes them resilient and stronger leaders (Male CEO). One Gen X leader described

it as, "Minorities have to be adept at looking at multiple avenues of why a situation is really

occurring and be able to operate in it" (Third Gen X President). Coded language was described

as hidden within job postings and embedded in the entire hiring process under the guise of

institutional traditions. Unclear and inequitable standards for candidacy evaluation, language

descriptors of presidential leadership style, and language used in rationale for no hire and in

contract negotiations were data examples of coded language used in the hiring process.

Systemic Racism: The Original Pandemic

Systemic forms of racism was a dominant theme in the study. Racism, its human invented classification systems and the invisible constructs it erects are social, economic and political tools used to oppress ethnic groups and were described in the data related to institutional culture, policies, and hiring practices. Its tentacles are evident in all facets of society and institutional culture. One leader described, "For the basic tenets of what we're talking about, racial issues, prejudice and so forth and so on, are present everywhere" (First Generation Male CEO). Given that racism permeates all areas, higher education is not endemic or unaffected. On the subject of racism in the higher education academy a participant described, "I think that the less obvious unfortunately, is there still some whether intentional or unintentional, there's still some systemic racism in the Academy and being able to facilitate that pathway" (Second Generation Male Baby Boomers II). Symbols of racist practices, policies and processes are prevalent in institutional cultures. An awakening is occurring for institutions of higher education to become more diverse and inclusive reflective progressively diverse student body and as reflected in the institution's leadership. On the subject of the drivers of change in institutional culture a leader stated, "it goes back to the symbolic, the expectation of the community" (First Generation Male Silents/ Baby Boomer I).

Race and racism are societal norms that persons of color contend with daily. Structural barriers that arise from them were considered impediments to navigate and overcome. A veteran leader described, "No question that being a minority was something that presents challenges that you need to be very much aware of, and be determined to overcome if you really want to be able to succeed and achieve your goals" (First Generation Male Silents/Baby Boomer I CEO). Another veteran leader described, "I'm not used to it. I'm tolerant of it. To me, it's a big

difference between being tolerant and being used to it. I'm tolerant of it, and that I know that I'm going to be challenged more" (Second Generation Male Baby Boomers II CEO). Race and racism were findings in the study contributing to the underrepresentation of leaders of color in the community college presidency by the Latino/Hispanic group.

Institutional culture, its symbols, cultural climate and vision for change were identified as contributors to the underrepresentation. In describing factors of the underrepresentation and the role of institutional culture a leader described:

> In general, the problem I see is that people of color are still vastly underrepresented in leadership positions including as provost, president and chancellor. You do not see the representation that you would like to see given the numbers of students and student of color in community colleges commensurate with the number of CEOs of color. So that's the general perception. The follow-up question on the cause is that essentially nothing has changed among our institutions. Institutional behavior has not changed when we began to think of preparing and developing leaders of color, men and women. Institution's cultural behavior, led by top leadership and boards are not interested or have minimized the importance of creating a diverse leadership community, a diverse student community, and a diverse culture. (First Generation Male Silents/ Baby Boomer I)

Another leader described the pervasive nature of racism on institutional culture and in higher education. The leader stated, "Another factor that's been just in general, the pervasive cloak of institutional racism that has permeated our colleges and universities for decades. The original pandemic CharMaine, is racism!" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II). The leader further described:

> This country has had it for a very, very long time since the beginning of its origins. So that's the original pandemic if you will, racism. So there are communities, there are governing boards, there are locations that still are not yet into, or desire or feel it is necessary to have leadership that looks like me and you think a big part of it is institutional policies and expectation. (Veteran CEO)

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Participants identified burdens on persons of color as a direct result of prejudice, ignorance, and racism manifested in institutional and societal cultures.

The practice of demographic census and identification based on race and ethnicity is an example of a social construction that is often prejudicially mishandled and serves as an economic benefit or obstruction. In describing having to check the box or race and ethnicity on an application in the hiring process, one leader described:

> A person's color and ethnicity should not be viewed as a factor. It should be totally ignored. I wish we'd not even put race or ethnicity when you do an application. Should not even show up. But of course, I know that comes into play depending on the community. A person of any color in any place or gender can do just as well as anyone. It's a continued struggle for minorities in all areas and all genders. Minorities that includes women in all colors and different areas. That's changing but it's still going to be a pervasive issue that is slowly evolving and changing. (1st time, Second Generation Male President from a non-traditional pathway)

Structural policies and the use of racial and ethnic identification on hiring applications is an example of positive affirmative action reform progress that has been transformed into tokenism hiring practices with prejudicial bias.

The toll of racism on men and women of color was described in the data as a burden. Findings described burdens on persons of color as a direct result of prejudice, ignorance, and racism manifested in institutional and societal cultures. One analogy of racism was a weight placed on persons of color. A leader reflected "It is a burden to prove ourselves that was placed on us persons of color. To have to carry a large burden to prove ourselves, be seen and make a difference" (First Generation Male CEO). Another finding was the need to have to prove one's worth, and competency to be seen as human, as equal. One described it as a super syndrome for persons of color to have to do more and go beyond that of their non-ethnic counterparts. A leader described:

You have to do more, show more, put on a resilient cape, and that is not equally pared out with non-persons of color, how does that wear and tear on an individual? Because you have to do a lot, and above and beyond in multiple areas, as you said. You've got to know how to ask all the right questions, you've got to be super fundraiser, you've got to have more experience, and you've got to have exposure. (Second Generation Baby Boomer II Female CEO)

Others described that not only do leaders of color carry a burden of proving competency, but one is also not viewed as equal or given an equal playing field. Another leader akin it to playing a game with a handicap. The leader described, "It's almost like you start the game with a handicap, and you have to overcome that. Where other people, you start the game with some advantages, and then you build on that" (Second Generation Female CEO). Others described the toll as a constant test. In describing the pressures of being tested a leader stated "Whether it's policy, whatever it may be, a political behavior or just a day-to-day interaction with people. You're always being tested" (First Generation Male CEO). The need to be infallible and the false narrative that you can't make mistakes for fear it will serve as an indictment for all persons of color and support one's negative preconceived bias of the ethnic group were feelings described by participants. One leader described the pressure to be infallible:

I am not one that advocates for race, color, or ethnicity just for the sake of color and ethnicity. I think we all need to earn the racks. There's nothing worse for us, you and me, than to have someone from our own background messing up. Because immediately, that's used as an excuse for "These people are not able to meet the standards". And you will hear that for the years as the reason why where they will say, "Well, we don't want to take a risk". (First Generation Male CEO)

Community colleges are microcosms of the larger communities. Data from participants described leading during a time of unprecedented multiple pandemics including the coronavirus health pandemic labeled COVID-19, social unrest identified as the Black Lives Matter Movement and political civil unrest racism. The precipice of each of these was viewed as opportunities for positive change for community colleges. A first generation Silents/Baby Boomer I described:

As we go forward in the 21st century, and as we start realizing, particularly with the COVID pandemic that we're going to look at things differently now. COVID-19 is pushing all of us to think creatively and to think differently than we have in the past. I think that's going to allow the opportunity for leaders of color to really move in higher education far more than it has in the past. (Male CEO)

Opportunities for positive change was related to mentored support and guidance for future leaders of color, equitable access and distribution of resources and change resulting from the intersection of converging social and political forces. Many examples were given as to how racism, structural barriers, and a societal culture wrought with social injustices impact the underrepresentation in the presidency. Themes identified by the Latino/Hispanic group for question one included gender disparity, lack of representation, role models and mentored guidance, opportunities for exposure, lack of clear standards and pathways, a flawed hiring process and the use of coded language as a barrier, and toll of racism on institutional culture, structural policies.

Research Question 1: The Supremes – All Women

Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" Themes that arose in the female gender group for question one included a) institutional cultural, b) forms of discrimination and prejudicial gendered stereotypes and biases, c) the pipeline to the presidency, and d) regression of gains for CEOs of color.

Institutional Culture was a structural barrier described as a contributing to the underrepresentation. In describing the role the culture of an institutional plays, an Asian Pacific Islander female stated, "From the institutional side, the history of the institution. And the culture of the institution, I think plays a large part in the placement and the success of the president". The culture within higher education and the academy was described as an unfamiliar and elite hierarchy for persons of color to navigate and transcend. One participant described:

> Community colleges are still built under the higher educational culture. They're still an academic hierarchy, shared governance, etc. Though we're supposed to be open access, we still have processes in place put people in boxes that do not recognize what they bring to the table. When half of our students are transfer students, so we build our system still with that traditional university model. All the bureaucracy and the systemic racism or systemic-ism that is built within higher education. One example of a structural barrier is having to penetrate formal networks other than that by history, which was built for white power. (Third Gen X Asian Pacific Islander Female)

Institutional culture was a dominant theme in the study by the Women's gender group contributing to gender biased perceptions of women of color's competency and ability to lead.

Discrimination based on prejudicial stereotypes related to persons speaking with an accent, ageism and stature were prejudicial stereotypes and forms of discrimination described by the women. Women participants described prejudicial stereotypes based on gender bias contributing to perceptions of women as less intelligent and impacting ability to be seen as a

leader. Findings by the Women's group described ageism and perceptions of looking youthful to that would detract from their ability to lead. Soft-spoken speech was perceived as lacking aggressiveness and stature or diminutiveness would prevent a woman CEO from being taken seriously.

Gender biased descriptors in the data were described as supporting a narrow minded perception of leadership as male and white. On the subject of youthful appearance a leader from the Pacific Southwest stated, "They just felt like I was too youthful and didn't fit the prototype of a CEO" (African American Female). Biases and perceptions of persons of color are informed from a lack of cultural competency and limited experiences and interactions with persons from diverse ethnic and gender groups. One leader observed, "Whether a person recognizes their own bias, it's a tradition that ends up having a negative impact on people of color". Gender bias and prejudice has many forms including as a structural barrier.

Perceptions of a woman's *Mobility* in the selection process was a finding by the Women. Many identifiers in the hiring process, including mobility was noted as a structural impediment contributing to gender bias used in the hiring process. One Female leader observed, "She has small kids, what is her ability to accept the role? What they really are doing is forming a bias on woman's ability to lead by placing doubt." (African American Female, 1st time President). Gender bias was a significant factor in contributing to underrepresentation of women of color in the community college presidency.

The *pipeline to the community college presidency* was described in many ways including a leaky pipeline. On the challenges of leakages in the pipeline one Female leader described, "One of the gatekeepers is even getting in [described as the pipeline]. Then once you're in, how do you retain them" (Third Gen X API Female CEO). Another Female leader described

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narrowing of the pipeline stating, "If you're coming out of student affairs, you're typically stepping out of a director role into a Dean role, maybe a chief student affairs officer; and then again…it's the narrowing of the pipeline" (African American Female Fourth Gen X, 4th Generation Transformer from the Northeast). A lack of bench strength in the numbers of women of color with access and opportunities to develop experience as mid-level and senior leaders were findings used to describe the disparity by the Women.

On the low numbers of women by ethnic group in the pipeline a Female leader observed;

> I'd say that there was a pipeline issue. Specifically in my case of Hispanics, is that there were not as many people in the positions that would be one step or half a step to the CEO position. There were many more people in mid-level management. We knew we needed to be working with directors and deans and associate deans, and some vice presidents, to make sure that there's enough of us that are ready when the opportunities come. (Latino/Hispanic Female Silent/Baby Boomer I CEO)

The Female leader also attributed intentional professional leadership development and mentoring as a contributor to the low number of women by ethnic group in the pipeline. The leader described:

> I think for a while there, it was more of a pipeline issue. I don't think there were enough people. Some groups have done better than others. I think African Americans, nationally, the African American community college community has done a much better job with leadership development, and perhaps others. (Latino/Hispanic Female CEO)

The Women's group noted significant regression of gains by ethnicity and gender for CEOs of color in the community college presidency today, particularly among men of color. Access to opportunities, support for professional development and mentoring were findings from the data by the Women's group contributing to underrepresentation in the presidential pipeline.

Experience and Time in the Seat is a theme for the Women as a factor for the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. The experience garnered from time spent in a presidency is what leaders referred to as time in the seat. A Third Gen X leader described how constant movement deprives the leader from gaining necessary competencies and experiences stating, "Time in the seat is another factor. Oftentimes, I see folks, who aspire to the presidency, and are jumping from job to job, to job. They aren't putting enough time in the seat to produce outcomes and demonstrate deep competency" (Female two-time President). Another seasoned leader akin it to honing your craft stating, "My concern is that people aren't spending enough time learning the craft, and they're moving very quickly. My concern is not getting people into the roles, but having people have longevity in the roles" (Female Second Generation Baby Boomers II President). Consistent time in a presidency affords opportunity to develop relationships and garner the necessary consensus building to effect change. A veteran First Generation Female leader described:

> My thing is, you cannot do a lot of good in the college presidency in three years. You've got to at least stay five years. The text book used to say you could leave in three. In three years you're just getting to know the community. (Female Silents/Baby Boomers I President)

The inability to develop tools critical to leading today's community colleges by laterally moving in presidency positions without accumulating significant time in the seat detracts from a leader's vitae of experience. Another Third Gen X stated:

> Because you don't have that sense of self or you got advanced too quickly, in jobs, and you don't realize you shouldn't be doing something you shouldn't be doing. You don't know the questions to ask. Because here's the dirty secret about this, you jumping around on all these jobs, you don't have a record of success and then when things get hard, you've got nothing to lean on. You have no experience set. (Female President)

Participants described constant lateral moves to other presidencies with insubstantial time at any one institution results in deficiencies of experience and proven record of success and was a theme from the data for the Women's group.

A lack of transparent reporting of data on the number of men and women community college presidents of color was a dominant theme for Women. A Latino/Hispanic leader stated, "When you look at the proportion of CEOs in community colleges, presidents or chancellors who are Hispanic that proportion has gone down" (Female CEO). Many attributed a lack of true data on the actual number of persons of color leading at community colleges affiliated with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) as an impediment to understanding the phenomena. One Female leader observed, "Well, first of all, there are more opportunities [presidency positions] than there were 14 years ago, when I started. I was the first woman and person of color in my first hire as presidency you know and there still is that [disparity by women of color], but there's less of it today" (Seasoned African American Second Generation Baby Boomers II President).

Participants, in describing their experience and understanding of racial, and gender disparities effecting the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency were confounded by the disparity given the number of community colleges and perceived opportunities available. Some subscribed transparent reporting of data on the number of persons of color serving as community college presidents would augment understanding leakage points in the pipeline to the presidency. One Female leader observed, "We have 1100 community colleges in this country, give or take, there are fewer positions and there is a lot of chuckholes to get to those position" (1st African American Female CEO in the Northeast). The leader attributed impediments in the pipeline to the presidency to understand a perceived disproportionate number

of persons of color in the presidency. Others argue for more transparency to better understand the phenomena. A third generation Female leader argued "a lack of data from organizations, would make the truth of it a reality that they don't want to address" (African American Female Gen X). Dominant findings in the data reported by the Women's group include structural barriers within institutional culture that impact the pipeline to the presidency.

Each of the Women identified with gendered biased stereotypes including perceptions of appearance, disposition of stature and speech, and how those factors were subscribed to them being successful leaders. While all groups identified structural barriers and leakages points in the pipeline as contributing to an underrepresentation, findings from the Women's group were myopic on a lack of bench strength for women of color in leadership. Participants described factors that attribute to leakages in the pipeline to the presidency including lack of consistent structures in place for mentoring and leadership development. The women described a lack of attention to and intentional development of women in leadership to offset persistently low and eroding numbers of Latino/Hispanic women and insignificant numbers of Asian Pacific Islander women. Transparency and accountability in reporting data to augment understanding of a perceived regression of gains for women of color in the presidency were findings of the Women's group.

Research Question 1: The Commodores – All Males

Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" Themes that arose in the Male gender group included; a) lack of intentional pipeline development; b) a lack of and inequitable distribution of opportunity, c) structural barriers and policies informing the hiring process, d) regression of affirmative action grants and scholarships that made access to education more affordable, d) strategies to formal leadership preparation in developing the pipeline.

A myriad of findings by the Men's group identified factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. One Third Gen X Male leader described it succinctly as:

> I think there are three specific factors that play into the dearth, the lack of true representation in the CEO suite of community colleges and colleges in general. Number one, the pipeline. There really is no robust pipeline to develop people of color into these roles. And so without that pipeline to the presidency that is affixed without the specific expectation of institutions to truly seek diversification at their highest level, which is the second factor, and without the sort of supporting structures, after one comes into the role. Those are the three main reasons why you do not see many CEOs of color. (African American Male 1st time CEO in the Northeast)

As community colleges transform to be more diverse and inclusive, a need for more *intentional development of the pipeline* was identified. Others argue the time is ripe for developing a cadre of new leaders of color in senior leadership among the ranks of faculty, department chairs, deans, and vice presidents in the form of succession planning towards intentional development of the next generation of presidents. One Latino/Hispanic Male leader described:

> A lot of these individuals happen to be also young people of color who are here, and they have a lot of courage. And they are the ones who've been out there at the protests. Hasn't been us. We've been home safely watching it, right. It's been them who's been out there, and so why not, let's give them an opportunity to show what

they have. One of the most exciting parts, is just having the younger generation of hopefully new administrators step up now, and say, 'I want to lead now, I'm ready to lead, and can you show me how to do that?' (Bi-lingual Male Latino/Hispanic CEO)

One leader argued that change only occurs when driven by external agencies. The Male leader considered:

If it is not a requirement under your regional creditor's requirement, then you don't have to do it. If it is not a mandate from community leaders, then you don't have to do it. If it's not an expectation of your internal audience, then you don't have to do it. So the question becomes, what is the catalyst to diversification? Whether that is racial or gender if there's no true catalyst, why would you do it? (African American Third Gen X Leader in the Northeast)

Robust development of the pipeline to the presidency, institutional commitment to diversity and support structures for leaders were findings by the Men's group.

A lack of and inequitable distribution of opportunity and resources was another finding contributed to the underrepresentation by the Men's group. In considering the proportion of leaders of color and the student demographics, one Male leader observed:

If you look at the diversity of our student body, and particularly community colleges, and those who lead our community colleges, there's a gross disparity between those who lead and the students that are enrolled. So a more equitable distribution of opportunity would be important here. (Veteran Latino/Hispanic CEO in the Pacific West)

The Men argue the significance and value of increasing the representation of community college presidents of color is directly aligned maintain the vision and mission of our colleges as open door, open access institutions. A veteran CEO stated, "When you lead, the priorities are about equity for students, equity across the institution in whatever form that surfaces" (Veteran Latino/Hispanic Male CEO). An equitable distribution of opportunity that benefits all students is a finding identified in the Men's group. One first generation immigrant Male leader reflected,

"CEOs of color have a responsibility to carry on the baton of opportunity created for them, to push and keep the doors open to create more opportunities for others" (Bi-lingual Male Latino/Hispanic CEO). Data in the study from the Men was an intentionality in granting equitable access, opportunity and resources to develop more leaders of color in the pipeline to the presidency. The inequitable distribution of power and resources as a finding is an example of a structural and institutional barrier that impedes one's success. *The Power Imperative* was a term used to describe the barrier of inequitable distribution of resources. A veteran Male leader described:

> I think part of it is a historical unwillingness to share power and resources. That's called the power imperative, and that's always going to be there. Who's in charge? Who has the most resources to allocate to a specific event, or series of events, or institutions or organizations? That is a barrier. (African American Male CEO serving in both the Southwest and Northeast)

A lack of and inequitable distribution of opportunity and resources was identified by the Men's group.

Structural barriers in the data were described as a coded language, stereotypes, perceptions of ethnic groups subscribed to candidates, structural flaws in the presidential pipeline, institutional policies and practices, and structural racism. Various reasons were given for structural impediments as one Male leader explained, "There's a systemic and a structural thing that also is keeping more, I would say, minorities out of leadership positions" (Second Generation Asian Pacific Islander Male leader).

Structural policies were indicated as a factor that contributed to this phenomenon. Findings attributed inconsistent structural practices and views on perceptions of value in higher education pathways when recruiting talent. One Male leader stated, "There are two different models in higher education, there are those institutions that for all the right reasons want to bring

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talent in from the outside to keep from becoming stale in creativity" (First Generation

Latino/Hispanic CEO). Others akin the disparity to a desire for status quo where the entire

process would benefit from alignment of practice and training. A leader observed, "Just looking

around the room when I'm in meetings, it would appear to me that a lot of the leadership came

from the traditional academic environment. It's a trained incapacity" (First Generation

Latino/Hispanic Chancellor). Institutional policies and practices were structural constructs

identified as barriers by the Men's group.

The *hiring process* was a theme described as a structural barrier and gatekeeper to the

presidency. The position description used in the hiring process was described as a structural

barrier. In describing the position description and questions used in the hiring process a Male

leader stated, "They're [position description and interview questions] designed for you not to

move forward. I don't know how we characterize a structural thing?" (Second Generation Baby

Boomers II Asian Pacific Islander Male President). Another Male leader agreed adding, "These

gatekeepers exist and some of them, related to interviewing use structural barriers, meaning that

they go beyond the capability of the interviewee" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic

Chancellor CEO). A flawed hiring process was described as a gatekeeper to the presidency by

the Men's group. Participants described structural policies as barriers inherent in the process.

Some *strategies in formal leadership preparation and pipeline development* included

changes to the curriculum, for content that is relevant to helping CEOs of color prepare, thrive,

and survive. Establishing and setting up a mentor networking system for persons in the seat to

support them in being successful as well as proactive strategies for intentionally developing

candidates into the pipeline. One leader considered the efficacy of formal leadership programs,

and the use of culturally responsive pedagogy and instruction to curtail biased perceptions of

persons of color when preparing future leaders and close the leadership gap. A Male leader described biased perceptions of persons of color as leaders contributing to the underrepresentation stating:

> Perhaps that bias of seeing African Americans as potential leaders in higher education is still underrepresented by institutions that are preparing future leaders. And are the efforts proactive in identifying students into the program with the goal to contribute to the growth and development of leaders to help close that deficiency and be more representative of the communities that many communities represent? (Second Generation African American President)

It was further acknowledged that intentional efforts in the latter portion of the last century up until the early years of 2000 by the American Association of Community Colleges, Association of Community College Trustees, League of Innovation, and The Aspen organizations yielded good results in diversifying the presidency. Some participants pondered revisiting successful efforts to increase development and representation of more leaders of color in the presidency today.

Finally, the CEOs noted that there is no one all fix and solution but they do agree that, "First of all, there aren't enough people who look like me who look like you in the ranks, there isn't enough" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic Chancellor). Some argue that intentional grooming is "what's led to a small number" however "a lot of us are not being prepped and groomed for it" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic Chancellor). Others suggested influencing policy structures by "establishing specific metrics that we're going to set around the candidacy process" (Third Gen X African American President). Another, asked for a "more pronounced development and awareness as a career path" (First Generation African American President). Each of these suggestions by the CEOs requires redesigning formal leadership preparation programs or developing informal institutes to better prepare persons of color.

Strategies noted to support increasing the candidacy pool as well as the C-Suite are complements to other efforts. As one CEO described:

> It's a compliment to that, meaning that there's no one strategy for it. That's just one example. But it would complement a strategy or innovative view on increasing persons of color in a career with the goal that they will progress to the C-Suite and be successful. (Veteran Second Generation African American President)

Each of these observations benefits understanding the lack of a direct pathway to the presidency and refinements needed for leadership professional development.

The erosion and retrenchment of affirmative action programs that have benefited students of color in education was a finding in the data representing a form of structural racism that impacts the underrepresentation of leaders of color in the community college presidency. In acknowledging the attacks on affirmative action policies that benefit students of color, a Male leader described:

> I wouldn't have gotten to go to a flagship without that presidential scholarship. What we've seen since the attack on affirmative action and that those numbers have regressed. The group that benefited the most from affirmative action was white women. I'm not begrudging it, that wasn't the intent but they benefited the most from affirmative action. So we saw during that period significantly more women in leadership and presidential roles in the community college and others. And we saw some progress on African American and Hispanic leaders. (A Latino/Hispanic Male leader in the Southeast)

Data from the Men's group on the underrepresentation identified an inequitable distribution of resources, power imperatives, and attacks on affirmative action scholarships that provide access to students of color and that impacts the pipeline to the presidency.

Findings in the data contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents for the Men's gender group similarly reported by the women's group includes a perceived lack of intentional development of the pipeline. The Men's group reported more

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specifically on causes and strategies to address including efficacy of formal leadership

preparation programs, their proactive identification of students, support, and use of culturally

relevant pedagogy and instruction. Identification of structural barriers that support a flawed

hiring process and deficiencies for change from regional accreditors and other external agencies.

The Men described underpinnings of systemic racism evidenced in institutional policies and

culture and inequitable distribution of opportunity and resources.

Research Question 1: The Miracles – All Group Composite

Research Question 1 asked, "*How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?*" The analysis of the respondents' comments revealed that the majority of participants saw an underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of the community college presidency. Participants described factors based on their experience and understanding of racial and gender disparities including race and racism as well as incidents of race and gender that may have positively or negatively influenced their career. Themes from the all group composite included; a) lack of a clear pathway to the presidency, b) a flawed hiring process that also serves as a gatekeeper to the presidency, c) systemic racism, d) regression of gains, e) lack of transparency and accountability in addressing the disparity by ethnic and gender groups in the community college presidency.

Leaders described biases of what leadership looks like, challenges of leakages in the pipeline, barriers inherent in the hiring process, and the effects of race and racism on institutional and societal culture and manifested in prejudices and stereotypes. Participants described an overall lack of cultural competency by stakeholders, the distinction between cultural traits vs. leadership traits, perceptions of what a leader looks like, and factors that comprise good leaders. Findings from all participants for research question one follows.

Lack of a clear Pathway to the Presidency

The lack of a clear pathway to the presidency was identified as contributing to the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. Systemic inequities of opportunity, exposure, and development of leaders of color in areas of the academy was a finding in the data. Leaders described institutional policies and practices as structural barriers, lack of a direct career pathway to the presidency, exposure and opportunity for leadership

development experience beginning at the mid-level management, and a propensity to inheriting

distressed vs. healthy colleges. Dominant findings by the Composite described a lack of attention

to address leaks in the pipeline, the lack of a pipeline development strategy, equitable

distribution of resources for students to complete and develop the pipeline, lack of CEOs of color

as role models, and lack of marketing the position as a career choice.

A Flawed Hiring Process as a Gatekeeper to the Presidency

The hiring process was a dominant theme by the all-composite group contributing to the

underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. The process was

described as flawed. Data identified a lack of standardization in hiring criteria and preferences

including biased perceptions of credential type, experience in the traditional vs non-traditional

pathway, use of coded language in position descriptions, and intentionality of the search when

advertising. A need for diverse voices throughout the process and training on cultural

competency by all stakeholders.

Stakeholders in the hiring process were defined as human resources, selection and hiring

committees, faculty senates, college leadership, the board of trustees, community members with

agendas and special interests. Stakeholders were also identified as gatekeepers of the process.

The institutional culture was identified as a structural barrier where the culture of the

organization breeds smallness in referred to as lack of vision in creating diverse and inclusive

environments. A desire for sameness in hiring is referred to as the Replication Factor where the

institution's view of leadership does not go being the traditional archetype of a white male.

Many of the leaders identified the hiring process as a structural barrier within

organizations as a gatekeeper to the presidency. The data described a need for diverse ethnic and

gender representation on committees, and training including cultural competency training for

faculty, search committees, the board of trustees as stakeholders in the process. In describing the

hiring process as a structural barrier a Third Gen X Miracle described:

> It is to say that if you lack diversity in the hiring process, in the group that does
> the evaluation and the natural tendency is to hire like people who will quote-
> unquote fit into our community, you are at a disadvantage from a structural
> perspective. You are at a structural disadvantage (African-American 1st time
> President)

Institutional culture hiring evaluations by faculty, search committees, and the board of trustees

was identified as playing a significant role in the hiring process. A 1st time President noted:

> I would say faculty leadership when they're serving on search committees and
> what they're expecting for how they evaluate a president's performance. They can
> be super critical of the president of color's performance. I would also say the
> board of trustees and their lack of racial competency or they are not focused on
> equity as a goal is a gatekeeper. They're the ones who are hiring White presidents
> over and over again. And then I would say, some of it is just community
> perception, others biases that you have to have gone through the traditional
> academic route. Those are the top three. (African-American Female)

Leaders described institutional pressure and haste in presenting candidates for hire. A leader

described:

> We're too easy at accepting what's put before us. If I give a leadership team a
> charge of bringing me two candidates, I'm boxing myself in and I've got to pick
> between those two. If I did not find the ideal candidate, then send me another one,
> or let's go out and look again. Too many times we box ourselves in saying, I've
> got too much invested. I've got to make a decision based on these rules as
> opposed to saying, no, I'm not finding the right solution here, and I've got to look
> deeper. (Latino/Hispanic Male, First Generation Silents/Baby Boomer I CEO)

The role of institutional culture on organizational behavior related to the hiring process was a

finding.

A need to evaluate hiring standards, practices, and cultural competency training of

stakeholders involved in the hiring process was a finding. A 1st-time leader agreed that a lack of

clear standards guided by the institution's cultural values and the cultural competency of

members of the search and selection committees including the board of trustees is the culprit opposed to intentionality. The Third Gen X leader described:

> I don't think that they are intentional, I think it is sort of just they're not questioning the processes that they're using for hiring and presidencies, and they don't see the role that their biased evaluations can have on a community college presence. (African American Female President)

The hiring process was described as inequitable. A veteran leader stated, "I think the processes we use for hiring are often not fair and equitable." (African American Female Silent/Baby Boomer I). A lack of clear standards and metrics around the candidacy process was a finding. A 4th Generation Transformer noted, "Regarding the specific metrics that we're going to set around the candidacy process, what is that new hire experience looks like? And that first year of the staff member's experience at the college, are they given mentors?" (1st time Gen X, African American Male President). Participants described strategies to improve the hiring process allowing for equitable standards, metrics for evaluation, cultural competency training, and wrap-around support for the new hire as a first-year experience.

The pathway to the presidency yields many entry points including the traditional academic track and non-traditional pathways including student affairs, workforce development, and private industry. Biased perceptions of elitism in the traditional academic track and a lack of parity in the experience of leaders from non-traditional pathways were barriers identified. A disproportionately high number of persons of color are in the non-traditional pathway. The inequitable preference of candidates in pathways where persons of color are not represented was referred to as a double-edged sword. A third Gen X leader described:

> Well, I don't want to say there's not a higher standard [for the hiring process]. I think that's being a little naive, but you just have to do your work [research] in applying. I think there are a lot of factors involved. And this might be naïve, but I really don't think that at this level that people are going to say, "Oh, we're not

going to hire them because they're black." There may not be a lot of people in that traditional [academic] track. I think it's a double-edged sword. We have to do our research and look for those positions that align with our experiences and they need to advertise in ways that promote the idea that you are really embracing that you want true diversity. (African American Female CEO)

Biased perceptions of elitism in the traditional academic track were identified in the data as a gatekeeper that serves as an impediment for persons of color. One veteran male leader described:

The traditional pipeline looks a little different and if persons cannot penetrate the traditional pipeline, then racism and gender are a factor. It contributes because if persons aren't there then they're not looked at because still, search firms are considering those traditional area pipelines. (African American Male 1st time community college President serving for more than a decade)

The hiring process was referred to as a gatekeeper to the presidency describing administrative boards and search committees, faculty, the board of trustees, and community stakeholders. Participants described the use of quotas by administrative boards and search committees to bolster the candidacy pool and presenting false hope. The composition of the selection committee lacking diversity, faculty who lack cultural competency and questions used in the hiring process were described. The board of trustee's readiness, cultural competency, and community cultures described as geosynchronous and hyper-local was also described as gatekeepers of the hiring process contributing to the underrepresentation of minorities as community college presidents.

Systemic Racism Contributes to the Underrepresentation of the Presidency

The systemic nature of racism was a dominant theme contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. Prejudicial gender biases in the form of perceptions of what the archetype of a leader should look like, perceptions of the competency and ability of men and women of color's ability to lead, an inability to recognize one has a bias, and a desire to change, navigating prejudice, stereotypes (age, accent, stature,

other), were aspects of systemic racism entrenched in institutional cultures. Stereotypes were ascribed to gender bias, the Model Minority stereotype, and prejudiced perceptions of the ability of men and women of color as leaders. Racism was described as embedded and entrenched in societal and institutional culture and a steep hill for minorities to climb.

In describing the embedded nature of racism on society and institutional culture's perceptions of persons of color as leader's a fourth Gen X Transformer described, "Because it took centuries to entrench, embed and to institutionalize it, so it will take, unfortunately, just as long and more leadership capacity" (API Female CEO). Racism is a normalized reality to navigate for persons of color where progress has been made albeit slowly. One leader described:

> One, as a nation, we may love progress in many areas from civil rights movement or women's rights voting, six days, seven days, nine days now to today. But the recent social justice movement clearly taught us, despite the progress we've made as a nation, minorities in this country still have a steep hill to climb. (First Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO of a multi-college, urban/suburban district)

Racism is a social construct built on the need for power suppression of ethnic groups considered a minority. A leader described its origins as built on:

> One is prejudice, and the other one is ignorance. And of course, prejudice is based on ignorance. Well, it's all about that. And I don't want to repeat myself, but a lot of the under-representation is based on prejudice and misconceptions. (First Generation Latino/Hispanic Male CEO).

Race and racism were identified as contributing to prejudicial bias and stereotypes of the competency of leaders of color. On a scale of one to ten a leader stated:

> When I think about, on a scale of one to 10, how much do race and racism contribute to it? It's a seven or eight because there are all of these underlying biases about our competency, about our ability to raise money, our ability to establish relationships with White business folks and community members and politicians. (African-American Female, 1st time President)

On the subject of gender-biased stereotypes for men, a leader stated, "I stand out. Some people will see that as a negative. But some folks who are prejudice in their opinions believe, "He must have been an athlete" and folks who care about those things want to meet you. So you leverage that opportunity to your benefit." (Third Generation Gen X Male). Numerous data emerged on prejudices and stereotypes.

In identifying factors associated with systemic racism on societal and institutional culture in higher education, one veteran leader described:

> I think stereotype threat is one. I use the term prejudiced as opposed to racism. I think prejudice is another area. The term credibility is a third and that's in earned of unearned. I hate to use a certain term that's assigned to factors because all of those are societal factors but part of it is the history of this country. (African American Male, Baby Boomer II CEO)

On the subject of navigating negative detractors, a leader described:

> It was there. And it was based on complete racism and prejudice. But again, as I told you before, you can either accept that or do nothing about it, or you can decide, "That's wrong, that's not good. That's not good for me. I want more, I want better." And be able to forge your way through. [The researcher understood the statements to describe navigating negative detractors]. (Latino/Hispanic Male CEO)

One tool to ascend is leveraging the strengths of what you have described by a first generation Male as:

> The way that you move up in the brass, it is, you have to work for it. You have to work for it. And you have to work for it in a smart way to make sure that prejudice and misconceptions do not get in your way. (Latino/Hispanic Male CEO)

Systemic racism and racism referred to as The Original Pandemic, Tokenism, microaggressions culminating in recent social and civil unrest, and the erosion of affirmative action policies that benefit men and women of color as students were described in the data by the Composite group.

Underrepresentation of Men and Women of Color in the Community College Presidency

Participants described an underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of the community college presidency. Findings identified a lack of transparency in reporting data leading to a lack of accountability to understand a regression of gains for CEOs of color in the presidency including disproportionate numbers for Asian Pacific Islander and Latino/Hispanics in the academy. Participants described regression of persons of color in the community college presidency as a whole. The lack of data on the true numbers of CEOs in the community college presidency was a concern identified as contributing to the underrepresentation and unwillingness to explore the factors associated with the low numbers.

Data from the study supported scant numbers of Latino/Hispanic and Asian Pacific Islander women in the presidency. Asian Pacific Islander males were minuscule. African American males were noted as declining. Latino/Hispanic males noted gains however this is a false narrative given men and women of all ethnic groups are disproportionately reflected. In describing what is considered gains for persons of color in the presidency, a veteran first generation leader stated, "given the numbers of students, and the fact that the number of students of color, for example, are not represented by, I would say, a covering commensurate number of CEOs that are of color" (Latino/Hispanic Male CEO). Numerous advantages were ascribed to increasing the number of leaders of color. A Third Gen X noted:

> You have all these students of color who may have lots of different issues related to being students of color. Why don't you get a person who's a profession of color? Now, on the one hand, that's great because you want to have a CEO that meets the contemporary needs of the students. But, it's so much more. (African American Male 1st Time President)

Findings in the study affirmed an underrepresentation of men and women of color in the community college presidency.

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Research Question 2 Findings Presented By Ethnic, Gender & Composite

Research Question 2 asked participants "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" The researcher asked four interview questions to query participants about their ascension to the presidency as follows:

- IQ1: Describe how race and gender played a role in your pursuit of the community college presidency?

- IQ2: What challenges or barriers did you navigate on your journey to becoming a community college president?

- IQ3: Using brief descriptors, list perceived gatekeepers that exist for minority's ascending to the community college presidency.

- IQ4: Tell me about your views on why these gatekeepers exist for minorities pursuing the community college presidency?

Themes that arose from participants by composite, gender, and ethnicity groups for research question two follows.

Research Question 2: African American

African American (A2) - Research Question 2 asked participants "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" Each described how race and gender may have played a role in their pursuit of the presidency, challenges or barriers navigated along the way as well as gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency and views on why said gatekeepers may exist. The following themes were derived in the African American ethnic group for question two including; a) gatekeepers of the presidency, b) racism on ethnicity and gender, discrimination and prejudicial stereotypes informed by culture (institutional, societal, political), and c) the psychological and negative health effects of Super Syndrome referred to as 'John Henry-ism'.

Gatekeepers

Participants described navigating beyond impediments and the landmines of gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency. Gatekeepers were described as all stakeholders of the process including faculty, the board of trustees, and communities. On the subject of not having a terminal degree impeding persons from the presidency, a female leader stated, "If you don't have that terminal degree, that's another gatekeeper. It's really frowned upon to not have one and to apply for a presidency" (Third Gen X female). The inconsistent perceptions on the requirement of and the type of terminal degree one possess were described as a gatekeeper that weeds out candidates during the selection process.

Participants described perceptions of institution desire to maintain or "a desire not to disrupt the status quo" as a gatekeeper to the presidency. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Female). Another leader noted, "The need to maintain the power base by the Board of Trustees" (Female First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I). On the subject of maintaining the status quo

a leader stated, "With faculty, they become gatekeepers because they want a certain person like

them to lead them" (Female President). Faculty dually have responsibilities for hire and support

in the retention of presidents. A Third Gen X described the duality of faculty in hiring and

retention as:

> Well, I think one, the faculty, as a whole. Faculty can get you hired but they can
> also get you fired. The faculty, in a lot of ways, if they feel that you are
> inauthentic or they question your competence or your authenticity. That is a
> gatekeeper. (Female President)

Formal leadership preparation programs were identified as a gatekeeper. In describing formal

leadership programs as gatekeepers a veteran leader stated:

> One way a leadership development program is a gatekeeper is that if you don't go
> through one and you don't have that organization's support or some kind of
> backing from that organization, because some colleges will go directly to for
> example the League of Innovation. They go directly to the ACCT, Aspen. And if
> your name is not connected with one of those groups, or if you had a less than
> stellar experience in one of those groups, that follows you and they're going to
> ask. They just don't follow this small path to find out about you or to get some
> perspective, they cast the net really wide. (Female Second Generation Baby
> Boomers II with experience in over three regions of the U.S.)

Personal bias of committee members was described as a gatekeeper. Leaders recommended

training of all persons involved in the hiring process including human resources, hiring and

selection committees and the board of trustees to bring awareness and mitigate replication of hire

as status quo. A female leader from a non-traditional pathway described:

> What I have found, even in my institution, is what people think is the perfect
> candidate. When you ask someone to be on a search committee and identify the
> perfect candidate, a lot of times they're just like them. So, if they're different from
> them, they don't fit the description to them and that's what I mean by bias. Search
> and hire committees and the board of trustees in many ways lack cultural
> competence. (Female Second Generation Baby Boomers II President)

Each of these statements identifies various types of gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency.

The Influence of Racism on Ethnicity and Gender

Ethnicity and gender operate as visible identities. Socioeconomic, ethnic, and gender inequalities in higher education were themes described by the African American ethnic group describing their ascension to the community college presidency. One cannot decouple their ethnicity and gender. A Third Gen X leader described biased perceptions of race and gender stating:

> We don't really get to decouple race and gender because there is a definition in people's head, conscious or unconscious, of what they think when they see who's the president, what they think the president should look like, sound like, and how this president should carry themselves. All of that is part of the package and if you don't own and acknowledge that, they are being naïve at best and just plain resistant at least. (Female President)

Biased perceptions of ethnicity and gender informing the archetype of a community college president was a finding. In describing race and gender's influence on the hiring process a veteran male observed, "I don't know if race and gender play any key role. I just happen to be an African American male" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male). Respecting one's existence and identity was a common descriptor. Participants described inequitable standards, practices, and processes as part of racially hued socio-economic and political systems within institutional cultures and society that inform higher education and contribute to gender biases.

A seasoned leader described:

> It's hard for me to dis-aggregate any one part of my identity. So, you cannot decouple that and I think, oftentimes, people want to decouple or say, 'Oh, it's not about race. It's not about gender. It's not about...' I say, "How can you not, if you are raised and born in this country, we don't get the luxury of separating race". We don't get to decouple race from any of this. (Female President)

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Impression management is the conscious and subconscious process of actively managing one's

image in an effort to control how they are perceived by others. It is the byproduct of racist bias in

the form of expectations of what a leader looks like and how one presents themselves as too

ethnic. A Third Gen X leader stated, "I do think that there's an image, some level of posture or

how people look". (Female President in the Midwest). A fourth Gen X/Millennials male leader

described advice from a mentor to alter his appearance in wearing bow-ties with his suit during

interviews to avoid being prejudicial stereotypes associated with Muslim faith-based groups. The

leader described:

> Early on, when I was looking for vice presidencies, during that time, I favored
> and was wearing bow ties. I would be granted interviews and not move forward.
> One of my mentors said, "I know you like wearing bow ties, when you go to
> interviews, don't wear them." I'm like, but that's part of who I am. And he's like,
> "Is that a part of who you are? Or is that what you like to wear?" I was like, it's
> what I like to wear. He said because whether you like it or not, many folks have a
> perception of a black man in a bow tie. I started doing interviews without bow
> ties, with regular ties on, and I started being moved to finalists. So interviewing
> for President, I never wore a bow tie. Those are some of the challenges and
> barriers I've navigated, since coming to the presidency. (Fourth Gen X
> II/Millennials I President)

Women participants described stereotypes related to impression management as in how a woman

looks in appearance, displays emotion, and is scrutinized from everything to her verbal

communication, accent, intonations to one's hair, hair texture, hairstyle, body stature, even how

ethnic the name. A female leader from the Midwest described prejudiced stereotypes of how one

looks, dresses or appears to be too ethnic that they have to manage daily stating:

> I see, especially with women, so I guess it's both racism and sexism, but you have
> to really watch the way you have your hair, the way you dress. All of those kinds
> of things for boards to hire you. You have to have less of an ethnic look. I'll say it
> that way. (Female Second Generation Baby Boomer II President)

Another leader described having to actively manage their impression management to avoid prejudicial stereotypes associated with women of color stating, "questions of how African American women have to present themselves in the workspace; just in terms of hair, and body image, and angry black woman versus strong competent woman" (Female 1st time President in the Northeast).

Biased perceptions of female leader's emotional intelligence was a theme. A Third Gen X leader stated, "If a woman is emotional in her leadership role, it's frowned upon. Whereas if a man is emotional, he's firm and strong and dedicated" (Female President in the Midwest). The impact of social constructions of racism in the form of biased perceptions of ethnicity and gender were findings in the data by the African American group. Structural practices as barriers manifested in the hiring process, descriptions of actively regulating impression management to limit prejudicial bias of leader's emotional intelligence were described in the data.

Structural Inequality as a By-Product of Race and Racism,

Race and Racism were identified as playing a role and a challenge or barrier to navigate on the journey to the community college presidency. A veteran CEO stated:

> Yes, racism is a problem. It is a major problem. It can handicap or it can handcuff you. It depends on what you want to let it do, or it can just be a real thorn in your side. It can be the biblical thorn in Paul's side thing, it's always there. (Male CEO with service in the Southwest and Northeast)

Various prejudicial stereotypes were encountered on the journey and in the role of the presidency. Participants described discriminatory bias based on the perception of their name as sounding too ethnic. A Gen X Male leader noted:

> If my name is [Jamal Chen Hernandez], some are going to look at it a little bit differently. Even though they didn't see race or anything on here [application], they're going to be looking. I also think that's part of what is impacting these

gatekeepers is these preconceived notions and these implicit biases. (Third Generation President)

Racism was a norm many leaders described as a hurdle to navigate and not allow become an impediment to their success. Leaders advised moving beyond the focus of race given the difficulty in society's ability to decouple ethnicity and gender noting:

> To a lesser extent, I think, focusing on the fact that you're a person of color or a minority, even though you know that figures into it, you could never really separate that from what you're doing because people don't allow you to, the society doesn't allow you to. (Male Second Generation Baby Boomers II)

Participants were perplexed and frustrated at the need for cultures to segment into silo aspects of one's identity. A Third Gen X leader stated, "I think that is hard to decouple but my advice to everybody is that you need to be your true self and you need to do you" (Female President from the Midwest). A male CEO described an incident where his leadership ability was marginalized by the distraction and inability to decouple his race and gender describing:

> When I took over the role as chancellor, I was being introduced as "This is our Black Chancellor, Dr. Statesman". I would be forward and had to actively tell people, "I am the Chancellor who happens to be Black" [in managing their impression of the CEO]. (Male First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO)

Structural inequalities are conditions that perpetuate, contribute and are reinforced by a confluence of unequal relations in roles, opportunities, and functions. One Gen X leader described:

> I can tell you one of the reasons why I left one of my jobs was I was doing the work of the vice president and not getting the money that I was entitled to. I was providing leadership and support for another person who was on my level. I had a terminal degree. They had a terminal degree. When the vice president position became available in my area where I was doing the work, I went through the interview process for the job description I wrote. I did not receive the job that I had been doing interim stating that I did not have the requisite experience in the area. I know what it is to actually not get paid what my white counterpart got paid in doing work in the same position. The only thing that was satisfying to me was

that when I moved out of that job into my next job, I was making more than my counterpart at a higher position. (1st Time President in the Northeast)

Findings identified compensation inequalities with white counterparts of equal education and experience.

Institutions take on the climate and culture of the leadership. Leadership sets the tone for fostering engagement with the community, promoting a sense of welcome and inclusiveness for all students to achieve their best, and environment supportive of faculty as frontline educators in the classroom. A Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I male leader described the culture at his college when he first arrived as president recalling:

> When I accepted my job offer and was announced to the campus, when I first got there, faculty at one of the campuses were throwing darts at former President Obama's face. One of the first things I instituted was equity inclusion training which from initial feedback was not well received and as a liberal agenda. The point here is that if I am a black male CEO of the institution charged with influencing change, it is not ok to throw darts at any President, much less, the first African American President of the country. (1st-time President in the Midwest)

The reinforcement of institutional cultures that lack climates and vision for more diverse and inclusive environments for students, faculty, and administration contributes to them as structural barriers. The active management of self-impressions, navigating structural inequalities, microaggressions, and other discriminations contribute to the active work by leaders to prove themselves and demonstrate their social identity and competency to being a member of the CEO suite. Participants described the need of having to prove themselves.

Feelings of having to prove oneself were identified in the study. In describing their ascension to the presidency, A Female leader serving in the Midwest described:

> I would say having to prove yourself, your competency and always having to prove yourself more than your white counterparts. How you do that is important as well. You can't demonstrate arrogance or anything else, you have to be humble with it. (Female Second Generation Baby Boomer II)

This and other observations by participants describe CRT's Intersectionality in how various forms of racial and gender biases are based on categories of identity and how these categories overlap and intersect forming a power imbalance among persons of color. The need to constantly prove one's competency and justify their abilities speaks to the dehumanization of persons of color. Being labeled a minority was identified as dehumanizing. The label of a minority is a racial construct that considers culturally rich ethnic groups as subordinate in status to the dominant group which for centuries was a white majority. Participants noted the demographic status of our community colleges and student body correlates with an ethnically diverse population that is no longer homogenous in composition.

At the intersection of race and racism is the super syndrome or referenced by one CEO as the John Henry-ism effect. John Henry-ism is a psychological construct defining a strong behavioral predisposition characterized by a strong commitment to work, and single-minded determination to succeed often exerting efficacious mental and physical vigor to a person's detriment (International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, 2020). It speaks to the constant need for participants to work harder, stronger, faster, and prove themselves more capable just to be on par with whites in the same positions. A Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I noted, "There's this pressure that we have to do more and be different" (Male President). Another leader stated, "We also have to counteract the John Henry-ism that takes place. This idea that we have to be everything for everybody even if we have to sacrifice our physical and mental health in ways that others don't" (1st time Gen X Male President). A Second Generation Baby Boomers II stated, "If I have to move 10 objects and if someone judged moving 10 objects was successful for a majority person, then they would expect that you'd have to move 20 before you get that same success" (Male President). A 1st-time President described having to do more as:

African American people specifically. That we cannot just come with the same exact same platform, skills, preparation, and competency, but persons of color are always expected to have more, do more. We have to make sure we show people that we're well worth and capable of the position and it's not just about the color of my skin. It's about what I do as a leader. And so, I think there's still that gap of recognition of individuals who need to see this is what we're capable of doing. And we have to repeatedly unfortunately, we have to repeatedly prove that. (Third Gen X Male President)

Among the many burdens of the minority, the super syndrome is that it unfairly supports an inequitable standard of the profession. The researcher's field notes reflect a great desire of leaders to balance availability to students and in mentoring other leaders. Navigating racism, structural inequalities and practices in institutional culture were findings in the data. Participants identified feelings and experiences of syndromes and social constructs formulated from racism in describing their ascension to the presidency.

Research Question 2: Asian Pacific Islander

Asian Pacific Islander - Research Question 2 asked participants "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" Each described how race and gender may have played a role in their pursuit of the presidency, challenges or barriers navigated along the way as well as gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency and views on why said gatekeepers may exist. The following themes were derived in the API group for question two including; a) gatekeepers in the hiring process, b) structural barriers as impediments, and c) leadership preparation and mentors.

Gatekeepers in the Hiring Process

Participants described the entire hiring process as a form of gatekeepers and included organized professional social groups in that description. Examples of gatekeepers described are the hiring process, committee, supervisors, and board of trustee's cultural readiness for a CEO of color, philanthropic donor, and social media. Support for persons in the pipeline was a finding. A Second Generation Female stated, "One of the gatekeepers is even getting into the pipeline. Then once you're in [the pipeline], how do you retain them moving forward?" (Female Baby Boomers II CEO). Other participants described the need for search committees and the board of trustees to probe beyond prejudicial stereotypes of what constitutes a leader. In describing search committees and the board of trustee's role impeding candidates Second Generation Male leader stated:

> Search committees not looking beyond perceived stereotypes and board of
> trustees not looking beyond a traditional archetype of what a president should be.
> Those are particular gatekeepers. They are real, they do exist. But often, the gates
> are set-up. It's palpable, but you cannot conclude and say that's a gatekeeper.
> (Male Baby Boomers II CEO)

Another theme was a fear of change by stakeholders in the hiring process based on a lack of

cultural competence, stereotypes, and bias of what leadership looks like. A leader noted:

> I think many times its fear of the other and those that they don't understand. And I
> think people who don't look like again, whether it's male, female dynamics, or
> Hispanic, Anglo, etc. Because it works in the reverse too. And so it's fear of the
> other and those that they don't understand. Simply because they've not had the
> exposure to. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II President)

Gatekeepers in the hiring process were described including a lack of cultural competence

resulting in stereotypes and biases was a finding for the Asian Pacific Islander ethnic group.

Structural Barriers as Impediments

Findings in the data for the Asian Pacific Islander group identified structural barriers and

processes embedding in institutional culture and practices. On the subject of systemic processes

of institutions as a gatekeeper, a Second Generation Female noted:

> Earlier we talked about systemic processes and policies in place. So the
> gatekeepers are individuals who for generations thought a certain way of the other
> and hiring those with whom they are comfortable. (Female Baby Boomers II
> President)

Formal and established networks in the form of councils, associations, and affiliates were

described as gatekeepers. A seasoned Male Second Generation CEO described an experience

with formal association early in his career:

> Established connections network for the industry is a gatekeeper. It's very
> difficult for minority candidates to breakthrough. My first experience in attending
> an AACC conference was not very positive. When you enter a large hall, the first
> session, receptions all you will see is three-piece blue suits. They tend to be white,
> gray hair, college presidents who tend to be very similar. You feel you don't
> belong in that setting. That's the early years of the AACC national conference.
> Now, today's AACC, it's very different. You see more minorities you see different
> young people, people speaking with an accent, people who are immigrants,
> different faces, and persons of different color today they become college
> presidents. We've made a lot of progress that when I got there. So that's what I
> meant by it's hard to break through that network and without it, you don't know

who to contact [or how to navigate the landscape of higher education]. (Male
Baby Boomers II CEO)

Formal organizations and associations were perceived as exclusive and identified as a type of

structural gatekeeper. A Second Generation Female stated:

When you look at our society's organized groups [described to the researcher as
formal leadership organizations, councils, sororities, fraternities], yet they are also
exclusive. There's a sense of exclusiveness. And so that sense of exclusiveness
becomes both a figurative as well as a literal gate for others to walk through. And
the only way that people can open doors for you is if they are comfortable that
you belong to that group affiliation. (Female Baby Boomers II President)

Lack of Opportunity and Exposure to senior leadership experiences and support for

professional development was identified as a gatekeeper. A Second Generation Male noted, "The

opportunity is not afforded to some really talented individuals, many of which are in various

disciplines. They are overlooked and not considered because they don't meet the stereotypical

presentation" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male President).

Influential Donors were and special interests community members were identified as

gatekeepers. A Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male described:

Donors or benefactors, major contributors to the college foundation and the local
community can be gatekeepers. Why do those gatekeepers exist still today for
minorities is a great question. In my mind, some of these things have surfaced with
the current Black Lives Matter which I point to that's historical, economic, and
political mechanisms and I think you can't separate them. And I'll relate that to your
question is why the board of trustees aren't more open to hiring a minority president?
Because I would submit that many of their campaign supporters, which are
economics-driven. When they run for office, the campaign supporters come from not
very diverse kinds of communities. The minority communities do not have the
political and the economic firepower to upside or supersede some of these board of
trustees or donors. (Male President)

Social Media was described as an unintentional perpetrator of stereotypes and a challenge

for leaders to navigate along their ascension to the presidency. A male participant stated, "The

media, not just our typical print but Twitter, Facebook and social media. You have to be aware of what you write or tweet that can be turned into difficult situations and can become an obstacle" (Male Second Generation Baby Boomers II President). Another leader described how a leader's personal views of a social equity agenda on using social media can be perceived negatively and become an obstruction. The fourth Gen X II Millennial President stated:

> If you have social media, when you look at some of the other presidents in say Texas who has Twitter accounts and are social justice or equity avengers, many of them say, "These do not reflect my college. My Tweets are my own. Tweets don't mean endorsement." That's great, you can do that in certain places. You couldn't do that in the [Pacific West]. Does that mean you don't support diversity, inclusion and equity? No. It just says that you know your constituents, you know your legislators, and so you need to have the acumen to know what you can do things without overstepping your bounds. (Male President)

Data themes from the study for the Asian Pacific Islander group identified types of gatekeepers as structural barriers in the form of processes and policies, formal associations, councils, and established networks, lack of opportunity and exposure to senior-level positions and influential, philanthropic donors, and special interest community groups. The acumen of using social media in support of social justice, equity and inclusion matters was described as a potential obstruction to navigate in the ascension to the presidency.

Leadership Preparation and Mentors

In regards to the leadership pathway, 80% of Asian Pacific Islander participants are from the traditional academic pathway and 20% from the non-traditional route. All participants had mentors that helped guide them along the way, with most attributing those persons who opened doors and provided opportunities as other persons of color. A Fourth Gen X II/Millennial stated,

> Making sure that as persons become students that they know that there are opportunities to go to the next level to the presidency as a career choice. Then, as people become leaders and supervisors, I think that you need to mentor people in positions below them, but then also get to be mentored by people above them.

That network is within your college but also within the field that you're in. It's really key to be somebody's mentor and a champion for other people. (Male 1st Time College President from a non-traditional pathway)

The Asian Pacific Islander group acknowledged the importance of having allies and mentors in any form helps one to succeed. A Second Generation Male CEO noted:

Throughout my career, I have received lots of good mentors, lots of good people in the community as well as in the institution I work have been there for me. Sometimes, race and gender can help. There are people who want the minority to succeed. They're willing to help. We have to identify those people, be willing to disclose, be willing to reach out, be willing to take some risks. And so my personal experience clearly proved there are lots of good people who want us to succeed. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male CEO)

Findings identified a lack of representation by this group in the senior leadership positions and the presidency contributing to the low number of Asian Pacific Islanders as mentors. A male President described:

The other end of the spectrum, and why it's hard for minorities and women in the categories that you're looking for is a lack of representation of persons who look like you as role models to consider this a career path. I prefaced it by saying because at a point there aren't a lot of people in those levels, and so when you look at championing, we have some of the best presidents but they are few. They are stretched and focused on the community or on their campus and may be able to help mentor or not at all, and so it gets delegated. Especially with the hiring and to the HR resources. Making sure there are people on the other spectrum that are open to diversity, whether it's gender or race, or orientation. I think it's moving more forward now, there's going to be a gap because we're still transitioning. (Male Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I 1st Time College President from a non-traditional pathway)

The importance of mentors in ascending to the presidency was a dominant theme in the Asian Pacific Islander group. Findings in the data supported the importance and influence of mentors in providing opportunities for advancement, intentional exposure to networks and associations, and

giving back as a mentor once in the presidency. Leadership preparation and intentionality in

cultivating and developing the pipeline were other findings identified for this group.

Research Question 2: Latino/Hispanic

Latino/Hispanic – Research Question 2 asked participants "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" They described challenges or barriers navigated along the way as well as gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency. The following themes were derived in the Latino/Hispanic group for question two include a) gatekeepers as barriers, and b) factors on why they exist and prejudicial stereotypes that discriminate.

Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers in the form of the hiring process to structural barriers. Participants described gatekeepers as stakeholders in the process, the composition of the search and selection committees, inequities of facilitation of the process including the search committee's use of quotas to bolster the candidacy pool which presents false hope to candidates and questions crafted for use as barriers.

Barriers were described as credentials, inconsistent metrics of value for the traditional vs. non-traditional pathway and institutional symbolism, and silencing or closing off of diverse voices at the table. A need for and lack of cultural competency for all stakeholders were identified as Faculty, search and selection committees, and the board of trustees and structural barriers (institutional culture and policies) were findings as gatekeepers. Leaders described challenges with the perceptions and use of quotas, tokenism, microaggressions, and the burden of being a person of color. One leader described quotas as a double conundrum and impediment to the hiring process stating:

> But then you don't go to being a finalist. Is it because of your experience? Is it because of faith? Is it because that's not what they want at the particular moment. Or is it that the search committee/firm fulfilled the requirement of the quota and they brought the person here for that or whatever. Circumstances didn't allow that

person to continue to move forward. I don't know to what extent that plays a role. (Third Gen X Male 1ˢᵗ time President)

Causes for why gatekeepers exist

Causes for why gatekeepers exist were noted as a desire for sameness or status quo, institutional culture, historical and systemic racism, lack of training including cultural competency, racialized biases, inter-group tensions, and pressure of special interests from the local community. Community colleges were described as geosynchronous in nature and orbiting the community it serves as well focusing on the matters hyper-local. On the discussion of community interest's influence and the geosynchronous nature of community colleges, a Veteran leader described:

> Community colleges are still local because they are prominent, they support, they sponsor-All those things, but their region scope is much further than the Circles of the area. So this places it in the context of the circumstances and the geosynchronous of those institutions. It's a little difficult to pinpoint a specific one, but be mindful that the community colleges are hyper-local, extremely, extremely local. It's a little difficult to pinpoint a specific one, but be mindful that the community colleges, I guess you know this, are hyper-local. So extremely, extremely hyper-local. (A bi-cultural and bi-lingual Third Gen X President)

Another leader described the influence of community interests on the diversity of the presidency:

> For example, if I'm going to be a college president in Alabama, or Georgia, or Southern California, then a Mexican shows up, what are people going to say? Or at an East L.A. College, an African American wants to be the president there. What are the people going to say there, where they are 80% of the folks? So we have our own internal biases, tensions, and baggage that we've got to unpack, and simply get rid of. (Veteran Male CEO in the Pacific West)

Race and Racism

Biases and prejudicial stereotypes as a form of race and racism were described by participants as factors in their experiences and journey ascending to the presidency. Findings an

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inability of persons perceiving they have biases to begin to address, an inability to see leaders who are non-white in the role as the community college president, and a lack of cultural competency to distinguish the difference between cultural traits vs. leadership traits. Biased stereotypes of gender, perceptions of what a leader looks like, and competencies of what comprises a good leader were identified biases based on racist social constructs described on their journey to the presidency. Experiences of racism in the form of microaggressions and tokenism and regression of affirmative action policies were themes.

Microaggressions was a finding described by the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group as covert barriers that manifest themselves in many forms. On the subject of microaggressions, "Its ways to construct barriers to not advance candidates who particularly have been nontraditional in that particular setting, whether it be gender or ethnicity. So those are some of the ways that these biases, microaggressions, manifest themselves" (Veteran CEO in the Pacific West). On the use of coded language when a candidate is perceived and labeled as not a good fit a leader stated, "Coded language in their views, justifies it. So it intensifies the microaggressions, lack of awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion. (CEO in the Pacific Southwest).

Tokenism was a finding in the study and described as double jeopardy by checking a box on an application. The CEO perceived checking a box as being segregated into an ethnic pool of which they can be categorized into multiple categories of race and gender. On the subject, a CEO noted, "There are rules, there are expectations, and there are policies that are probably not supportive of people of color ascending to the job" (Female Latino/Hispanic CEO from the Southwest). Participants described factors to unpack the social constructs of racism.

A regression of Affirmative Action policies benefitting students of color was a dominant theme for the Latino/Hispanic group. Given the richness and bi-cultural nature of the group,

systemic racism and lived experiences, have many roots in institutional, society, and policy. Themes identified include overturning of affirmative action policies that benefitted equal hire for women of color and much-needed scholarships to students, symbolism, and as exhibited in institutional policies and practices. In addressing the rollback of affirmative action policies benefiting students and the pipeline, a leader observed, "What we've seen since the attack on affirmative action is we've seen that those numbers have regressed and so we do see fewer women, and we absolutely see it" (1st generation college student and graduate Third Gen X Male President). Data from the Latino/Hispanic ethnicity group for research question two identified barriers, microaggressions, gatekeepers, reasons gatekeepers exist, biases, stereotypes, and racism in describing their ascension to the presidency as findings.

Research Question 2: The Supremes – Women

Research Question 2 asked participants "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" Women described how race and gender may have played a role in their pursuit of the presidency, challenges or barriers navigated along the way as well as gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency and views on why said gatekeepers may exist. Themes relevant to research question two for the Women included; a) perceptions of race, gender and stereotypes, b) gender bias, c) structural barriers that influence tokenism, a Bionic Woman Super Syndrome, a glass ceiling and d) systemic racism.

Data for the Women's group identified *perceptions of race, gender and stereotypes*. The inability to decouple race and gender was prevalent. One 1st time leader described, "We don't really get to decouple gender because there is a definition of people's head, conscious or unconscious, of what they think when they see who the president is" (Gen X, Fourth Generation Transformer).

Another described *biased perceptions of being a woman*. A Third Gen X noted, "If a woman is emotional in her leadership role, it's frowned upon. Whereas if a man is emotional, he's firm and strong and dedicated" (African American, CEO). A Baby Boomer II stated, "Perceptions, you know that again, we are less than prepared or less than qualified" (African American Female, Two-time College President).

The Women noted the psychological effects of stereotypes on confidence and leadership ability. One CEO described, "We need to not let stereotypes begin to erode our self-confidence" (1st generation immigrant CEO of a multi-college, urban/suburban district). Another leader considered stereotypes a barrier and a false bias of one's competence stating, "As a female leader, and then as a person of color, these barriers are connected to what perceptions there are

and the expectations" (Female Silent/Baby Boomer I CEO). A 1ˢᵗ time President stated the

imperceptions of bias awareness describing, "It's interesting, I don't think people realize they're

anti-Black especially, sort of almost hidden or ingrained beliefs about what we are capable of"

(African-American Female). A Baby Boomer II described experiences of persons being

condescending stating, "I think there was a certain level of condescension and familiarity,

especially from men, that I couldn't say 100% sure, but I think is because of stereotypes of

femininity." (Latino/Hispanic Female).

Gender biases systemic or otherwise and the inability to acknowledge or change

individual biases, misconceptions, or stereotypes one has that causes them to act and or support

structural policies in place that serve to disadvantage leaders and students of color. One

Latino/Hispanic leader gave the example of a person's response to a question of biased actions

stating, "Absolutely not, there's nothing racist about me," and I would say, "I would invite you to

be thinking about it" (Second Generation Female CEO from the Southwest). On the subject of

perceptions and bias the female leader described as "persons, they don't see it, but I saw it, as the

recipient of some of that. Deep, ingrained biases and perceptions about who we are, what we can

do and our level of competence" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO). Another Baby

Boomers II described how bias leads to ethnic discrimination stating:

> I think where a lot of that racism applied because I saw it myself. I applied for a
> job as a woman and they said, "Oh, well, you're just too youthful." I'm 50 years
> old. I thought, "Okay. I think that means ... That's good?" Now, was it ageism or
> discrimination? It was. No one needed to tell me that. I think they have their idea
> of whatever ethnicity should look like. (Two-time African-American Female
> President)

The toll of these constant expressions of bias, often manifested as microaggressions is palpable.

Perceived mobility as an impediment to ascendency for women is the agility to move and

relocate as well as the assumption of ability to relocate or view of being 'place-bound". "In some

cases, especially for women, is the choice to not move, or you choose to be, I guess, place-bound" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO). Findings for the Women's group identified perceptions of race and gender stereotypes, gender bias, and the psychological effects on leader's confidence.

Structural Barriers

Tokenism, the policy or practice of making a symbolic effort to be inclusive of, or give advantages to members of minority groups thereby postulating the appearance of racial and gender equality was described. One example of tokenism as a finding by the Women the perception that affirmative action policy favorably impacts women of color. The contrary was a finding. By categorizing women as one minority group, it inherently divides women into two categories of white women and others.

The category of non-white women is a large group of women of color who are disproportionately masked under the label of gender. The Women refer to data in longitudinal studies regarding gains for women in the community college presidency which camouflages the disproportionate number of Latino/Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander and African America women in comparison to white women as one group. In describing the demographic census practice of ethnic and gender identification in hiring, a Third Gen X Female leader stated, "So when a white woman applies, they feel as if they can check two boxes because the definition of a minority now also includes a white woman. But the minority is not a white woman. Because affirmative action was not founded for black people, it was founded for white women who could not get jobs" (African American Gen X President). Tokenism related to affirmative action is a structural inequity as was described as an impediment in ascending to the presidency. Inequalities

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including gender bias and tokenism are complex social constructions that form internal and external barriers that interplay one's ability to be successful in matriculating in leadership.

Tokenism promotes isolation, exclusion and feelings of being invisible were identified in the data. In describing the how women actively have to navigate challenges of gender bias and tokenism, a Female leader stated, "I have to be consciously aggressive to make sure when I was at the table, regardless of where the table was, I was not there as a checked box, decoration" (Latino/Hispanic Female leader CEO). Women from each ethnic group described instances where "I was told I was a token" (African American Female leader), or "I was told, I was their token and they didn't need two of us". Another was asked, "How do I mind being used as a token?" when serving on a selection committee for diversity. The CEO described, "Yes, I was a token because in that selection committee, I'm still invisible in that process" (Asian Pacific Islander Female leader). Others concluded that when you are a trailblazer as a woman and a woman of color, you will always navigate prisms of bias and tokenism. In describing how race and gender played a role in their ascension to the presidency, an African American Female leader stated:

> I think it played of role, a negative and a positive role throughout my career. It
> played a positive role in the fact that I came up through a very white male
> dominated field of manufacturing, that I was a token. (African American
> President in a non-traditional field)

Tokenism creates barriers between the individual that treats them as invisible, in isolation and/or exhibits overt and covert microaggressions acts of being treated as invisible including being ignored. In describing being the only woman on panel of all male leaders, a Female leader described:

> I remember one commission meeting when I was on a panel with two white men
> and I was the only female. They kept talking and over me so much I remember

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thinking 'if I don't grab the microphone, and I mean that figuratively and in some cases literally, I'll never get a word in. (Latino/Hispanic Female leader)

Other Women described being invisible as a constant struggle battle to be seen, heard, and listened to. Invisibility, a by-product of tokenism, was a finding for the Women.

A Glass Ceiling, also referred to as a bamboo ceiling or plexiglas ceiling, was a structural barrier and theme by the Women. Structural barriers related to institutional policies and practices that impede progress for persons of color was described as a challenge to navigate. All participants agree a glass ceiling exists in various forms. One Latino/Hispanic Female leader observed:

> Absolutely, there is a glass ceiling! In some institutions people are not as enlightened as they think they are. I think that we're [women] still viewed as less than. Of course, there will be exceptions, but I think as a whole, I don't think we have actually broken any glass ceilings yet. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Latino/Hispanic CEO)

Some speak to the plexiglas nature of the more than metaphorical ceiling describing it as an intentional barrier with most identifying it as an impediment to overcome to crack and penetrate. Another Female leader from the Midwest noted, "It's a broken ceiling. It's still a ceiling, it's cracked and broken in places, but it's still a ceiling" (African American Female leader in the Midwest).

Each participant described how they navigated being the only in one of any given particular categories either by age, female, ethnicity, in the history of the college. One described it as being double jeopardy with at times being more gender than race which is predicated on the hue of skin and/or mannerisms that cannot distinguish between ethnicity. One Female leader described navigating being the first or only as being in the intersections stating:

> For me, I tend to live in the intersections. When I think of myself as a minority college president, or I think of a woman, being a woman of color, I think of a

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woman who would identify as bisexual or lesbian. It's hard for me to dis-
aggregate any one part of my identity, and I think that places me in a unique
space. (African American Female CEO in the Northeast)

All agree one cannot decouple their race, ethnicity nor identity from who they truly are as CEOs

of color and women.

The *Super Syndrome,* the psychological effect of formulating an invisible cloak or shield of

armor that women imperceptibly and figuratively brandish to prove their competency and worth

as leaders. The Super Syndrome described as the John Henry-ism effect for men of color, is a

psychological construct and behavioral predisposition and determination to single mindedly

working tirelessly to succeed often exerting extreme mental, physical and emotional toll to

justify, prove one's ability, worth, and be perceived as equal. In describing having to prove

oneself as a hurdle to the presidency to navigate, one Female leader described:

When you're doing that all the time, it's really, really hard. And so that's been my
barrier I've had to navigate, is always having to be the first, the only, and then
play all the roles. You've got to play the woman role, then you've got to play the
black woman role. (Veteran African American Female leader in the Pacific West)

In describing compensation inequity between male and white female counterparts, a

Female leader stated, "I know I had to work harder than even some of the white women here

need to do. I had to pay my dues over and over and over" (Latino/Hispanic Female leader CEO).

Being a woman of color has it unique challenges. A veteran African American Female leader

stated, "We have the barriers to overcome that I think others don't have to overcome. You can

overcome them, but you start out having to overcome them" (African American Female leader in

the South-central region). Another agreed stating, "We start with disadvantages, perceived by

other people, not for us, that you have to fight hard to overcome" (Baby Boomers II Female

leader). Having to do more, go beyond expectations to prove oneself to prove one's worth and

value was a finding identified in the data by Women as a challenge to navigate to the presidency.

This syndrome of being the Bionic Woman, who is built stronger, smarter, can run faster, and works harder than any man, also feeds the *Imposter Syndrome of self-doubt*. One participant described the manifestation of self-doubt associated with the super and imposter syndromes as:

> From a personal side, I think some cases is the lack of confidence that you can actually do the job, because the messages have come, and your sense of worth and your sense of who you are and what you can do begin to erode a bit. (Latino/Hispanic Female CEO)

Another CEO indicated that when you peel the scab off and "At the end of the day when you remove all the layers, the labels, you see racism." However, the secret to Women's survival is not to allow racism to "get to your core". Offering, "There will always be racism. You can't let those comments get to the core of who you are" (Asian Pacific Islander CEO).

Systemic Racism is a barrier in the form of political structures and policies. As one seasoned leader offered, "There are no race-blind policies, there are systems, most systems are designed for a winner and oftentimes we don't get to collect enough points to win the game" (African American Female leader in the Pacific West). An Asian Pacific Islander leader proffered structural institutional racism as "the perception people have of immigrants and of minority women" that often serves as a gatekeeper (Asian Pacific Islander Female leader President. There was no shortage of description of gatekeepers nor why they exist including "historical racism" and "a lot of years of perceptions and expectations, whether or not they're true or not". Racism was a finding by the Women's group as a constant challenge to navigate in their pursuit of the community college presidency.

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Research Question 2: The Commodores – Males

Participants provided counter-narratives to describe their journeys to the presidency for research question two. Each described how race and gender may have played a role in their pursuit of the presidency, challenges or barriers navigated along the journey, descriptors of perceived gatekeepers that exist for minorities ascending to the presidency, and perception on why said gatekeepers may exist. The following themes were derived from the Men's all male gender group for research question two including the a) effects of race and racism in acts of marginalization, institutional culture, practices and processes, b) discrimination based on prejudicial stereotypes of ethnicity, gender, and c) challenges of power based on stereotype threat.

Leading Uniquely as Men, and CEOs, and of Color: Marginalization by Labeling

The Men's' group described marginalization through acts of labeling to disassociate leaders gender and ethnicity in attempts to decouple multiple aspects of their identity for social acceptance. They described the uniqueness of leading as male CEOs of color. Each of the Men identifying first as men, followed by their role. As one leader described, they are male CEOs who just happen to be a person of color. In describing the dual nature of gender and ethnicity, one CEO reflected, "first, it's not much different from being a president of any of any race or ethnic background, and for other races, it's dramatically different" (Seasoned African American Male leader from the Traditional Academic Pathway). Yet each of the men understands that navigating as men of color is uniquely different from their white male counterparts noting, "From my perspective, I've had to navigate different waters than my white colleagues or colleagues who are not of color, more specifically" (African American President in the Midwest). Another observed, "When I started seeking the chancellor's role, things became a little

bit more evidence that that was a higher profile position, and the acceptance was not as broad" (African American CEO from the Southwest).

All participants take resignation to a label in any form and defining how they'd like to be viewed as a CEO noted, "I would say first, that I don't see myself as a minority community college president. I see myself as a community college CEO, and I see myself as a man of color" (Veteran Latino/Hispanic in the Pacific West). Not identifying oneself as a pejorative label of a minority but rather an indication of ethnicity in terms of hue was a dominant theme throughout this study for the Men.

The act of labeling is a racially biased mechanism that detracts from viewing the person as a human in all its richness. One CEO described the phenomenon as invisible variables that persons of color must understand and more importantly learn how to navigate. The Male leader described being seen as different as:

> When you enter the world as being integrated, dominated by Whites, you know that when you come in you're seen as different, and different is perceived as less. So realizing that, and rather feeling sorry for yourself, how you handle that is going to make a whole world of difference in terms of how people will see you and how you're going to see yourself. Sometimes we don't realize that and we don't do much to understand that. So yes, those perceptions from the outside are important, and you need to be aware of what they are because sometimes, they are not very visible. I call them invisible variables that you need to be aware of. And that is important. (Latino/Hispanic CEO, 1st generation immigrant and community college graduate)

Yet, each is acutely aware of the challenges associated with labeling with one male leader stating "There are challenges I experienced by virtue of being a minority that is somewhat unique. And that just means I have to deal with just being a minority male, especially for minority males in general" (African American 'student-centered' President in the Central Southwest). Some of those challenges come in the form of mistaken identity of the role.

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Will the Real CEO, Please Stand Up

Inherent in the observation of challenges is the mistaken identity many have experienced as being anything but the CEO of the institution even when it is a widely publicized phenomenon. One CEO reflected:

> You always, occasionally get the... like people ask, you know, "Well, oh, what do you do at the college?" "Well, I'm the president." You occasionally get that, "Oh, you're the president." You get that every once in a while and I say, "Yeah, I'm the president." But you roll with it and try to help educate. (African American Gen X 1st Time President in the Midwest)

Another Male leader stated, "When I do face challenges, first and foremost, I just have to tell you, sometimes people are shocked when they see that you are the CEO of an institution and you're a minority person going into certain community situations" (African American President in Southwest). As each of the participants indicated, there are quite a few variables that are attributed to being perceived as the leader when you are a man of color.

Challenge: Being a Persons of Color Does Not Mean Less or Lack of Competence

Significant data from the Men described challenges associated with perceptions of male leaders of color as leaders. The leaders identified challenges of ethnicity and gender describing, "The challenge of serving as a person of color in a leadership role, like a chancellor or president, it's there, no doubt" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO). Another noted, "I just think that as a person of color, as a president, it's always more challenging" (Second Generation African American CEO). One CEO framed it as a common impediment to overcome stating, "No question that being a minority was something that presents challenges, that you need to be very much aware of, and be determined to overcome if you really want to be able to succeed and achieve your goals" (First Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO).

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Men leading at predominantly white institutions described challenges to navigate as one leader stated, "As African Americans, an African American leader and primarily in predominantly white institutions, that still has this challenges in its own" (Veteran Second Generation African American President from the Northeast). One Male leader described how there are natural differences in how persons of color lead stating:

> The job is the same as you would have with a majority male. Now we may do it differently. And there are some challenges I have to overcome that may be a majority male may or may not have had to overcome. (Veteran First Generation African American President from the Southeast region)

Another Male leader described it as an *intentional act by someone to draw out negative character responses* stating,

> There are periodic opportunities that I may have been challenged to see how I would respond or to see if I would allow negativity to take control versus maintain a level of professionalism and not be identified as the angry black man but respond as a professional African American leader regardless of how the question may have been presented in a challenging or disrespectful format. (Veteran African American President in the Northeast)

Leaders described *an inability of being fallible and making mistakes* because "You don't often get the benefit of the doubt. The benefit of the doubt usually happens to other applicants who are not people of color that want to become a chancellor or wants to become a president" (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Latino/Hispanic CEO). In free listing the causes of race and gender for minorities as leaders, one Male leader described, "External politics ... inconsistent expectations, unfair expectations, little room for failure" (Seasoned African American Third Gen X President serving in multiple regions of the U.S.).

When describing their *feelings on the challenges of leading as a man of color* one CEO stated, "I'm not used to it. I'm tolerant of it. To me, it's a big difference between being tolerant and being used to it. I'm tolerant of it, and that I know that I'm going to be challenged more"

(Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO). Another Male leader attributed the cause to racism in describing biased perceptions of men of color as leaders stating, "How we are perceived as leaders, so, that's a problem. And a lot of it has to do with basic racism, not accepting someone for who they are and their talent and skills" (First Generation African American President). A Gen X Male leader summarized it well by stating, "We have to make sure we show people that we're well worth and capable of the position and it's not just about the color of my skin. It's about what I do as a leader". (African American Third Gen X President). Racism, ethnic and gender bias were findings by the Men as CEOs of color attributed to their competence, and leadership.

Racial Bias of Ethnic Groups as Inferior informs Perceptions of Competency in leadership were findings in the data. A lack of cultural competence and experiences to counter the bias was described by participants. On the subject of perceived inequities of support in leadership a CEO described:

> The first thing what I realized is that walking into, particularly when you're in a state system, you can look and see what occurs with other presidents, and if they're not Black or if they're a person of color, they're kind of handed the keys, just like you're everybody else. And, my experience is that there is this absence or vacancy of knowledge when it comes to what does it look like to transition not only a person of color, a Black person, somebody that's descendants of slaves is actually very different than just being a person of color. (African American Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I President)

The differences are real. Inherent in the perception of male leaders of color as less than and lacking the competency of a leader that needs to be proved is an unequal bar of standards for persons of color as community college leaders. Racial bias of ethnic groups as inferior, inconsistent standards of value and evaluation in the hiring process and of competency were identified.

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Perceptions of an Inequitable Bar and Standards for Leaders of Color

Each of the Men are highly credentialed, hail from the traditional academic, non-traditional student affairs, workforce development, and private sector, they possess years of experience in senior leadership honing their craft and proficiencies in wide areas of expertise benefitting their institutions. Higher education was described as elitist, lacking a clear pathway to the presidency with inequitable standards for persons of color. Breaching the top of the organizational ladder as CEO would suggest each leader is experienced, credentialed, and qualified. However, many participants not only having to justify and prove themselves but higher standards than their white counterparts in the same role. One Second Generation CEO described their experience and expectations as, "My experiences have been overall very, very, very good. However, there occasionally appears to be a greater expectation, a higher standard of performance or follow up than perhaps my counterparts". The Male leader went on to describe:

> Occasionally, there are times that persons like to call you out to test your depth of knowledge or awareness. So you always have to be well prepared. Once you pass that litmus test, it appears that your leadership begins to thrive, but it's those initial one, two years that you will be challenged. (Second Generation African American President)

Another Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male leader agreed to state:

> In order for you to be selected as a person of color, either as a president or chancellor, you have to obviously do really well. You have to go many times way up above and beyond to show that you can really do the job and you have tons of experience. (Latino/Hispanic CEO)

One Third Gen X Male leader described the journey as, "navigating the complexities of the system and staying in there [the role] once you get in there" (Latino/Hispanic President). Others described the burden of having to prove their competency and legitimacy as leaders as an unequal bar requiring them to work harder. A Male leader described these challenges as:

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> I always realized very early in my career that in order to be at the same level as the rest, I needed to work three times harder. That took a lot of effort, a lot of understanding and determination, to be able to do that. (First Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO)

Another Male leader described it as *a lack of recognition* stating, "I think there's still that gap of recognition of individuals who need to see this is what we're capable of doing. And we have to repeatedly, unfortunately, we have to repeatedly prove that" (Third Gen X African American President). Many descriptors were used to describe experiences of the perception of competency.

A double standard was used to describe the inequity of standards for leaders of color and masked in the use of coded language. Coded language in the hiring process was a gatekeeping tactic described inhibiting candidates of color from moving forward in the pipeline. A leader stated, "The faculty may say, "Oh, we want an academic degree, a PhD." Again, this is implicit bias. This is coded language" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO). Another described prejudicial bias to describe the inequity and double standard of race and gender for men of color stating:

> That we cannot just come with the same exact same platform, skills, preparation, and competency, but persons of color are always expected to have more, do more. I think we have to come with that when it comes to all the soft skills. That's probably the best way to say it. (Third Gen X African American President)

Having to constantly prove one's worth is degrading and was referred to as a part of the normalized bias and elitism inherent in higher education systems and structures. Critical Race Theory acknowledges issues of power relative to racialized systems and structures such as higher education. Intrinsic to the is the need to normalize or subdue the concern often through the use of stereotypes built on racialized biases cultivated around societal norms.

Stereotype Threat was identified in the data to support these types of bias. One African American CEO described it as a stereotype threat:

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I think the primary issue is what Claude Steele called stereotype threat and that's this notion that one situation, one event creates a stereotype for people, particularly fellow African-Americans as lazy, whatever, whatever. For many of them, that's reinforced by the fact that they have no contact with black people, or if they have contact with black people, it's very limited. Or, it might have been a negative experience. And that's the basis for which they position us. (Seasoned African American First Generation CEO serving in multiple regions of the U.S.)

The *challenge of dispelling a label associated with one's identity* was described. One participant reflected on having prove his worth to be a CEO stated, "One erroneous stereotype related to leadership often associated with those of us in the Asian Pacific Islander group is that we don't have the courage or the resolve to make difficult decisions" (Second Generation Asian Pacific Islander CEO). At the end of the day, another CEO advised, "You ignore it, but do not ignore it. You respond, but you respond in a way that does not fuel the controversy" (First Generation Latino/Hispanic Chancellor). Each of these counter-stories was essential to understanding their stories and journeys to the presidency and the challenges they navigated to overcome. Data from the study affirmed all thirty-four participants as a composite group, including the all-male group referred to as the Men described their enjoyment leading community colleges, the mission, and the ability to make a difference as findings.

Research Question 2: The Miracles – All Group Composite

Research Question 2 asked, "*How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?*" Many data elements informed the stories and journeys to the presidency for the Composite. They described the role of race and gender in their journey to the presidency, challenges or barriers navigated, perceived gatekeepers, and why they exist for minorities ascending to the presidency. Themes identified for research question two for the composite group included; a) the hiring process and stakeholders of the process as a gatekeeper to the presidency, b) structural racism and bias of race and gender creating a structural glass ceiling impediment for men and women, and c) acts of discrimination that manifest themselves in the form of microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, the Imposter Syndrome and John Henry-ism.

Flaws in the Hiring Process and as a Gatekeeper

The Composite group described a flawed hiring process as a gatekeeper to the presidency. The Composite group identified a need for alignment of hiring practices and standards of the hiring process and a need for training for consistency in the hiring, and the preparation of presidents. They also noted stakeholders as faculty, institutional selection committees, presidential search firms, and the board of trustees would benefit from cultural competency training to distinguish between cultural and leadership traits, reduce ethnic, and gender bias. Alignment of practices with constituent groups, councils, associations, and other groups that influence the hiring decisions of college presidents was also identified as an opportunity to reduce barriers for persons of color ascending to the presidency. The hiring process was identified as a gatekeeper to the presidency by the Composite group. Stakeholders

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who operate as gatekeepers were identified as all persons in the hiring process, the board of trustees and their cultural readiness for a CEO of color, philanthropic donors, and social media.

Challenges to Navigate Towards the Presidency

The Composite group identified challenges they navigated ascending to the presidency including; perceptions (mobility, institution location, and community), culture (institutional, societal, political), race and racism (systemic racism and racialized biases), structural racism (institutional, social, economic, and political systems), discrimination (racial and gender biases and stereotypes). Actions based on aforementioned identifiers were described as contributed to feelings of isolation, invisibility, tokenism, The Imposter Syndrome and Super Syndrome also referred to as John Henry-ism. Leaders also described inconsistent standards and practices related to their leadership competency and the need for more leaders of color as role models and sufficiency as mentors.

Impact of Structural Racism

The inability to decouple race and ethnicity serves as a structural barrier and was described by the Composite group. On the subject of inability to isolate aspects of one's identity, a leader noted, "The interest actually wasn't because you're a woman or because you're black, you can't really take that apart; certainly here in the Pacific Northwest, it just is always kind of front and center" (African American Female, Two time College President Baby Boomer II). A Fourth Gen X Miracle described:

> You cannot decouple that and I think, oftentimes, people want to decouple or say, "Oh, it's not about race. It's not about gender. It's not about..." I say, "How can you not, if you are raised and born in this country, we don't get the luxury of separating race. We don't get to decouple race, from any of this. (African American Fourth Generation Gen X II/ Millennials I Female President)

The Composite group described structural racism and systemic bias and prejudice along the journey to the presidency that also contributes to the underrepresentation of persons of color as community college presidents. In describing the disparity a female leader stated, "Systemic biases and prejudices are... it is for me a factor that contributes to this gender and racial disparity" (Female Asian Pacific Islander 1st generation college graduate). Another leader described the cause for the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents succinctly stating:

> Because they probably, putting racism and prejudice aside, which really is the basis of all of this, because they fail to understand the value of diversity, they fail to see the need to have an institution that looks like the community that they serve. Especially for public institutions, that's crucial. (Veteran Latino/Hispanic Male CEO)

Racism is naturally entrenched in all aspects of culture including higher education. One leader observed, "This country has had a long history of systemic biases and prejudices only to be manifested right now in the myriads of different ways" (African American 1st time Female President in Southcentral Region). Leaders describe tools they were taught in youth or learned by culture to navigate racism. One Miracle stated:

> I unapologetically love being black. And so the fact that I am raised with a set of realities, I understand, and understood as a young man, that I would navigate the complexities of a world where structural racism exists And while it is my responsibility to address it in meaningful ways throughout my career, that doesn't mean that my parents didn't sit down with me and have the talk [about how to navigate and survive structural racism's effect on being a Black Man. (African American Third Gen X 1st Time President)

Tools to navigating multiple cultures while ascending to the presidency was identified as critical by the Composite group.

A Glass Ceiling was identified as a structural barrier informed by racist constructs and described by the Composite group as a theme for research question two. A Third Gen X Miracle stated, "There's always a glass ceiling for people like us to help transcend institution" (Female Asian Pacific Islander Third Gen X CEO). Properties of the structure of the Glass Ceiling were referred to as a bamboo or plexiglas ceiling that impacts both men and women of color. Leader's description of a glass ceiling by different properties denotes the ability of the structure as penetrable. One Miracle stated, "Absolutely. I heard someone say once, it's like, we haven't broken any glass ceilings. All we have is a bunch of bumps on our head from bumping up against it" [In speaking with the researcher and referring to a glass ceiling]" (Latino/Hispanic Female Silent/Baby Boomer I CEO). In describing various challenges and hurdles of the ceiling along the pipeline continuum, a male Miracle described:

> We can get to mid-management, and we may get to senior leadership, but we don't get beyond that glass ceiling. So what do we need to do to further advance that next step to the C-suite? As an African American and one of the few, sometimes the only one in the rooms of other CEOs, I have witnessed the uncertainty, unawareness, or the lack of know-how to embrace and celebrate diversity and be a part of that individual's success in getting into the C suite. And it goes back to culturally sensitive, understanding the differences of others, and then making a personal commitment to increase your team to be more representative of a diverse leadership group with a goal that you are committed to supporting individuals in that team if it's not in your organization to help them get into other organization and be a part of the C-suite". (Two time African American Male President and Second Generation Baby Boomer II)

Leaders described discriminatory treatment based on a myriad of racist prejudicial stereotypes.

Experiences of Microaggressions and Tokenism

Microaggressions were a finding by the composite group. In describing discrimination based on a person's accent a Miracle stated, "I have a very strong Filipino accent. The command of the English accent, it's either micro-aggression or it's been really embedded in the system"

(Asian Pacific Islander Third Gen X Female CEO). Leaders described the appeal and covert

nature of microaggressions in masking one's true beliefs and cowardice. A leader described:

> I think many times what we are challenged with is that people can't say to you
> today, because people are much more politically correct, they can't say to you,
> "Well, I don't like you, CharMaine, because of your skin color. They try to
> address who you are in a different way. They'll say, "Well, CharMaine, where'd
> you to go school? How did you get to where you are now? Did you get here
> because of - Affirmative action? (Veteran Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomer II
> CEO)

Others described prejudicial biases give way to microaggressions stating, "I think people are

excited and they were excited to have their first minority president, their first woman president,

but then the realities of not knowing how to communicate or microaggressions or not agree with

decisions become issues that you have to make". (Trailblazing Veteran African American

Female President in the South). In describing how microaggressions manifest, a Miracle

described:

> An implicit bias that gets in the way. I would say microaggressions get in the
> way. It's ways to construct barriers to not advance candidates who particularly
> have been nontraditional in that particular setting, whether it be gender or
> ethnicity. So those are some of the ways that these biases, microaggressions,
> manifest themselves. (Male Latino/Hispanic Baby Boomer II CEO)

Experiences of microaggressions were a dominant finding of research question two by the

Composite group.

Tokenism as a mask for fair and equitable treatment is a social construct of racism and a

finding by the Composite group. Leaders described feelings of horror associated with the

practice as a leader stated, "To be honest with you, I was always horrified of being included as a

token, and not because of my abilities" (Veteran First Generation Latino/Hispanic Male CEO). A

Third Gen X leader described being the token voice and the lone speaker for an entire group

stating:

> Being the only one, I have to educate everyone about our role as a black woman, what it means to be a black woman, what it means to be black in America, what it means to be black everything. So I become the token voice for the community. (African American Female Gen X 1st time CEO)

Many practices of tokenism were described by the Composite group including in the hiring process. One leader described how another leader rose to their defense when in a mid-level management role and experiencing tokenism describing:

> I got a call from HR, who was very defensive to say, "You know, we included you in the selection community because you're Asian. My boss, the finance director, called them on it to say, "She's a token? That's not ok, you're making her a token!" I mean, he's a more progressive and outspoken speaker than I. (Female Asian Pacific Islander Third Gen X CEO)

Tokenism, its counterpart's invisibility and feelings of described. A leader described the duality of stereotypical prejudice, feelings related to the Imposter Syndrome, and how they navigated beyond those challenges were findings. A leader described:

> I remember a former non-African American president I worked for shared with me that I was too soft-spoken and people just wouldn't take me seriously. And I was like, that is me that happens to be who I am. So that has you questioning whether or not you're made for this. Is this my role? Is this what I am called to do? Fortunately, that didn't deter me from moving forward. I've also had times when we need diversity for something they say, go get Female leader, she's, and she's the black woman, where you were very much tokenized. Yeah. And that's happened on too many occasions, unfortunately. (African American Female, Two-time College President Baby Boomer II)

Acts of discrimination that manifest themselves in the form of microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, and the Imposter Syndrome were findings by the Composite group for research question two.

Research Question 3 Findings Presented By Ethnic, Gender & Composite

Research Question 3 asked, "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" The researcher asked five interview questions to query participants about leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency as follows:

- IQ1: Please tell me about your leadership preparation towards the presidency?

- IQ2: Which if these do you believe were most beneficial to you?

- IQ3: Which if these do you believe were least beneficial to you?

- IQ4: Using brief descriptors, list the leadership competencies most relevant to you being successful as a community college president today?

- IQ5: Please describe how your experience and training are valued by different stakeholder groups in community colleges?

Themes that arose from participants by composite, gender, and ethnicity groups for research question three follows.

Research Question 3: African American

African American (A2) - Research Question 3 asked, "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" Participants described their leadership preparation, listed leadership competencies relevant to being successful as community college president's today, and experience and training valued by various stakeholders. Themes derived from the African American ethnic group for research question three included; a) leadership preparation, b) allies, mentors, and support networks, and c) cognitive and non-cognitive competencies needed for successful leadership.

Leadership Preparation

All participants were actively involved in and attributed formal leadership preparation as necessary to prepare for the presidency. Leaders noted that obtaining the doctorate garners your discipline while participating in leadership development programs hones certain skillset and provides you the necessary opportunity to meet and network to build lifelong support networks. Top formal leadership development programs identified that CEOs participated in include the Aspen Fellowship program, the Thomas E. Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, and the League of Innovation's Executive Leadership Institute.

Allies and Support Networks

Allies, support networks, and mentors were a dominant theme for the African American group. A veteran CEO akin allies and support networks to having a rainbow coalition describing:

> I think you've got to have a rainbow coalition. Allies on your support team from multiple diverse voices. Well, that means that on the team that's supporting you, you have to have white men. Hispanics, Asians, women, persons who have alternative lifestyles. You need all these voices in positions and high places that support you. (Veteran First Generation Female President)

Opportunities and access to experiences that lead to developing mentors, allies, and support networks were a major finding by the African American leaders. They described it as a barrier to the presidency. A Third Gen X leader observed:

> Oftentimes, we are relegated into a set of spaces and therefore we may not have the right mentors, the right experiences that give us that breadth and depth of experience, to prepare you to move into the presidency. (Seasoned Female President in the Northeast)

Leaders acknowledged that persons must be open and receptive to mentorship as one leader stated, "I've been a beneficiary of that because I've been open to the mentorship" (Third Gen X Female President). Each described the importance and value of mentors in helping them ascend to the presidency. Mentors were described as a coach, family support, and faith support and were identified as critical to one's success. Each described having profound mentors impacting their lives from leaders in higher education to civic leaders in the community. A leader Second Generation Baby Boomers II described:

> I tell you, it is the power of mentoring, relationships, and building a reputation. I would say that when I said I've been really blessed to have mentors. I've maintained relationships from my doctorate, through my affiliation on community associations formed in each state where I've resided, and in each position to the presidency today with presidents and chancellors. They were all mentors and friends even to present. (Female President in the Pacific Southwest)

Mentoring may often require deliberate action to develop. Leaders noted that mentoring can be in the form of deliberate intentionality and observations of leaders they admire and respect that they may not know. On the subject of moving beyond one's comfort zone to create relationships that lead to mentoring a leader stated:

> I was very comfortable [in observing leaders and seeking help]. So I was like if I can't win this battle, let me go here and say to him, 'you know, I've been observing over the years of your career, how successful you have been. Could you spend some time mentoring me'? (1st Time Female President in the South)

Allies, support networks, and mentoring were noted as crucial to success in leadership and the community college presidency.

Competencies Relevant to Being Successful as a CEO

Competencies identified by the African American group include knowledge and experience in relationship skills working with labor relations, the board of trustees, state boards and external community workforce, and economic development partners. Cognitive skills in finance, budgeting, fundraising, and communication were findings by this group. The top non-cognitive skills were authenticity, grit, internal fortitude, and passion for student development and success.

Findings for the African American group for research question three included cognitive and non-cognitive competencies, the advantages of participating in formal leadership development programs as well as having mentors and a support network.

Research Question 3: Asian Pacific Islander

Asian Pacific Islander - Research Question 3 asked "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" CEOs identified leadership preparation they perceived beneficial in attaining the community college presidency and factors most relevant towards their success. Themes derived from the Asian Pacific Islander ethnic group for research question three included a) the importance of mentors and support networks and b) operating in multiple frames of leadership and c) identification of competencies to being successful.

Mentors and Support Networks

All participants identified having *a support network* as critical to not only succeeding in the position but also in providing an outlet and guidance to understand the various societal and political cultures associated with higher education. One Second Generation CEO stated it succinctly as, "No college president can be successful without a good support network." Leaders of color possess an abundance of cultural wealth that resonates and identifies with students and community members. The need for more leaders of color as role models that reflect the demographics of the students served was a finding. One leader shared how their journey encourages students to persist in the educational goals describing:

> When I share with them that I'm the first in my family to go to college, immigrating to the states. I didn't speak a word of English. My parents worked three jobs, kind of labor-intensive type things and they didn't speak English. We came from a fairly not well-to-do family. And look at me, I worked hard, went to school, had the opportunity to go to an Ivy League university, and completed a Ph.D. I'm a community college president and, you can do it too. (Asian Pacific Islander Male 1ˢᵗ Time President)

Others described how having positive role models and support networks helps you navigate sabotages and dream killers along the way. A Fourth Gen X/Millennials leader described:

Sometime early in my career, and this may be just a different time people would say, "Don't tell her that you want to be a president," keep that under your sleeve." Do you know what I realized? Especially through the doctoral program, more people are able to help you, and they can only help you if you ask. The network is there to help you along with the way, helps you when you're actually in those roles and you're stressed out. (Male Asian Pacific Islander Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I 1st Time President with a 5th Gen Equity Achievers Style)

Mentors in any form are valuable however having leaders as role models and mentors from similar ethnic and cultural paths was a finding as most beneficial. In describing this need a leader stated:

As a minority, that in itself is a little bit complicated because there aren't as many diverse leaders, I would say, as it should be. All statistics are there. And so, oftentimes there are good-intentioned colleagues and others but they just have not been where we are. They don't have the background, they don't have the share of experiences. So, sometimes you may feel a little bit isolated and that's also very helpful to have a diverse group of colleagues, mentors, and friends. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II President)

All members attributed being valued by their stakeholders, at their respective institutions for their integrity, vision on expanding the open door college as well as the cultural wealth and capital they bring to the role and the communities they serve.

Experiences to Operating in Multiple Frames of Leadership

All of the leaders are highly credentialed with terminal degrees in finance, technical fields, and the sciences. Each actively participated in various types of leadership development programs they describe as beneficial to operating successfully in the presidency. One leader described how the sum of a person's formal and informal leadership experiences allows them to approach and move within multiple frames in leading their organizations effectively describing:

To be an effective leader, you have to deploy various frames [leadership frames]. Your experiences allow you to adapt within those frames, and the experience that you communicate in being in those situations. A good leader is an authentic, and engaged listener, willing to accept new and creative ways to solving and doing

things. Every leadership begins and ends with the relationship. (Male 1st Time President in the Pacific region)

Leaders described skills in relationship building, developing coalitions, and crafting visions for their institution which requires moving within multiple frames. In referencing moving between the structural, human resources, and political frames a leader described:

> Relationship, and experience in managing. How do you work with your supervisor, which is the board of trustees, whether they're elected or appointed? How do you work with the community and the mayor's office? How do you go to Capitol Hill to lobby? Governance is the overall vision purpose, the overall direction set by your trustees, by your board of directors. How do you translate the commitment into goals, into daily jobs, into people you hire, evaluate, and fire? (Male Asian Pacific Islander CEO)

Competencies Essential to Being Successful

Examples of non-cognitive competencies and the importance of developing those competencies were described by the Asian Pacific Islander group including; Communication (verbal and non-verbal), interpersonal and relationship building, financial management skills (budgeting, financial forecasting), Grit (resiliency and adaptability) integrity, and ethical values.

Research Question 3: Latino/Hispanic

Latino/Hispanic –Research Question 3 asked "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" Participants described their leadership preparation, listed leadership competencies relevant to being successful as community college president's today, and experience and training valued by various stakeholders. Themes derived from the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group for research question three included; a) value in cultural wealth leaders of color add to the presidency, and b) competencies for leadership described as keys to leadership success.

The Value of Cultural Wealth in Leaders of Color

Community Cultural Wealth is defined by Yosso (2005) as an "array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression", was a dominant finding by the Latino/Hispanic group (p.77). According to Yosso (2005) "CRT shifts the research lens away from a deficit view of Communities of Color as places full of cultural poverty disadvantages, and instead focuses on and learns from the array of cultural knowledge, skills and abilities — and by drawing on knowledge's Students of Color bring with them into the classroom" (p. 69). CEOs in the study are from three different ethnic groups with bi-cultural experiences and rich social networks as social capital (Social wealth). Many are bi-lingual language speakers (Linguistic wealth) with strong family and social support networks (Familial Wealth). The leader's ability to navigate multiple and distinct cultures, communities and societies bring Navigational wealth. Social and academic obstacles and experiences with racial and gender biases, discrimination, and microaggressions helped them acquire what Yosso (2005) describes as Resistant Wealth. Determination and ability to scaffold the odds and challenges of poorly resourced schools and

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communities, access to opportunities and resources, lack of role models and mentors to overcome tremendous odds builds character and perseverance. The literature does not readily attribute cultural wealth as identifiably inherent in white homogenous leaders. The cultural wealth is described as a value-add, that leaders of color possess. Regarding cultural wealth as a value-added a Third Gen X leader stated succinctly, "So my experience has been as you say, a minority college president, one that I had embraced, one that I view as the value of my background, and I don't decouple the excellence and the diversity of who I am" (Male Latino/Hispanic President). Shared experiences of social, educational, and economic inequities that foster ethnic social consciousness were findings many of the leaders from the Latino/Hispanic group described. One leader observed:

> I grew up in a household that spoke only Spanish. I grew up in a household that was unlimited financial means for a period of our life, I grew up in a working-class neighborhood in an inner-city. All those things that suddenly have you as deficits are all complete assets to my job as a chancellor today, to my roles as a superintendent, college president, and the other roles that I've had. (Male Latino/Hispanic CEO in the Pacific region)

Although data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2014) reports "racial and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the concentrated poverty population, and concentrated poor communities in metropolitan areas are often highly segregated", leaders described growing up in rich social cultures dispelling the stereotype myth that all persons from ethnic groups are mostly poor and disenfranchised minorities (Meade, 2014). A Third Gen X leader described:

> The neighborhood, the subdivision where I grew up and my parents still live have changed a little bit. But for a long time, I would say the majority of my years there, was one of a lot of role models and examples of people being highly educated. (Male Latino/Hispanic Third Gen X bi-cultural President)

The tremendous cultural and community wealth that leaders of color bring to the leadership experience and the community college presidency is immeasurable. As one CEO described, "This cultural wealth capital that people talk about is the gospel, I have, I possess, and I use that to my advantage for myself and my students" (Male Latino/Hispanic CEO). Others described how having social capital provides one skill to traverse diverse communities and build relationships that benefit their colleges. In describing community relationship building and social-cultural wealth, a female CEO stated:

> I have a very strong network here, even nationally, and a lot of it is the social capital that I have developed. I have the warmth of the culture and people find me approachable. All of that is helpful to me to become connected with the community. (Female Latino/Hispanic CEO)

These shared experiences of social, educational, and economic inequities foster ethnic social consciousness which many of the leaders from the Latino/Hispanic group described. Many leaders identified with a passion and advocacy for social consciousness that is tenuous to do when you're a person of color in a leadership role. One leader described:

> When you're a CEO of color, you could play it safe, or you could try to do some great things, right. Let me give an example of what I'm talking about. After the George Floyd murder and all the issues [social, civil unrest] that were going on, I began what's called the CEO's Diversity Initiative. The purpose of the initiative was for us to do an audit of the entire system, in terms of how we address issues with diversity. It's not just about numbers. It's about changing attitudes, changing the environment, changing the atmosphere. I have a great board and a board that wants me to make changes. They brought me in because they didn't want me to play it safe. (Male Latino/Hispanic CEO in the Pacific region)

Leaders of color are role models for all. A veteran leader described:

> Many of us get into these institutions and you have to work for it in a smart way to make sure that prejudice and misconceptions do not get in your way. And that is by making sure they know you well as a person, your values, and your ability to get things done. Sometimes I see colleagues throughout my career basically accept that as a given, and not do much about it. And I always tell them, "Then

don't blame the system. You are here to fight the system." We're here to make things better. We're here to make sure that we're a community of people that regardless of where they come from, who they are, that the door of opportunity is wide open. And nobody's guaranteed anything. (Veteran Male Latino/Hispanic First Generation CEO)

Many described how cultural wealth in its many forms is perceived as a threat to the established power structures describe how candidates of color with agendas related to equity, social justice, and educational opportunities are constructs that many institutions are not ready to embrace. The lack of readiness of institutions to address system racism was described as a challenge for new leaders. A veteran CEO stated:

How are we going to measure learning and learning outcomes in this new environment? How are we going to fund all of these different activities? Because the reliance on local and federal resources has declined. Another question is the other partake of course is the social injustices and a justice system that has been compromised, the rule of law, which almost has disappeared. So these are the challenges that the new and current leaders have and will be exposed to. (Male Latino/Hispanic Second Generation CEO)

Cultural wealth was described in many forms including social, linguistic, familial, navigational, resistance, determination, and social consciousness. Cultural wealth was described as a value add and a dominant theme in the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group.

Keys to Leadership Success

Competencies considered relevant for community college CEOs included cognitive technical and non-cognitive skills. Technical skills described as budgeting, finance, data-informed, cultural competence, coalition building, legislative experience, labor relations, and experience in state systems. Communication skills (verbal, non-verbal, interpersonal) and non-cognitive soft-skills are described as emotional intelligence, comfortableness with ambiguity, and fortitude. Having mentors and a strong support network were findings described. On the subject of resources and tools to help in the presidency a veteran leader described:

> As a CEO, you have a lot of resources and a lot of people that can help you. But you'll have very few people, except maybe a mentor here or there that you can call to reflect on a challenge that you have where you're not sure. So that unwavering self-confidence and the ability to deal with uncertainty. (Male Latino/Hispanic First Generation CEO)

Having unwavering confidence, having internal fortitude to overcome pressures and agility were defined as keys to success. Another leader described how the coronavirus health pandemic underscored the need for leaders to be agile stating:

> It's okay to doubt yourself. It's okay to admit mistakes. But deep down inside, you have to know that you can lead. COVID-19 has shown me that traditionalists do not deal well with uncertainty. So you have to be confident in your abilities and agility to manage and lead the organization because as a leader, none of us signed up for COVID-19. (Male Latino/Hispanic CEO in the Southeast)

A well-read leader is an informed leader by reading and maintaining currency on information and pertaining to leadership was described as beneficial. Organizational approaches and understanding how to operate within multi-frames of leadership, approaching issues from data-informed positions, developing human capital resources, and creating process alignment critical to institutional success were findings. In describing organizational life cycles to effectively manage change, a veteran leader described:

> Four things impact organization success including 1) management; the ability to manage people, 2) results, 3) alignment of people and processes, 4) creativity. For organizations and for people to really thrive, they have to be aligned, you have to allow them to not duplicate effort. My favorite organization charts out the pyramid. The center is a strategy, the strategic plan. So it's an orbit, a value add. Organizations as a whole will focus on different elements on their way to maturity or bureaucracy or reinvigorating themselves. In summary, I think those are important. (Male Latino/Hispanic First Generation CEO)

Leveraging one's cultural wealth with unwavering self-confidence in one's leadership skills and experience to help direct our community colleges beyond multiple pandemics including coronavirus health, civil, social justice, and racial unrest. Developing a support network, which

includes family, mentors, and allies from all different ethnic groups were identified as being

essential to surviving. Participants in the Latino/Hispanic group identified elements that are

beneficial to attaining and surviving in the community college presidency as cognitive technical

and non-cognitive skills, keys to leadership success in the form of cultural wealth as a leadership

competency, mentors, and a strong support network. On the subject of technical competency a

leader stated:

> As a CEO, you don't have to be an expert in every single one of those, but you
> should be technically competent in a whole variety of areas, and where you're not,
> hire strength to bring that in. Finance, technology, workplace development, board
> governance and relations, are technical competencies. Your board meeting has
> your board agenda, where you're asking the board to take action on certain things
> and you'd better understand what you're asking them to take action on, because
> the board has one employee, you! (Male Latino/Hispanic Second Generation
> CEO)

Keys to leadership success were findings by the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group.

Research Question 3: The Supremes – Women

Research Question 3 asked, "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" Participants described their leadership preparation, listed leadership competencies relevant to being successful as community college president's today, and experience and training valued by various stakeholders. Findings identified by the Women included; a) formal and informal leadership development, b) psycho-social competencies, and c) mentors and informal support networks.

Formal and Informal Leadership Development

Each Female leader described formal and informal leadership preparation as beneficial including leadership Institutes, serving on councils, and participating in professional development conferences. Institutes and conferences were the dominant forms described as valuable to obtaining access to and cultivating relationships with other leaders across the U.S., establish mentors, and form support networks. One Female leader described, "Your resume is not only the academic community college dimension, which you also have outside service. It might be nonprofit institutions, but it may also be service on national committees and councils" (Latino/Hispanic CEO Female leader). Many advocated for formal leadership institutes to offer culturally relevant pedagogy as one leader stated, "Participating in various institutes focus on teaching you different things, from different perspectives and they serve different purposes. We need to know how to operate within a space that we have not been privileged or privy to operate within" (Third Gen X African American 1st Time President).

Psycho-social Competencies

Grit, internal fortitude, agility, and ability to think creatively were psycho-social competencies described. A Third Gen X leader observed, "Creative in our thinking. When I say

creative in our thinking, people always say, "Well, you need to think outside the box." Well, if you say think outside the box, you clearly already put yourself in the box" (Seasoned African American Female President). Another key competency is "the capacity to accept fallibility". An Asian Pacific Islander Female leader observed:

> I think we usually want to win the war, but we don't realize that the war is made up of smaller battles. And the battles are comprised of one interaction at a time. And every word that we say, every decision that we make builds upon itself. (Asian Pacific Islander Female leader 1st Time President)

Being an innovator, accountable, having integrity, ethical, excellent listening skills and a global learner were described as skills relevant to success in the community college presidency.

Mentors and Support Networks

Developing and utilizing support networks was a dominant finding among the Women as Women CEOs to being successful in the community college presidency. One CEO attributed the importance of mentors and support networks to traverse the glass ceiling, bamboo, and plexi-glass ceiling noting, "It is navigable through creating a support network" (Second Generation African American CEO). The Women provided counter-stories of how informal support networks in the form of family, faith, and sisterhood shared and eased the burden of completing the terminal degree, child-rearing responsibilities as well as standing in the gap when the world views of women of color are often unkind. One leader defined mentors as, "Kumu is both a teacher, a mentor, a parent, an ancestor, an elder. It's anyone that imparts to you some valuable knowledge and supported your experience and your growth. That would be Kumu" (Asian Pacific Islander CEO Female leader). Mentors can also be leaders one admires and follows as one Female leader described:

> People can mentor you up close, or you can be a student admiring them from afar which allows you to think about how you're going to do your work into your life.

There are many people, I've never met whose life leadership story informs me. (Third Gen X African American President)

The value in having strong support networks was described as building, "Confidence, because I have a network of people that when I get really in a spot where I don't know what to do, I have enough people that I can call to help me say, "Let's think this through" (African American Female leader President in the Northeast). Developing and utilizing mentors and reliance on support networks was a major theme for question three by the Women's group.

Research Question 3: The Commodores – All Males

Research Question 3 asked "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" Participants described their leadership preparation, listed leadership competencies relevant to being successful as community college president's today, and experience and training valued by various stakeholders. Findings identified by the Men's group included; a) employing multiple frameworks as approaches to leadership, b) mentors and support networks, and c) wisdom notes to being a successful community college president.

Employing Multiple Frameworks as Approaches to Leadership

Findings by the Men identified operating within various frames of leadership as a successful approach that is valued by stakeholders. An Asian Pacific Islander Male leader noted:

> Sometimes you have to put forth and deal with various situations through a political frame and another, maybe more of a hierarchical frame. You're kind of the sphere of influence. You've got to be adaptable and able to assess the situation from many avenues. (Asian Pacific Islander 1st Time President)

The Men identified cognitive and non-cognitive competencies beneficial to success described as, "Team building, communication, budget management, fundraising, organizer. And what this means? Being able to get the big picture and bring all the processes together to address the challenge at hand. And then strong advocate for the work that we do" (Seasoned African American President from the Northeast). Communication, relationship, and team-building were dominant findings by the Men.

Mentors and Support Networks

The Men identified mentors and support networks as vital to maintaining health as leaders CEOs. A veteran leader stated:

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I have always said, every time I have received any kind of recognition, that my pathway has been made possible by people who believed, share values, my values, who really have a sense of purpose, and who were determined to make a difference. And that is a winning combination. So I've been very fortunate in more ways than one. (Veteran Latino/Hispanic Male CEO in the Southeast)

Others described faith as the epicenter of their support network. Another veteran leader described:

The foundation for the work that you're doing, what keeps you going? For me, it's faith. It's the things not seen, it's the faith that keeps you going. When everybody else is beating up on you, beating down on you, all of the names both internally and externally, it's the faith. If you don't have something that exists beyond the structural walls of the job and all of that, you're not going to make it. (Veteran African American President in the Southeast region)

Others identified their spouses and partners. A leader stated, "As an essential component to success, what's been helpful, having a true partnership whether that's your spouse or partner. Not just mentors, but someone you can be completely vulnerable to and authentic with" (Veteran Latino/Hispanic CEO). Mentors and support networks were dominant themes for research question three by the Men's group.

Wisdom Notes to Being Successful

The Men identified findings important to be successful including, "It's about being a champion. It's literally about being a champion for somebody else that really needs you" (African American Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I President). In describing the highs and lows of the job a leader stated:

They have to know that it will be the hardest job they've ever had. And they need to know that what you start out as, as far as what you think it's going to be, is... it's going to be so much more. (African American President in the Midwest)

Others cautioned not to place the title or position as a trophy to aspire to but as an opportunity to serve. A Male leader stated, "[Pursuing] the presidency and becoming a president or an

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institutional CEO, is an opportunity to serve and to be responsive to the people who need you.

But it's not something to be put on a pedestal" (Seasoned African American President in the

South). A Third Gen X leader cautioned on being myopic in viewing equity as only about the

student experience. The Male leader described:

> We as people of color, as those who have been sort of marginalized based on race or gender lines, we matter. We ought to be seen, heard, supported, thought about in meaningful ways and not marginalized in thinking that equity is only about the student experience. And I think that in limiting our examination of equity to the student experience, what we do is, we then make it palatable to deal with the population but not with the problem. (African American 1st Time President in the Northeast)

The Men described being champions, the highs and lows, and true reward of service and other

forms of wisdom to being successful for research question three.

Research Question 3: The Miracles – All Group Composite

Findings for Research Question 3 asked, "*How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?*" Participants described their leadership preparation, listed leadership competencies relevant to being successful as community college president's today, and experience and training valued by various stakeholders. Themes derived from the Composite group for research question three included; a) relevancy of formal and informal leadership preparation, b) mentors and support networks, c) cognitive, non-cognitive, and psycho-social skills for leadership, d) keys to success, f) leaders of color as role models, g) the positive value proposition of cultural wealth and h) unique voices of leaders by community college generational era.

Formal and Informal Leadership Preparation

Leaders described formal and informal leadership preparation as relevant to the community college presidency. Leadership programs promoted relationship-building noted; "The reason I liked the leadership programs that I went to is because of the relationships that you develop with everybody there, the other CEOs" (Male leader Baby Boomer II CEO). Pursuing the doctorate provides discipline and other tools described as:

> Formal education, you can never go wrong with it because it equips you with the tools you need from a scholarship perspective, and then you can apply it. My point is, you learn all those tools and you always have to face something that there's no textbook step other than logic, analytical thinking. (Two-time African American Male President and Second Generation Baby Boomer II)

Leadership programs by the various affiliates of the AACC provide various niches of focus as one leader observed, "I went through The Thomas E. Lakin Presidents' RoundTable Institute which was different because it focused on being a person of color and being a president" (African American Gen X Female leader). Another described aspects of conformity observing, "I

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really feel like, particularly in a lot of the leadership training that I've been through, including the Institutes, there's a heavy piece of conformity" (African American Male leader Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I President). Many leaders outlined the benefits of formal leadership programs in networking. A leader described:

> While I enjoy building a network, for me attending some of the formal leadership development institutes was beneficial. It was the opportunity to talk with sitting presidents to better understand the role when they would share their joy but also share their challenges. They would, "So what would you do?" And they would ask me questions, how would you handle this? And so I found that really was most helpful for me is to have that time with sitting presidents who also were quote-unquote "grooming" me for the position. (1st time African American Female leader Second Generation Baby Boomers II President)

Professional leadership development opportunities require support. A leader noted, "Persons are intimated by those who do have higher aspirations in leadership. I know colleagues that had supervisors who were just not supportive. They wouldn't support them to go a Leadership Institute, or any other kind of professional development institute" (African American Male Fourth Gen X II/Millennials I President). Formal and informal leadership preparation was identified as relevant to the community college presidency.

Mentors and Support Networks

Mentors and support networks were major findings for the Composite group in research question three. On the importance of mentors a leader described:

> How important it is to have mentors and supporters for women and folks of color who aspire to the presidency? For me, that has been, for my career, the game-changer. That we need to have people ask... Because sometimes women, and especially women and people of color, we think we've got to have all these boxes checked before we will step forward or say, "I'm qualified." And that was just one of the barriers for me, "I'm not quite sure I'm college president material." So we need people who will see that in you and then help you get there. (Asian Pacific Islander Second Generation Female CEO from the Pacific West)

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Participants identified the importance of leaders of color as mentors in helping persons navigate

complex, pitfall loaded and challenging landscapes. On the importance of having mentors with

shared experiences, a leader stated, "Because although it might not be similar to others who have

shared through difficulties, prejudices, the only one of whatever characteristic in this particular

group, all of those people can help" (Asian Pacific Islander Male leader President). Mentors were

identified as being vital to refining persons for leaders stating:

> I had profound Mentors in my life, CharMaine. I still have a little edge on me. I'm
> more gentrified than I probably ever thought I would be. But I had mentors who
> sat me down, who invested time and energy in me, who observed, she's not just
> one way...she's a thinker. I'm going to show her how to do this in a way that she
> doesn't ostracize people. Or, she's got a really good social relationship with
> people. How do you use that to build and cultivate networks? Mentors who sat
> down and had those conversations with me, modeled it, confirmed when I made
> good decisions, but also gave me constructive feedback." (African American
> Third Gen X Female President from the Northeast)

Having mentors and a strong support network was noted as critical to being successful stating,

"We need to put express the importance of having a support network. Please don't think you can

enter this by yourself. You can't do it alone, and I think that that is critical for us to know and

understand" (African American Second Generation Female leader Baby Boomers II). Numerous

descriptors and attributes on how to nurturing candidates, a desire to support fellow leaders of

color, and how to actively identify and develop students early in the credentialing stage for the

pipeline to the presidency were findings in the data. Self-confidence was a major finding by the

Composite group described as:

> As a CEO, you have a lot of resources and a lot of people that can help you. But
> you'll have very few people, except maybe a mentor here or there that you can call
> to reflect on a challenge that you have where you're not sure. So that unwavering
> self-confidence and the ability to deal with uncertainty. (Latino/Hispanic First
> Gen Silents/Baby Boomers I Male CEO)

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Mentors and support networks were findings by the Composite group for research question three.

Competencies Relevant to Being Successful as a CEO

The Composite group identified competencies for being successful as cognitive, non-cognitive, and psycho-social skills. Examples of cognitive and non-cognitive competencies include: "compassion is another leadership competency that is extremely valuable. I will also underscore the ability to lead in times of ambiguity, which is always in higher education and that requires agility, it requires resilience, and it requires persistence" (African American Female leader Baby Boomer II). Communication (verbal and non-verbal), interpersonal and relationship building, financial management skills (budgeting, financial forecasting), Grit (resiliency and adaptability) Critical thinker (psycho-social skill) integrity, and ethical values were findings by the Composite group.

Keys to Success for Community College CEOs

In describing *keys to success* some leaders described wisdom on how to navigate the presidential landscape in the academy. One Male CEO stated, "When you go into a presidency, you can't be president of just one group. You have to be president for everybody" (African American Female Second Gen Baby Boomers II). Seasoned leaders offered advice and encouragement including being a life-long learner stating:

> First and foremost, know your stuff. Learn your stuff. Keep maintaining your currency on your technical competencies. Be comfortable in ambiguity. Making precise decisions with imprecise information. Having good mental health, having good physical health and good relationships with those around you. (Latino/Hispanic Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male CEO)

Working knowledge of one's values and ethics described by a Female leader as, "You have to know what your moral principles and values are because you have to stand up" (African American Second Generation Baby Boomers II President). Clarity of purpose was described as:

You have to work on clarity of purpose, and alignment of the mission, to make the right decisions for the right reason, and none of that can be about you, and being liked. Clarity of purpose and clarity of alignment of that purpose and that intention with the mission of the institution is key. (Latino/Hispanic Second Generation Baby Boomers II Female CEO)

Having a reasonable expectation in knowing your worth which is not always about the path of least resistance but the path that yields you the greatest benefit. A leader stated:

Sometimes you need to take a step back in order to move forward. You can always make the salary, but you cannot make up the difference in position attainment. Be agile, be able to seize the opportunity at the right moment. (Latino/Hispanic Third Gen X Male 1st-time President)

Avoid allowing race and gender stereotypes to define your identity. A Female leader offered, "I've never chosen to allow an interpretation of negative events in my life to be because of gender, because of race, because of age" (African American Gen X Female leader President).

Working knowledge of potential landmines within institutional cultures was described as:

One of my biggest disappointments right now about young [leaders] is that they're stepping into these roles, believing that they deserve the role that they're stepping into at an institution and not understanding the culture. And by not understanding the culture, they're saying your strategic planning program doesn't work. I tried this and this is what we should do. Or this works and not what you're doing. And what I proffer to new leaders of all ages, spend some time understanding why something happens in the environment that you are in, and then make changes. (African American Male leader First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO)

The Composite group identified structural barriers as opportunities to address deficits within the social and political structures of community colleges in the U.S. Building teams and relationships were described by one leader as, "If you don't want my opinion, don't ask for it. And if you don't see a smile on my face, ask me why. And if you ask me why don't be surprised if I ask you to help me put one back on my face. Hold them accountable. We're in this together" (African American Male leader First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I Male CEO).

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Community College Presidents of Color as Role Models

Many leaders described the positive value of having role models of color in leadership to help students consider institutions where they are represented, serve as a relatable example to overcome poverty, change their economic outlook, persist and make a difference. In describing the importance of leader's as role models for students a leader stated:

> When I have conversations with students often they are amazed to learn that I didn't start where I am now. When I share my story with them, a light bulb goes off. They see they can get beyond their situation to get someplace better than where they are now. (Latino/Hispanic Male CEO in the South)

Leaders of color are a positive influence, inspiration, role model, and mentor for all students to persist in their educational goals as one leader described:

> Students need to know they can make it. I feel very strongly about support groups. For students to know that they're not the only ones that it happens to and when they see a higher education leader that they can talk to. It's important for me to connect with students. It's important that the students hear my story, be allowed to ask me, how did I end up being a CEO of a large urban college? And what was my path here? (Latino/Hispanic First Generation Male leader CEO)

Students and communities need to experience the richness and culturally diverse experiences of various ethnic groups that mirror the world around them. In describing the importance of leaders of color represented in all regions an African American Female leader noted:

> When I was at a college with 1% persons of color it was important for the students in that community to see leaders of color in that community. They need to have you in every place. (Second Generation from the Pacific West)

The Positive Value Proposition of Cultural Wealth

Additionally, leaders attempted to encapsulate the need for more community college presidents of color in the academy. They probed beyond the power of role models on impacting the lives of students, students, and communities seeing and being exposed to diverse leadership.

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They identified cultural wealth as an asset that society elects to dismiss and deemphasize, acknowledging it as value-added to the higher education academy. A cultural wealth that is forged by their collective lived experiences, by grit, and is a strength of resilience not afforded by non-minorities. A veteran Male leader described:

> I call the college a dream factory. Why? Because the students that we serve in community colleges, they're more vulnerable, they have more of the characteristics that are considered deficits, even though they are not, and I feel that what we provide is a winning factor to allow them to dream and realize their dreams. This is not about making good money and support. This is about wanting to make a difference. Wanting to leave a mark. (Veteran Latino/Hispanic First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I Male CEO)

The amount of cultural wealth that leaders of color bring to the community college presidency is immeasurable. In making a case for the vast amount of cultural wealth and experiential knowledge leaders of color bring to leadership and their constituents, a leader describes:

> I think a combination of factors, CharMaine; I think part of it is the character you bring into this role. I am from the East Side of [an urban city]. There is a certain amount of grit that you have to handle to get through that experience. I am the first in my family to complete a college degree, to have a white-collar job, and to understand what that means. The first of my family to go to plan retirement. So, for me, I think that that life history, and oftentimes I think if you look at a lot of women of color who are in the presidency, and people of color period, there is a life story that gave them a certain amount of grit and distinction because it was preparing them for what's going to happen next. I have a life story that prepared me for this moment. (Third Gen X African American Female President from the Northeast)

The positive value proposition of cultural wealth was described by another Miracle stating:

> The truth of the matter is, we bring value-added to the enterprise. Your lived experience CharMaine, is the value-added to the leadership equation. And institutions should be fortunate to have that lens because you in many ways exemplify the support, the struggle, the journey, the sort of transition of so many of our students, as do I. So we have to redefine what excellence looks like, to have a wider berth so that folks of color can be positioned to compete, and

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ultimately land a CEO ship. (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic Male CEO from the Pacific South)

On the subject of a broader representation of leaders of color in the community college presidency, a Miracle stated,

> Here is the reason you need better representation in the community college presidency because we need that representation to influence, support, to engage the students that we serve. Students need to know, that it comes from people like you and me that look like them. That there's no reason why they should think differently. (Latino/Hispanic Male leader CEO)

Another CEO described:

> I've learned that the best way to transform is to be in it, rather than from the outside. I wanted to pursue the leadership capacities to be grounded in my anti-poverty work. Several community members have asked me to pursue [leadership roles outside the community college] but I'm grounded to say, "No, that's not my island. The community college students are my island. That's where I make a difference. Education is key to any anti-poverty work. To have this opportunity, I'm privileged to be able to contribute, which's huge for me. That has guided me. (Third Gen X Asian Pacific Islander Female President from the Pacific South)

In describing why the investigation is critically important to community colleges today, leaders described:

> In [Southeast Community College], 70% of my students are still first-generation college students in 2020. 87% of them are on some type of financial aid of which 97% are on either Pell or scholarship and so I just feel it's a tremendous responsibility, but a real opportunity as well to serve this community who needs us [leaders of color] so desperately. (Third Gen X Latino/Hispanic Male President)

Unique Voices of Leaders by Community College Generational Era

Findings from the Composite group as an all-group composite by the researcher relevant to the study were the identification of unique voices of leadership approaches and styles as categorized by the community college generational era. The responses from each generation

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were very distinct, informative as to how they navigate and address challenges in being a community college president, dynamic and spirited in their experiences, views, and approaches to leading. Different approaches and styles of leadership were evident in the study that could be identified by generations of American community college development

Evidence in the data supported common styles, approaches, and visions by the era of community college leadership by the thirty-four participants. The first and second generations Silents and Baby Boomers I & II indeed presenting a voice that can be described as the Collaborative style. Evidence of approaches to leadership by the third Generation X era of community college leadership voiced transformative approaches in describing and attaining success for all students from a learning-centered perspective. Most notably was the voice of the fourth generational era of community college leadership labeled as Gen X II/Millennials I. The distinct voice of this 5th generation style of leaders is greatly attuned to creating environments that foster inclusive and diverse climates that support equity in student resources and achievement. The researcher labeled this 5th generation style as Equity Achievers for their pronounced voice in guiding their respective institutions with this in mind.

Leaders described using multiple frames of leadership that are situationally dependent. Understanding one's leadership orientation was described as important to managing the complexities of the landscape. A Third Gen X leader stated:

> Understanding your leadership orientation. For me symbols and politics are important because I'm trying to navigate the complexities of issues. How do I see myself? How do others see me? How can I expand my influence to do the work that I believe is important and appropriate? (African American Male President from the Northeast)

Each of the participants in the study was forthcoming with identifiers to improve the pipeline to the presidency, relevance of leadership development in building networks of mentorship and

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support, tools needed to be successful and nurturing. The new generation of leaders serves as inspirations to the ones before. A veteran Male leader stated:

> Institutions throughout the country, where you see the change that we are hoping for and expect and demand, as Congressman Lewis stated are by having leaders who are responsible and can enforce the policy of change. I feel a passion to find out what's been going on, what went wrong, and what needs to be done. (Latino/Hispanic First Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO)

Participant's described leaders as risk-takers, advocates of change, access, and equitable opportunities for all students. A powerfully encouraging statement to the researcher from a Female CEO to empower, encourage and nurture was stated, "Mahalo, thank you for braving the wilderness" (Asian Pacific Islander Third Gen X CEO). Themes derived from the Composite group for research question three included employing multiple frameworks as approaches to leadership, identified cognitive and non-cognitive competencies beneficial to success, mentors, faith and support networks necessary for attaining the presidency community colleges.

Summary – Chapter 4

This chapter presented an analysis of the research questions and a summary of the research findings presented by demographic groups and representing each of the participating minority community college president/CEO groups by ethnicity groups and gender. The researcher presented relevant themes and findings that were organized by the foci of research questions pertaining to the study. Collectively, they are represented by ethnic, gender and all-group composite and analyzed from a Critical Race Theory, and Glass Ceiling Theoretical frameworks. The following Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings of the study by research questions, and offer conclusions and implications identified through extensive data analysis.

Chapter 5 - Summary, Discussion and Recommendations

Chapter 5 presents an overview of the study, discussion of the findings by research question, recommendations for practice, findings related to the literature, implications for future research, conclusion, and researcher reflections.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities serving in presidential roles in community colleges. An analytical review of the findings shows scant progress in the diversification of minority-serving community college presidents, citing major gaps in the preparation, recruitment, and hiring of presidents and the criteria used for evaluation and hiring by boards of trustees. Findings indicate a need to increase alignment in training of stakeholders, constituent groups, advocacy associations, presidential search firms, and other groups that influence the hiring of college presidents, affecting the pipeline to the presidency. Finally, inclusion of culturally relevant pedagogy in leadership preparation curricula and cultural competency training is needed to address biased perceptions of race and gender, systemic biases, and structural racism.

Three research questions guided the investigation:

1. How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents?

2. How do minority community college presidents describe their ascension to the presidency?

3. How do participants describe the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges?

A phenomenological narrative inquiry, using semi-structured interview questions derived from a Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Glass Ceiling Theory (GCT) framework was the methodology employed for the study. An adapted model of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), using free-listing cultural domain analysis (CDA) for validation, was the method used to formulate meanings and derive emerging themes in this richly descriptive and interpretive research study. The researcher created a system of data collection and analysis for the study using personalized macroinstruction templates created by the researcher, with eleven data elements for reviewing, sorting, and confirming data validation, and creating data model analysis forecasts and graphs. These qualitative research processes and strategies allowed the researcher to fully answer and address each research question.

Discussion of Findings for Research Question One

Underrepresentation of Minorities as Community College Presidents

The analysis of the respondents' comments revealed that the majority of participants saw an underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of the community college presidency. More than half of all participants struggled to quantify the underrepresentation, attributing varied numbers of currently serving leaders of color based on their experiential knowledge. They were unclear of the exact percentages but discussed the underrepresentation as a problem. A comment from the women's group expressed this dilemma: "Out of all the community colleges, I don't know the exact numbers of African American, Hispanic Latino or Asian Americans but we [African Americans] are better represented in the community college than in other structures in higher education" (1st-time African American Female President in the Pacific West). Participants from the women's group described an increase in presidencies for Latino/Hispanic males, a regression for African American males, and dismay at the lack of movement for Latino/Hispanic

women and Asian Pacific Islanders as a whole. A female leader stated, "Actually, there are more Hispanic men being hired now than black women or black men. Less than 1%" (African American Gen X Female President). The women found the underrepresentation perplexing given the numbers of qualified candidates in the pipeline. One stated:

> It's the lack of the pipeline [described as internal and external barriers] despite the fact that there are numbers [numbers described as qualified candidates in the pipeline]. When I say that, it's not just AAPI, I'm sure that's similar to other minority populations. (Asian Pacific Islander Gen X Female CEO)

A Latino/Hispanic male participant stated, "The reason I believe that the numbers are so dismally low level, is because there are very strong individuals out there who do not subscribe to diversity" (Latino/Hispanic Male Silents/Baby Boomers I). American community colleges are a microcosm of a much larger and increasingly diverse society where both the ACCT and AACC (2016) have jointly reaffirmed their commitment to "promote and support programs and initiatives that develop diverse leaders at the Board and CEO levels and in the administrative and faculty ranks." Collectively, comments identified by participants from each ethnic group support an underrepresentation of men and women of color in the community college presidency.

In response to interview questions addressing research question one, CEOs described their experience as minority community college presidents, factors they believe contribute to their underrepresentation, including racial and gender disparities, the extent to which they believe that race and racism contribute to racial and gender underrepresentation in the community college presidency, as well as incidents where race and gender have positively or negatively influenced their career. Interview questions related to leaders' perception of the extent to which race and racism contribute to racial and gender underrepresentation yielded significant

data. Themes for research question one by composite group describing underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents were:

(a) Lack of a clear pathway to the presidency;

(b) Evidence of a leaky pipeline to the presidency;

(c) A flawed hiring process and gatekeepers along the continuum;

(d) Opportunity, access, support, and intentional leadership development critical to advancement;

(e) Structural barriers and processes in the form of institutional culture exist and are impediments to the presidency;

(f) Systemic racism, ethnic and gender inequities in the form of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes exist and are impediments to the presidency;

(g) Importance of mentors, allies, and support network essential to matriculating and success in the role of the presidency.

The investigation found a multiplicity of factors that were used to describe the phenomenon.

Lack of clear pathway to the presidency

The analysis of the respondents' comments revealed that the majority of participants viewed the lack of clear pathways as the major reason for the underrepresentation of minorities among the presidential ranks. Over two-thirds of participants commented that the traditional academic pathway was the dominant access point for the presidency. Upwards of 20% of male participants from the Asian Pacific Islander and Latino/Hispanic groups hail from the non-traditional pathway. They commented that higher education was pervaded by biased and elitist views which diminish experiences from non-traditional pathways and consider leaders entering from non-traditional pathways to be less qualified. A Latino/Hispanic Male stated,

"Unfortunately, those views still apply today. Nothing's changed except for a few isolated cases like mine. There are a few other people out there with a different background that are now being considered for the presidency" (Latino/Hispanic Gen X Male President). An Asian Pacific Islander male commented:

> I had an epiphany transformation to exit engineering for higher education. I've been
> fortunate that the chancellors who hired me, presidents who supported me felt that I had
> something to contribute. A voice was missing, maybe an Asian male voice in
> engineering. (Asian Pacific Islander Baby Boomers II Male President)

An African American male commented:

> I'm a very non-traditional president. I'm a doctor in the medical sciences and former high
> school science teacher recruited to work with STEM and healthcare programs for
> underrepresented youth at the community college, opening the door for a campus
> presidency. (African American Baby Boomers II Male Seasoned President)

A majority of all participants agreed that the qualifications and experience of leaders from non-traditional pathways, including student services, finance, diversity offices, the sciences, workforce development, and private industry are equitably qualified for the presidency. Many participants noted that one's ability to lead is not confined to any one pathway, arguing that a lack of a clear pathway and standards of evaluation for hiring contribute to underrepresentation.

Evidence of a leaky pipeline to the presidency

The leadership pipeline was identified as a barrier contributing to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. All participants described the pipeline as leaky, having significant holes, requiring an understanding of the higher education landscape to navigate, lacking an intentional development strategy, and as a hindrance or barricade to

successfully attaining the presidency. An analysis of the comments identified structural barriers, and lack of pipeline development strategy, resources, and support as leaks in the pipeline to the presidency. A participant stated:

> There are multiple pathways to the presidency today. What I'm suggesting is that there are no specific pipeline development strategies that will increase the number of CEOs. There are really no true support structures for the CEOs that not only have to navigate to secure this path to get to this position but then to navigate the complexities of staying in there [in the position] once you get in there. So there [are] no sort of formalized structures, generally speaking, that promote the development of this. That's why it's a leaky pipeline. (African American Gen X Male President in the Northeast)

CEOs identified numerous entry and exit leaks where prospective leaders become lost, including access and opportunity to education, ability to afford and pursue the desired terminal degree, opportunities for leadership development, access to formal networks, and mentoring.

Opportunity, access, support, and intentional leadership development

CEOs from all ethnic groups identified a lack of access and opportunity for exposure to develop leadership experiences essential to the presidency as contributing to underrepresentation. One veteran CEO stated, "I always say that talent is universal, opportunity is not. I think you have to harness those opportunities" (Veteran Latino/Hispanic Male First Generation CEO). The men described factors that contribute to underrepresentation in terms of a shortage of "opportunities for leadership preparation, the ability to garner experiences necessary for the position and to be provided an opportunity to get the opportunity to serve in the position" (Seasoned African American Male President in the Northeast). An analysis of comments by the

men's group described opportunities for men and women of color as being contingent upon biased perceptions of men and women of color in similar roles. A Gen X participant observed:

> I never go in unprepared. We prepare, we over-prepare because we know that we're probably the only person of color that's going to be at the table and we have to represent. We don't want to come off as [if] we don't know what we're talking about and then someone else doesn't get an opportunity because we didn't do a good enough job. You don't ever want to be the person who had the opportunity and didn't do well. That prevents the next person from having an opportunity.
>
> (Gen X Latino/Hispanic Male President)

The men also described symbolisms of institutional culture as barriers to opportunity for persons of color. A seasoned CEO stated, "The longer you're in a position, the more aware you become of all those influences that are the symbolic things that are going on in the organization. So I do think that there are gates to leadership access for persons of color" (Latino/Hispanic Male Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO).

Leaders described strategies for identifying and developing students for the pipeline to the presidency early. The all-group composite argued that there are deficiencies in opportunities for leadership experience and development at the entry level, for faculty, mid-level department chairs, deans, and those in senior leadership roles from both academic and student affairs, and deficiencies in support for participation in formal leadership development institutes and programs. Participants from the composite group, across all four generations, described few opportunities for candidates outside of the traditional pathway and elitist perceptions of persons from non-traditional pathways that diminish the value of candidates from student services, workforce development, private industry and other non-traditional pathways, thereby

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contributing to underrepresentation. Including faculty of color in the development of the pipeline would address leakages along the traditional academic pathway. Additionally, acknowledging, legitimizing, and validating experiential knowledge attained a priori, propositionally, or via practical work experience as a comparable form of expertise would help. Intentionality in developing persons of color successfully in the pipeline to the presidency was considered critical by many. CEOs noted that neither the pipeline nor the community college presidency reflect student demographics.

An analysis of the data by the all-group composite identified a flawed hiring process and several gatekeepers of the hiring process.

A flawed hiring process

CEOs described a significantly flawed hiring process that includes gatekeepers and that contributes to replication of past hires rather than an ability to see someone in leadership who looks different from the historical archetype of the president that gatekeepers are used to. The list describing a flawed hiring process was exhaustive, beginning with structural policies and processes that initiate the proceedings, and including all aspects of the screening, candidacy, and post-hire support process. One Third Gen X leader described it as, "that whole candidacy process of where we hire, what we look for, including where we advertise and the composition and training of persons at each stage of the process" (African American Male President).

Gatekeepers along the hiring continuum

Participants from all four generations of community college development leadership styles defined and identified gatekeepers at multiple stages in the hiring continuum. Figure 5-1, derived from the researcher's analysis of the data, describes six structural areas and persons along the hiring process continuum that serve as gatekeepers and impact hiring for the

community college presidency. While experiences varied, stages in the process provided the potential for blocking the pathway, including human resource officers, search and selection committees and administrative boards, faculty, boards of trustees, and community groups, including philanthropic donors. One participant stated, "Now that I'm sitting in this seat, here's where we have to understand and receive our power. The power is in the boards, whether it's a city board, whether it is a community college board or a university board" (African American Female Gen X CEO). Another commented on search firms, stating, "The search firms really aren't doing their due diligence. Otherwise, we'd have probably 11%, 12%, if not more presidents of African American descent in this country, but we don't" (African American Male Silents/Baby Boomers I President). Another participant agreed that hiring boards had power as gatekeepers, stating, "When a vacancy occurs, those on the search committee just operate traditionally, looking at candidates they may hire as they traditionally have hired. Predominantly white and males" (Latino/Hispanic Male Gen X President). Another male participant, commenting on biases by search firms, stated, "When I talked about search firms as gatekeepers, consider that the majority of those search firms are owned and operated by whites. They're going to bring their own bias to reading applications, et cetera, before it even gets there" (African American Gen X II/Millennials I Male President). Social media was noted as a contributor to creating biased profiles and perceptions of candidates. Overwhelmingly, participants commented on the need for cultural competency training for all stakeholders in the hiring process.

As shown in figure 5-1, gatekeepers and their biases contribute to the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents today.

Figure 5-1. *Gatekeepers of the Hiring Process*

Gatekeepers were identified as structural policies in the screening process that is guided by

human resources. Job descriptions and the use of coded language in the postings were identified

as leakage points to the presidency described as "where we advertise, how we advertise and

position descriptions. There can be things, little hidden phrases, and position descriptions that

will turn people off" (African American Female Gen X CEO). Screening, selection and search

committee's biased perceptions of leadership were identified and described as "anything from

postings, from what people say they're looking for, or the way that people are interviewed, or the

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way the forums are conducted" (Latino Hispanic Female Baby Boomers II CEO). They were also noted as structural barriers with a Gen X male participant stating, "[T]he group that does the evaluation — the natural tendency is to hire like people who will quote-unquote fit into our community. You are at a disadvantage from a structural perspective. You are at a structural disadvantage (African-American President). In describing administrative boards and search firms as gatekeepers, a male Gen X II / Millennials I participant commented:

Search firms play as great gatekeepers. I didn't realize how much influence search firms had until I was going through the process. [You need an understanding] on the specific search firms to interact with and ones not to interact with. They will solicit you and say they're interested [in you applying] to fill their minority quota, but they're not going to be advocating for you with the committees and the trustees. There are boards who rely very, very heavily on the thoughts of candidates from either search firms. Sometimes, institutions aren't even getting all the applicants because a search firm has pre-screened them. (African American Male Gen X II / Millennials I President)

Faculty and trustee boards were identified as structural barriers and gatekeepers having tremendous power. A participant stated:

[Institutions], if they're responding to boards who make the ultimate decision – boards of trustees and governing boards to make the ultimate decision – they're responding to committees that screen either in or screen potential candidates out. And sometimes, they're responding to what I'll describe as community sentiment, these town halls where candidates go up and make their presentations. It could dissuade very good candidates from being advanced now. So what gets in the

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way, some of these structural things – biases, microaggressions, the notion of how

they define or view excellence gets in the way, the Ed.D. versus the Ph.D. can get

in the way. (Latino Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO)

Community groups and philanthropic donors were identified as gatekeepers seeking to maintain

or advance agendas. A female CEO described:

Donors who said, "Well, I won't donate to the college because of some radical

agenda [He/she] may have." Okay, I'm sorry that you would penalize students

because you think if we're talking about blackness, or talking about the fact that

women should be able to do this or that, gay and lesbian people should have equal

access. I'm sorry that you would penalize our students that way and I'll try and

find another donor who won't. (African American Female Gen X President)

Each of the six structural areas identified persons along the hiring process continuum that serve

as gatekeepers and impact hiring for the community college presidency.

Systemic Racism, Ethnic and Gender Inequities, Bias, Prejudice, and Stereotypes

The researcher found the concepts of systemic racism intriguing among the different

ethnic groups. Men in the African American group described analogies of the bionic man or

superman syndrome one participant referred to as "John Henry-ism." A Gen X Male participant

said, "As you do this research, what you'll find is that those of us of color, particularly men of

color that are CEOs, we also have to counteract the John Henry-ism that takes place" (African

American Gen X Male President). The Power Imperative was also described as "a historical

unwillingness to share power and resources" (African American Male CEO Baby Boomers II

serving in both the Southwest and Northeast).

Asian Pacific Islander participants described the model minority stereotype, and feelings associated with the Imposter Syndrome, tokenism, and assimilation, each byproducts of racism. One participant noted, "You have to be very assertive, you have to be vocal, and you have to be out there. All of that to counter what fits right within the pattern of a model minority as the ones to keep quiet" (Asian Pacific Islander Second Generation Baby Boomers II Male). Another stated, "For me, my own barrier transcendence experience has been a part of the assimilation. I was just assimilating like anyone else. I didn't want to ruffle the feathers" (Asian Pacific Islander Gen X Female CEO).

Latino/Hispanic participants described explained underrepresentation this way: "I think the reason is, and we have to say it out loud more than once, and that's institutional racism" (Latino/Hispanic Male Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO). Racism was described by one Latino/Hispanic participant as "the original pandemic." Racism was described by a veteran CEO as invisible variables where the burden has been placed on us to outwit and outsmart. On the subject of racism in various forms, a participant stated, "Have I faced issues of, and racism? Absolutely. All of us do who are CEOs and/or people of color. We have faced them and we have addressed them, and they happen in different shapes and forms" (Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO). In considering the culture for new leaders, another participant stated, "Will they still face the same type of discrimination and racism that I faced in my career? Of course. It's going to be hard to get rid of that" (Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO). Overall, the reasons identified by participants from the different ethnic groups as contributing to the underrepresentation of women and those from minority groups in the community college presidency complement each other rather than pose competing viewpoints.

Participants described factors based on their experience and understanding of racial and gender disparities, including race and racism as well as incidents of race and gender that may have positively or negatively influenced their career. Leaders described biases regarding what leadership looks like, challenges of leakages in the pipeline, barriers inherent in the hiring process, and the effects of race and racism on institutional and societal culture that are manifested in prejudices and stereotypes. The leaders also described how they could be resourceful in navigating the complexities of these environments by leveraging many tools, including their cultural capital as wealth. Data on systemic racism and ethnic and gender inequities were described as factors contributing to the underrepresentation of community college presidents of color. Inequitable expectations and standards for leaders of color were attributed to inequities in perceptions of a candidate's leadership experience, in the leadership evaluation of CEOs, their compensation, and their contract renewals.

Importance of Mentors to Navigate Structural barriers

Structural processes, inherent within an institutional culture, were identified as barriers contributing to the underrepresentation. A female leader described structural barriers, stating, "There is a reality of racism. There are rules, there are expectations, and there are policies that are probably not supportive of people of color ascending to the job. All of that impact who is in the space" (Latino/Hispanic Female Baby Boomers II CEO). The data described systemic structural processes, politics, and inequities reflective of both societal and institutional culture as barriers in the hiring process. Other examples of structural barriers are those that impede penetrating formal networks, more equitable distribution of resources, and access to opportunity for students, as well as regional creditors' requirements. Others described the covert nature of

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structural barriers as a distraction from lack of accountability for developing the pipeline for diversity in the mission statement.

Despite the biases encountered, participants from all four generations of community college leadership development styles described the importance of role models and mentors for the ascension to the presidency. Citing a lack of role models and mentors promoting the presidency as a career option, a participant stated, "I didn't grow up to be a president or [have] aspirations until later in my career" (Latino/Hispanic Gen X II/Millennials I Male). Another commenter supporting the need for more mentors of color stated, "We don't have a lot of role models that we can look at that can lead us to become community college presidents" (African American Silents/Baby Boomers I Veteran CEO). Another concluded:

> We need a larger, stronger, more effective core of mentors that look like you and
>
> me. That will identify, create and find ways within our institution to push,
>
> influence, exhort and encourage other men and women of color in our institutions
>
> to be given opportunities. (Latino/Hispanic Male Silents/Baby Boomers I)

Others described community college presidents of color as role models for students: "To empower them about the possibilities. If they see me, they believe it. I am who they see" (Asian Pacific Islander Baby Boomers II Female President). Many of the leaders described the importance of students seeing community college presidents of color as role models and the critical role of mentors. Community colleges educate almost half of all college students, provide access to education otherwise unattainable for many, and play an important role in the economic vitality of the communities they serve. A need for deeper understanding of the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency is paramount.

Discussion of Findings for Research Question Two

Interview probes for research question two asked presidents to describe how race and gender played a role in the pursuit of the community college presidency, challenges or barriers to navigate along the journey, perceived gatekeepers, and views on why gatekeepers exist for minorities ascending to the community college presidency. Themes identified for research question two by the composite group describing their ascension to the presidency are:

(a) biased perceptions of race and gender;

(b) systemic biases and structural racism;

(c) a glass ceiling for men and women of color;

(d) socio-political forms of oppression: microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, the Imposter Syndrome and John Henry-ism.

Race and Gender Bias

Biased perceptions of race and gender impacting men and women of color were described in the data as contributing to inequitable views and biased evaluations of contracts, salary, expectations of leadership competency, and job performance. One participant commented:

> I've had situations where because of who I am, it's impacted my length of service
> and compensation due to covert racism of some board members not ever being
> used to a brown man in charge. I've had over twelve contracts and over twelve
> evaluations as a CEO. And in some cases, because that influence has been so
> negative, it has curtailed my advancement on the salary schedule. It has lessened
> the number of years on my contract, resulting in inequitable pay from my white

counterparts. That's the tangible evidence, a straight-up bias, and racism.

(Latino/Hispanic Baby Boomers II CEO)

Race and gender were also noted as positive in some forms that were leveraged to the leader's benefit. Participants were inconclusive on the impact of a person's inability to decouple race and gender bias. Racial and gender biases were experienced and described by participants regarding their ascension to the community college presidency.

Systemic Biases and Structural Racism

Bias as a result of prejudice, ignorance, and stereotypes was found to be systemically embedded in institutional culture, processes, policies, and practices affecting the hiring process and development of the leadership pipeline to the presidency. One participant commented, "Gatekeepers as barriers exist because of systemic racism and institutional structures in place that supports them. Old systems die hard" (African American Female Baby Boomers II President). Another participant acknowledged that it took centuries to entrench, embed, and institutionalize these biases and will take just as long and greater leadership capacity to resolve them, beginning with "the movement of first raising awareness, me just talking to another colleague about systemic racism and its impact" (Asian Pacific Islander Female Gen X CEO). Data used to describe systemic bias and structural racism included a biased and prejudicial hiring process with unclear traditional or non-traditional pathway standards, stereotypes of race and gender regarding leadership and leadership competency, lack of responsibility to confront and address perceived and unperceived biases and their effects on institutional culture; all of these contributed to leader's experiences and journeys while ascending to the community college presidency.

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Systems in support of institutional practices, cultural representations, institutional culture, and history were identified as impediments to ascension to the presidency. An institutional culture's resistance to addressing normalized and racialized bias and political and societal constructs were identified as barriers. Community stakeholders and board of trustees' influence on the hiring process, support of the presidency, and receptiveness to cultural change were identified as factors in the presidents' journey to the presidency.

A Glass, Bamboo or Plexiglas Ceiling for Men and Women of Color

A glass ceiling was identified as an impediment to navigate in the journey to the presidency for men and women. Properties of bamboo and plexiglas were used to describe the nature of the glass ceiling, presenting a false reality that it has been breached or penetrated. The location of a glass ceiling as a barrier for mid-management and senior leadership was described. Obtaining the presidency was considered a false narrative of penetration that was belied by the low number of currently serving men and women of color as community college presidents. Longitudinal studies reporting data on the number of men and women of color in the community college presidency and data from this study provide evidence for the existence of a glass ceiling.

Socio-Political forms of Oppression

The psychological effects of microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, and the Imposter Syndrome were identified as a norm for all persons of color and identified in the data for all participants. Socio-political oppression is a byproduct of systemic racism that includes marginalization, mistreatment, and exploitation to subvert the power of ethnic groups "whether that is transmitted overtly, or through microaggressions, or through never getting through a process leading to the presidency" (Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO). Another participant commented on the prevalence of tokenism today:

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I do think that it's [tokenism] kind of bubbled up in our racialized situation right now. Its like, "Oh, well, anyone will do. We filled this. We've got a woman." Check the box, as opposed to looking at who we're serving and who we need to have in all different representational areas to do that. (African American Female Baby Boomers II President)

An analysis of the comments relative to experiences related to tokenism, assimilation, and other stereotypical myths was prevalent in the Asian Pacific Islander group. All ethnic groups including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic described experiencing microaggressions. Participants described navigating these overt and covert attacks, strategies to avoid internalizing them, and leading authentically as persons of color. Themes identified for research question two include biased perceptions of race and gender, systemic bias and structural racism, a glass ceiling for men and women, microaggressions, tokenism, invisibility, The Imposter Syndrome and John Henry-ism.

Discussion of Findings for Research Question Three

Interview questions for research question three asked about a description of participant's leadership preparation for the presidency, aspects considered beneficial, descriptors of leadership competencies most relevant to being successful as a community college president today, and how the leader's experience and training are valued by different stakeholder groups in community colleges. Themes identified for research question three by the composite group describing the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges described:

(a) Leadership proficiencies: cognitive and non-cognitive competencies and frames of leadership;

(b) Formal leadership preparation, culturally relevant pedagogy and instruction;

(c) Training in cultural competency and biases;

(d) Cultural capital as adding value;

(e) Keys to being successful as a community college president.

Leadership Proficiencies: Cognitive and Non-cognitive Competencies, Frames of Leadership

Cognitive competencies identified as necessary for attaining the community college presidency include experience in both academic and student affairs. Relationship and team building, finance, budgeting and fundraising, and experience in labor relations were also identified. Non-cognitive competencies identified include communication skills, being a good listener, grit, a strong constitution, confidence, integrity, self-reflection, and being open to knowing what you don't know.

Participants identified proficiencies and described how leadership styles are intertwined and how they operate within them, including a need to understand how boards of trustees operate within those frames. A participant commented that effective leaders deploy various frames "and you have to understand what type of situation you are addressing as a political or hierarchal frame to assert the situation" (Asian Pacific Islander Male Baby Boomers II President). Knowledge of how constituents and boards operate was identified as key. A participant commented, "From a political standpoint, there's the public face of a trustee, then there's the private face. Understanding how they operate is essential to survival" (Latino/Hispanic Male Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO). An analysis of participant comments revealed that first- and second-generation males described using multiple frames of leadership as valuable to the success in the presidency. One-fourth of participants from these generations described their approach to leading using multiple frames of leadership, situationally based on the circumstances, thus drawing from experiences garnered outside of academe.

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All participants described the formal and informal leadership preparation as necessary and significant to be successful in the community college presidency. Both *formal and informal leadership preparation* were considered valuable, particularly when they included support from an individual's institution of service. A participant stated, "[I have] been through the ACE Fellows Program that specifically sought people of color to populate their fellowship program. They were actually doing a pretty decent job, but the institutions just weren't supporting the people to send" (Seasoned African American Silents/Baby Boomers I Male President in the Northeast). An analysis of the comments from participants yielded differing perspectives of the impact of leadership preparation efforts by generation. For example, a majority of Silents/Baby Boomers I directly benefitted from intentional efforts of the AACC and League of Innovation in the previous century. Conversely, two-thirds of Baby Boomers II participants were mentored by first-generation Silents/Baby Boomers I. They followed their guidance on formal leadership preparation and institutes to prepare for the presidency. In contrast, almost half of third-generation Gen X participants independently created mentorship alliances and crafted their leadership preparation journeys by rote. Fourth-generation Gen X II/Millennials I participants did the same; yet their types of formal leadership development were starkly different from the others, supporting the view that a lack of a clear pathway with intentional development impacts underrepresentation. A Gen X II/Millennials I participant commented, "My Executive VP allowed me to participate in the academic program review process. So the support of supervisors in allowing me to gain experiences in areas [where] I was deficient helped" (African American Male President in the Pacific West). Another commented on participating in leadership programs sponsored by AACC affiliate councils and AACC commissions, stating that the value "wasn't

necessarily the leadership piece itself, but the relationships that came with it. I wasn't assigned a mentor. I solicited help from external formal networks to assess my readiness for the presidency" (African American Male President in the Midwest). Another described leveraging different experiences to plot the course to the presidency:

> I've had a lot of good luck. I worked in multiple types of systems, at urban and rural colleges in different states in various sizes. I was an adjunct lecturer. My experience is in student services, degree from a community college leadership program and I'm active in multiple affiliate councils including the National Asian/Pacific Islander Council, and network with the Hispanic and African American councils who each have common goals. (Latino/Hispanic Gen X II/Millennials I President)

An analysis of the data reveals levels of ineffectiveness in leadership preparation by generational era that seem to correspond with the levels of intentional development efforts of each period. Revisiting previous efforts that benefitted minorities in the community college presidency is beneficial.

Informal leadership in the form of experiential knowledge derived from work on committees, councils, internal and external boards of the institution and in the community was described as pertinent and valuable to leading. Formal leadership preparation in the form of participation in institutes and conferences was noted as extremely valuable in providing access to leaders to cultivate relationships and form requisite support networks valuable to leadership sustainability. The discipline acquired in completing a terminal degree coupled with acumen learned in the aforementioned areas were themes identified in the data as contributing to success in the presidency.

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Cultural Competency and Bias Training

An analysis of participant comments related to training concluded that an overwhelming majority support the need for training in cultural competency and in eliminating prejudicial stereotypes, biases, and microaggressions. CEOs from each ethnic group identified audiences for various types of training beneficial to the community college presidency. A female participant commented on bias training, stating, "I've seen the evolution and value of implicit bias training on personnel. Imagine, what we can do with our student's and persons who need to build credentials; yet we never teach them how to navigate or transcend HR policies. A lack of [training] imbues gatekeepers" (Asian Pacific Islander Female Gen X CEO). Another participant acknowledged the value of training for boards of trustees in understanding the delineation of roles. A male participant stated:

> There is a need for training for boards of trustees. Appointed or elected boards are a little different in terms of expectations as some have political aspirations. Most boards don't understand the education code, rules, and regulations associated with running a college which can lead to micromanaging. So, training and education are needed so that they understand their functions and leave the execution of the policy to you. And that's easy to say very, very hard to do. So clearly, additional board's man ship, training in the professional development of the board is necessary. So that they can understand that they're complimentary, but respective differentiated roles are with the community college CEO. (Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO)

Participants described various types of training needs, specifically in cultural competency, understanding bias, roles, and functions of stakeholders including faculty senates, hiring and selection committees, and boards of trustees as critical to the community college presidency.

Cultural Wealth as Adding Value

The importance of cultural wealth, as a form of capital, was a dominant finding among the Latino/Hispanic group yet also acknowledged by a great proportion of members in the African American and Asian Pacific Islander groups. Participants attributed these experiences as impacting the relatability to the students they serve, including growing up in multi-generational homes. A participant commented, "I grew up in a family of five, the youngest of five, my four siblings, my mom and dad we all lived with my grandmother in her two-bedroom house" (African American Male Gen X President in the Midwest). Other participants commented on the resiliency derived from adverse circumstances, with one stating, "I grew up in a single-parent home. My mother was on drugs, and I raised my little brother. That I paid my way through school, that I worked three jobs, completed a terminal degree and now a college president" (African American Female Gen X President in the Midwest). Cultural wealth and experiences that allow participants to be successful were described this way:

> My own personal journey allows me to be successful in this role. Knowing what it's like to pinch pennies and make ends meet. What I bring to the conversation is it's because of these experiences our students are more creative, resourceful and committed to completion. (African American Male Gen X in the South).

Understanding the value of one's cultural wealth is a form of social capital and as such is an asset to be accentuated.

Keys to Leadership Success

Wisdom, in the form of *keys to leadership success*, was a theme in the study. Keys included the necessity of developing relationships with other senior leaders irrespective of ethnicity and gender, having mentors to instruct, guide and support, and building a team of allies

in the form of a support network for personal and professional sustainability in the community college presidency. Themes for research question three describing leadership preparation for attaining the presidency in community colleges were that cognitive and non-cognitive competencies for leadership, formal and informal leadership preparation beneficial to the role, and having both mentors and a support network were leadership success. These findings are relevant for faculty senates, boards of trustees, and other community college stakeholders related to the underrepresentation of community college presidents of color, the hiring process, training, and leadership preparation. In describing the study's utility, a participant stated:

> I look forward to your dissertation. I'll certainly look at it but I'm sure I'm going to be able to send that off to my board of trustees and our college community to say, "Look, these are some kinds of the things that are keeping us from moving forward, which embedded in there are issues of racism and structural inequalities." But then I think the key point that is missing so far is, okay, the data, the research is there. Let's have a conversation on how we can elevate ourselves beyond where we are right now to improve and better our college. I feel those conversations, in my limited experience, at least with boards and college communities and faculty senate, and our stakeholders, are just not happening. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II Asian Pacific Islander Male President)

This study on minority community college CEOs' perceptions of underrepresentation, preparation, and ascension to the presidency is relevant today.

Trustworthiness and Rigor of Data Coding and Analysis

The researcher used phenomenological inquiry as to the methodological approach for the collection and analysis of primary data and was the best approach for this study. The researcher made careful deliberation of thought when crafting and constructing decision trees leading to a

systematic analysis of coding steps to analyze the data. Including, the alignment of the primary

research questions guiding the study, the interview questions supporting the primary questions,

and the theoretical frameworks corresponding to each interview question (refer to Figures 2-1

and 3-1). Setting a clear research design and methodology enabled the researcher to confer

reliability of data, the credibility of the research methodology, and data collection important to

strong content analyses. Each supported the criteria standards in establishing trustworthiness in

this qualitative research adding transferability, dependability, confirmability, and credibility to

the study.

Given the cyclical nature of qualitative research, the researcher analyzed data during the

collection phase. Multiple steps were used to conduct the data analysis, including free listing

used in the interviews and counter-stories from participants that formed narratives. The counter-

narratives were examined using a modified interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) as

well as systematic coding steps to analyze the data. The researcher expanded the IPA concept

model for the coding and analysis of the significant amount of data. To present the information

with accuracy and particularity, precise attention was given to mastering and ensuring the

organization, tracking, and retention of participants' authentic voices for counter-storytelling.

The researcher created a nine (9) step system of data collection and analysis for the study.

The researcher created personalized macroinstruction templates for each participant using current

free add-ins and macros by DocTools (Fredborg, 2020) as a coding efficiency tool for use in

Microsoft Word. Each personalized macroinstruction template included eleven columns, which

allowed for the sorting, review, and analysis of data (refer to Figure 3-2). The researcher-created

system of data collection and analysis constituted the primary analysis tool to code and analyze

data for thematic coding and alignment of the theoretical frameworks corresponding to each

interview question. Naming conventions were created for each participant to track their voice as the researcher moved along the adapted IPA analysis continuum, advancing incrementally to higher conceptual levels as new categories were recognized from the coding. Numbers were assigned to each of the thirty-four participants and labeled author dates. Pseudo labels were assigned for ethnicity and gender groups, using abbreviations for each. The researcher analyzed interviews line by line, reduced each to thematic levels of coding, correlated with artifacts review, and sorted and categorized data by ethnicity, gender, and all-participant composite group. What follows is the disassembly and reassembly of the data using a matrix designed by the researcher and informed by CRT and GCT frameworks to draw conclusions and make relevant interpretations of the data. The creation of the macroinstruction was pivotal to the researcher and allowed for ease of reviewing, sorting, and confirming data validation and creating data model analysis forecasts and graphs. Each of the prescripts of the researcher's systematic process of data collection, coding, and analysis allowed for greater residence and adds credibility and trustworthiness for the findings of this study.

Recommendations for Practice

This study identified numerous deficiencies that impact the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. Sixteen recommendations to improve practice identified from the study include:

Research Question One*: Underrepresentation of Minority Community College Presidents*

1. Establish equitable and culturally competent standards in the hiring process for the community college presidency to improve a major flaw in the process.

2. Create an understanding of the alignment of skillsets and experiences obtained from non-traditional pathways that are on par with the traditional academic pathway to reduce leakage and increase the number of candidates in the pipeline to the presidency.

3. Establish a shared vision for the hiring process, including a review of coded language in job descriptions, evaluator bias, and other areas.

4. Initiate a call to action by regional, state, and national accrediting bodies, associations, and other agencies to evaluate the diversity and inclusion standards of community colleges.

5. Provide cultural competency training for all stakeholders along the hiring continuum, including the board of trustees.

6. Increase purposeful dialogue and collaboration with the Association of Community College Trustees to establish goals and benchmarks that move beyond the desire for diversifying the presidency to a plan for how that can be accomplished.

Research Question Two: *Ascension to the Presidency*

1. Provide intentional development and support for more faculty of color and persons of color in mid-entry roles that feed the pipeline, including department chairs, deans, and provosts, all of which matriculate from the academic pathway.

2. Provide exposure to opportunities for more faculty of color and persons of color in mid-entry roles that feed the pipeline to garner cross-functional leadership experiences and skillsets in broad areas that are necessary for the presidency, including operating budgets, finance, tax appropriations, government relations, and labor relations.

3. Initiate a call to action by regional, state, and national accrediting bodies, associations, and other agencies towards a purposeful evaluation of the college's institutional climate,

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involving students, administration, and the community to identify areas of opportunity to address outstanding symbols, processes and practices inconsistent with the vision of diverse 21st-century institutions of higher education.

4. Establish standards for institutional progress in reviewing outdated processes and practices contributing to structural barriers that do not support diverse and inclusive cultural climates.

Research Question Three: *Leadership Preparation Necessary for the Presidency*

1. Establish goals, benchmarks, and sufficient systems for preparing ethnically diverse candidates of color for the community college presidency.

2. Provide resources and support for professional development opportunities described as essential for networking and cultivating support networks to be successful in the role.

3. Improve and expand formal mentoring opportunities for new and veteran presidents of color described as essential for success in the presidency.

4. Increase collective efforts of AACC affiliate councils that represent diverse ethnic groups to collaboratively address cultural competency training needs and create or expand formal opportunities for mentoring programs by leaders of color.

5. Evaluate the efficacy of formal leadership preparation programs and institutes in preparing and contributing to more leaders of color in the community college presidency.

6. Revisit and scale efforts by the AACC and League of Innovation previously supported by the Kellogg Foundation in the latter half of the previous century and identified as having marginal success in diversifying the presidency.

The aforementioned recommendations to improve practice derived from the study identified numerous deficiencies that impact the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency. They can also be classified thematically as follows:

University-Based Leadership Preparation Programs

Leadership preparation programs play a significant role as part of the solution to increase ethnic and gender representation of CEOs of color in the community college presidency. Grow-your-own (GYO) — or institutional-based or state-based succession programs that focus on developing future college leaders from among the existing ranks of mid-level administrators and faculty are the equivalents of community colleges that afford open access to all. University-based leadership preparation programs are the equivalent of four-year transfer institutions. Collectively, they both develop pipelines to the terminal degree. University-based leadership programs should evaluate and give credibility to and academic credit for the experiential knowledge obtained through these programs creating the equivalent of transfer equivalencies for students pursuing the terminal degree. Additionally, university-based leadership preparation programs have a responsibility to move beyond institutional metrics and benchmarks to evaluate culturally relevant, learning-centered curricular, andragogy, and diversity of faculty in the field align. Dedicate institutional resources and funding to remove student barriers that impede completion of the terminal degree essential to acquiring the presidency.

Call to Action for Regional, State and National Associations, Affiliate Councils

Moving beyond a call to action towards focused intentionality by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), and representatives from the AACC's Affiliated Councils that support leadership development. Create deliberate opportunities and distribution of power and resources towards

more equitable access to opportunities that garner the development of experiences and foundational tools in developing more leaders of color in the pipeline to the presidency. Increase transparency and accountability in reporting data to augment understanding of and address the disparity by ethnic and gender groups. Transparency in reporting data to understand a regression of gains for CEOs of color in the community college presidency including a perceived regression of gains for women of color and disproportionate numbers for Asian Pacific Islander and Latino/Hispanics in the academy as a whole.

The Role of the Boards of Trustees and Governing Boards in Leading the Charge for Diverse Leadership

Boards of trustees, governing boards, administrative boards, advocacy associations, presidential search firms, and accrediting bodies play a critical role in leading the charge to this call to action in addressing the underrepresentation of CEOs of color in the community college presidency. Each must assume increased responsibility for creating a more diverse leadership that represents more diverse communities, a diverse student community, and a diverse culture of learning. An examination of the interplay of institutional cultures, structural barriers, and the positional power each serves as gatekeepers along the hiring continuum for addressing the ongoing underrepresentation of CEOs of color in the community college presidency in the 21st century.

Findings Related to the Literature

Findings from the study related to the literature include the archetype of a community college president as a white male, a need for leadership development systems in support of the presidential pipeline, a need for the presidency, senior administration, and faculty to be diverse, and desired characteristics, skillsets and experience for the next generation of community college

leaders. Early research predicted a need to increase the numbers of qualified candidates in the leadership pipeline because the profile of the community college presidency in America was changing (Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002).

Recent studies reveal that the demographic profile of college presidents by racial composition is stagnant, with the majority of community college CEOs being white males (ACE, 2013a; Gagliardi et al., 2017). The archetype of a community college president as a white male persists. Counter-stories of CEOs' perceptions, journey, and ascension towards the community college presidency by ethnicity and gender provide relevant insight regarding how to increase representation in the leadership pipeline and narrow the gap. The identification of gatekeepers, leakage points and opportunities to increase access, support and intentional leadership development and mentoring were findings adding insight on how to increase the representation.

Themes from the study that aligned with the literature include the lack of a clear pathway to the presidency and lack of opportunities, access, support, and intentional leadership development critical to advancement. The main headings in this study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways," and b) "Historical Overview of American Community Colleges." In describing both the lack of a clear pathway and intentional development of the pipeline, a participant commented:

> The main reason why you don't see many CEOs of color in the presidency is the pipeline, there is no really robust pipeline to develop people of color into these roles. There must be development of the pipeline that is affixed to specific expectations for institutions to truly seek diversification at the highest level, from within their support structures and after one comes into the role. That is why you do not see many CEOs of color. (African American Gen X Male President)

Findings in the study, related to a racial and gender underrepresentation of CEOs of color and related to the literature support that the leading demographic profile of college presidents by racial composition is stagnant.

Many participants in the study argue that expanding and diversifying the presidency's leadership talent pool is critical to succession planning. The Aspen Institute's 2017 study, *Renewal and progress: Strengthening higher education leadership in a time of rapid change*, underscored the importance of leadership development in strengthening the college presidency. The study described a shrinking pool of interest in the presidency by individuals holding positions traditionally preceding the presidency, inadequate systems for preparing diverse and nontraditional candidates for the presidency as well as a lack of college presidents, national associations, and boards of trustees as stakeholders willing to invest in the college presidency to ensure that a healthy supply of talent can be identified and cultivated (Aspen, 2017). Themes from the study reinforced findings in the literature and support the Aspen study. They include opportunities, access, support, and intentional leadership development are critical to advancement and structural barriers and processes in the form of institutional culture exist and are impediments to the presidency. The main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are "Community College Leadership Preparation," "Organizational Culture and Change" and "Critical Race Theory: Emphasis on Structural Paradigms." On the lack of interest in the presidency as a career option, a participant commented about "the energy and commitment that it takes to move up the academic ranks, time away from family, from your personal life, and interests. So, I think that that is discouraging some people from coming in" (African American Female Baby Boomers II Seasoned President). In describing stakeholders' responsibility in preparing diverse and non-traditional candidates for the presidency, a participant

commented, "The ACCT, AACC, League of Innovation, these organizations need to help build a pipeline, to cultivate, to train, to provide professional development opportunities" (Asian Pacific Islander Male Baby Boomers II CEO). Findings in the study related to the literature show that present systems are inadequate and that there is a need for stakeholders to engage in intentional efforts to cultivate and invest in more leaders of color in the college presidency.

A review of the literature showed the importance of community college leadership preparation and organizational change and culture. Themes from the study that aligned with the literature include the need for formal leadership preparation that includes culturally relevant pedagogy/andragogy and instruction and the existence of structural barriers and processes in the form of institutional culture and impediments to the presidency. Main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "Generations of Community College Leadership Styles", b) "Community College Leadership Preparation", c) "Organizational Change and Culture" and d) "Critical Race Theory: Emphasis on Structural Paradigms." A participant stated, "[t]wo very important points are the concerted effort for the administration to have leadership that resembles the students and second the community culture because their groups, the boards of trustees, chambers and others should also reflect that diversity" (Latino/Hispanic Veteran Male Silents/Baby Boomers I CEO). On the need for cultural competency, a participant stated that there is a problem, "from a leadership standpoint, whether it's the faculty or the staff not really understanding that there should be a little bit more of a cultural competency of understanding, of what does it look like, to be in that seat" (African American Male Gen X II/Millennials I President). This study underscored conclusions from the Aspen 2017 study addressing leadership development systems that prepare minority men and women and nontraditional candidates for the presidency and training for stakeholders in the process.

A 2019 survey of college and university presidents and the presidential pipeline conducted by *Inside Higher Education* and Gallup reported that a majority of presidents agree that there are too few minority candidates, including women, for community college presidencies (Jaschik & Lederman, 2019, p. 7). Themes from the study that aligned with the literature include evidence of a leaky pipeline to the presidency, a glass ceiling for men and women of color, and biased perceptions of race and gender. Main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways," b) "Glass Ceiling Theory," c) "Women in Community College Leadership, d) "Critical Race Theory: Applied to Gender and Ethnic Subgenres (AsianCrit and LatCrit/o)," e) "Stereotype of a Model Minority," and f) "Tokenism." On the void in the literature on the community college presidency, a participant commented that until the board of trustees and the AACC address the underrepresentation of women and racial/ethnic minorities, "we will continue to have less than 1% of women of color serve in the presidency. Actually, there are more Hispanic men being hired now than black women or black men" (African American Third-Generation Gen X Female President). A great majority of participants were also dismayed at the little evidence of increase among Asian Pacific Islander men and women and Latino/Hispanic women, and the regression in numbers of African American males in the college presidency. The void in the literature on the lack of diversity in the community college presidency represents an untenable position for diversifying the community college pipeline. This study adds a voice to that void.

Research has identified a clear underrepresentation of race and gender diversity in the community college presidency (Aspen, 2013; Espinosa et al., 2019; Gagliardi et al., 2017; Shults, 2001). Today's college presidents fail to mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of their students. Reports on leadership in higher education conclude more generally that administrators,

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professionals, and faculty remain predominantly White and predominantly male, particularly within the faculty ranks (Espinosa et al., 2019; Pritchard & McChesney, 2018). Themes from the study that aligned with the literature include evidence of a leaky pipeline, biased perceptions of race and gender, a glass ceiling for men and women of color, systemic biases and structural racism, the importance of mentors, allies, and support networks essential to matriculating, success in the role of the presidency, and cultural wealth as capital an adding value. The main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways," b) "Historical Overview of the American Community College," c) "Women in Community College Leadership," d) "Critical Race Theory: Applied to Gender and Ethnic Subgenres [AsianCrit and LatCrit/o]," e) "Stereotype of the Model Minority," f) "Tokenism," g) "Critical Race Theory: in Education," and h) "Critical Race Theory: in Pedagogy." On stereotypes that contribute to underrepresentation of race and gender a participant described a meeting with a community member where they were mistaken for the subordinate vs. the leader. The participant stated, "Years ago I'd be upset, now it's amusing. I am 5'1 and my last name doesn't coincide with the way I look. Race and gender negatively influenced me in that I didn't know in 2015 people would make assumptions like that" (Asian Pacific Islander Female Baby Boomers II President). In regard to today's college presidents lacking the racial and ethnic diversity of their students, a participant commented that boards of trustees, "if they're looking for the same thing they had before, a white man or a white woman who was older who came up the traditional route, that's not what they're going to get" if they hire more diverse presidents (African American Female Gen X President). This study underscored the need for the presidency, senior administration, and faculty to reflect and honor the diversity of the community and student body. Counter-stories of CEOs in this study were relevant to

understanding these challenges, barriers, and impediments to racial and gender diversity. Understanding factors that preclude greater numbers of minorities and women from ascending towards the community college presidency is paramount to understanding how to increase representation and narrow the gap.

Much attention has been given to what is needed by the next generation of community college leaders. Understanding leadership characteristics that have made community college presidents successful in the past 50 years is ineffectual for helping community colleges to thrive today. Studies report of new skills required of the next generation of leaders pioneered, in other enterprises, that are necessary to respond to fast-moving fiscal, organizational, and community change and the context in which colleges operate and use new technologies to create value for the students and communities they serve (AACC, 2018a; AACC & ACCT, 2018; Aspen, 2017). The themes from the study that aligned with the literature include leadership proficiencies and frames of leadership, and keys to being successful as a community college president. The main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "Generations of Community College Development," b) "Generations of Community College Leadership Styles," c) "Overview of Leadership Theories," and d) "Framework for Community College Leadership." Themes from the study that support understanding the next generation of leaders are leadership proficiencies and formal and informal leadership preparation. A participant commented, "They're not ready for the Millennials. They're not ready for the Gen Xers because we don't look like a traditional president, nor do we come up the traditional trajectory to get to the presidency" (African American Female Gen X President). Few studies have reported on who this new generation of leaders is or given voice to their experiences. This study adds voices to the

literature from Gen X and Gen X II/Millennials generations, who have been an enigma in the literature.

Great attention has been paid in the literature to efforts at succession planning through formal leadership development programs for community college presidents at the university level, national associations and institutes, grow-your-own (GYO) programs, and the identification of desired characteristics, skills, and competencies necessary for today's community college leaders (AACC 2016, AACC 2018a; ACE, 2019; Aspen, 2017; Mathis & Roueche, 2019). Findings from this study identified a desire for culturally relevant pedagogy/ andragogy in formal leadership programs, institutes and board of trustee training, which participants deemed critical for equipping persons with a diverse array of tools and cultural competencies to effectively lead a diverse student body and other constituencies. Themes from the study that aligned with the literature include formal leadership preparation, culturally relevant pedagogy/andragogy, and instruction and training regarding cultural competency and biases. The main headings in the study's literature review that correspond to these findings are a) "Community College Leadership Preparation," b) "Critical Race Theory: in Education," and c) "Critical Race Theory: in Pedagogy." On the need for cultural competency training for faculty, boards of trustees, and other stakeholders, a participant commented, "You have to have some understanding and some training [in] how to navigate in an international world" (African American Female First-Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I Veteran President from the traditional academic pathway). Another participant argued that students are more culturally competent than the faculty, staff, and board of trustees, commenting, "I also feel like the students are more culturally competent than maybe the board or faculty or staff in a lot of respects" (African American Male Fourth Generation X II/Millennials I President). Cultural competency

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training for faculty, administration, and boards of trustees and culturally relevant pedagogy/andragogy and instruction in formal leadership preparation programs would cultivate a leadership proficiency that benefits community colleges and their leaders.

Throughout the literature, many researchers have called for the need to diversify the presidency, including Boggs (2003), Gillett-Karam et al. (1991), Troutman (2018), Vaughan and Weisman (1998), and Zamani (2003). On the timeliness and value of this study, a participant commented, "Part of your study will help to decode some of these issues and make it clearer and plain" (Latino/Hispanic Male Baby Boomers II CEO). This study is valuable to community college practitioners and stakeholders in that exploring the lived experiences regarding the preparation, pathway, and ascension of minority community college leaders increases understanding and begins to address the void in the literature. "Mahalo – thank you for braving the wilderness" (Asian Pacific Islander Female Gen X CEO).

The researcher made careful deliberation of thought when aligning topics in the literature review aligned with each of the research questions (refer to Table A-5). Including, the alignment of the primary research questions guiding the study, the interview questions supporting the primary questions, and the theoretical frameworks corresponding to each interview question (refer to Figures 2-2 and 3-1). Each supported the criteria standards in establishing trustworthiness in this qualitative research study.

Discussion of Research Findings and Theoretical Frameworks

Findings that arose from participants by ethnic and gender groups for each of the three research questions and support Critical Race Theory and Glass Ceiling Theory follows.

African Americans

Findings from each of the three research questions for the African American ethnic group that arose prominently in the study support all five tenets of the CRT framework as well as the GCT framework. The following concepts from the African American counter-story demonstrate how CRT and Intersectionality figure prominently in efforts to foreground the many ways that social power and inequality are produced. Participants provided counter-narratives of their lived experiences as CEOs of color. Challenges described with perceptions of competency, and the minority burden of super syndrome legitimized the centrality of experiential knowledge detailing instances of racial subordination. Descriptions of sexism reflect deep structural and systemic questions of discrimination and inequality which CRT intersectionality. One first generation leader when asked about race and gender disparity of minorities on the underrepresentation stated, "Let me start with saying, racism and sexism, those are very important" (Male President) with a Second Generation leader agreeing stating, "I think racism and sexism, certainly" (Female President). A Third Gen X leader described:

> You have a pandemic of health proportions, that has only been exacerbated and made more challenging because of the pandemic of racism; and because we have not had a racial reckoning in this country, as a result of that, we cannot ignore the fact that race and racism and white supremacy it influences the heterosexism, gender identity. (Female President)

Tenets of CRT were established in the data for convergence and intersectionality. Identification of a glass ceiling for men and women of color and social constructs and barriers prevalent in institutional cultures reflect the interdisciplinary perspective of CRT and GCT.

Asian Pacific Islander

Findings from each of the three research questions for the Asian Pacific Islander ethnic group that arose prominently in the study support CRT and GCT. Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit) consists of seven interrelated tenets seeking to understand specific racialized realities of Asian Americans. The themes that arose prominently in the study included Asianization, re-constructive history, strategic (anti-essentialism), intersectionality, and commitment to social justice. Asianization refers to the reality that racism, as a pervasive aspect of American society and racializes Asian Americans in distinct ways. One leader stated changes comes with having more role models and speaking up:

> Given the current environment with kind of the inequities and the racism and stuff
>
> like that. Sometimes you have to speak up. I don't mean to say, "Go in there and
>
> start arguing with everybody." Because sometimes you just hold your ground and
>
> be firm. And if there's an injustice, you have to speak up. That for me, I can really
>
> relate to as an Asian American. (Second Generation Baby Boomers II President)

Participants 'counter-stories supported the reconstruction of history in transcending invisibility and silence by incorporating the voices and contributions of the group. One CEO described:

> In groups, I would be representing [and comment on items]. I would say
>
> something. I would present an analysis. It would all be discounted. Literally, all
>
> discounted. I can't believe how overt it is. Then if the other person from [the
>
> College of Statesman], who's all white by the way, all-white male, would say
>
> exactly what I said, it would take them two or three meetings before they realized,
>
> oh yeah- that's something we should do. (Third Generation X CEO)

Participant experiences of discriminatory acts, stereotypes, and microaggressions as a result of racism and social constructs were an indicator of strategic (anti) essentialism. A CEO described:

> The point is it is often in the mind of people when they look at a college president, then look at the system chancellor, they have in their mind that image. This person standing there does not fit that image they have, hence you cannot be a good president. This is what I mean by not only structured racism is deep in the mindset, in the thinking of some individuals in our industry, in our institution, that makes it hard for minorities to think to become a president. Or when they become, they have an extra burden to overcome. They have to work harder to prove. This is what I meant. It's stereotyped racism, it's a mindset. That's the biggest part. (Second Generation CEO)

Finally, participants described strategies to navigate the culture acknowledged the intersectionality of the oppressive systems that shaped their realities including assimilation and arising from the imposter syndrome. One leader described:

> Surrounding yourself with a support network that can relate to and has similar shared experiences. It's important to kind of bring all those pieces in. You're not alone but rely on others before you, other experiences, and try to make it your own. And so, I think that has served me as a minority in these types of positions. (Second Generation President)

Other leaders advocated for more training for persons of color on how to institutional, political, and societal cultural dynamics and how to successfully navigate them. One leader observed, "We never teach them how to navigate or transcend HR policies" (Third Gen X Female CEO). Another described investing in personal professional development and training noting, "Training

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where they can go in with some kind of guidance hence to say, "Look at this particular type of training and how you can improve yourself or how you can have some development in these areas" (Male Second Generation President). Another noted raising awareness in common discussion systemic racism stating, "The movement of first raising awareness, me just talking to another colleague about systemic racism and its impact" (Third Gen X Female CEO).

These concepts form the Asian Pacific Islander counter-story demonstrating how CRT, AsianCrit, and Glass Ceiling Theories figure prominently in efforts to foreground the many ways that social power and inequality are produced.

Latino/Hispanic

Findings from each of the three research questions for the Latino/Hispanic ethnic group that arose prominently in the study support CRT and GCT. The themes that arose prominently in the research supporting the CRT framework included counter-narratives, interest convergence, intersectionality, and commitment to social justice. Latino/Hispanic participants provided countless counter-stories, grounded in their experiences and knowledge of and as persons of color in describing leadership preparation and competencies beneficial to success in the community college presidency today. A seasoned leader described, "Getting the job is the beginning of the challenge. And I'm not minimizing climbing the hill to get there. But once you get there, you got to be ready and you've got to leverage everything you've got" (Male Latino/Hispanic CEO). Thick rich descriptions and counter-stories were used to validate cultural wealth as a competency and value add for leadership. Various forms of cultural wealth ethnic groups inherently possess along their life's journey are often discounted, invalidated, and under-supported in the research. Each of the participants valued the role of the presidency and the ability to influence change as one leader observed, "I have found, if you're not at the table,

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CharMaine, you're on the menu. You don't want to be on the menu" [Field notes from the researcher understood this statement to mean one can only affect change by being in positions to influence change] (Second Generation Chancellor). In describing social consciousness, the ability to make a difference, and the importance of leaders of color in the community college presidency a leader described:

> Believing in what you do, believing in your craft, believing that all students can learn, to your last bone. There is a tremendous amount of administrative influence in these roles and we should use it for positive and productive change. Always student-centric, always student-minded. You have to be, a risk-taker, because the system is producing the kind of results that it was designed to produce. If you cut the inequity down for brown and black students, in particular-...that's what the system is producing. So if you want to change that, it's going to require risk-taking, a sense of steadfastness and a sense of stability.
>
> (Male Latino/Hispanic Second Generation CEO)

Prominently findings in the research for the Latino/Hispanic group supported CRT frameworks included counter-narratives, interest convergence, intersectionality, and commitment to social justice.

Women's Gender Group

Themes that arose prominently in the research for the Women's gender group that support the CRT and GCT frameworks included counter storytelling and experiential knowledge, intersectionality, and commitment to social justice. The Women identified the importance of being a voice at the table representing persons of color. Participants acknowledged "power in the authentic voice", even if it's "the lone voice" as women of color recognizing, "if you're the only

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one at the table, that's the only opportunity that gets to be told" (Third Gen X Asian Pacific Islander CEO). In referencing why having persons of color leading community colleges is important, a Female leader stated "You cannot lose sight of the goal, which is access to education, to help people have a better life" (Second Generation Latino/Hispanic CEO).

Women of color have a unique voice that they articulate and bring a different perspective to the position of community college CEO. Collectively, women of color CEOs help amplify the voice of their respective communities. In chronicling an example of amplifying the voice of the community a Female leader described:

My narrative when I would go to community members to join a movement [on overcoming poverty through education]. I would say, "When it comes to negative social indicators, we're number one. We're the poorest among all the [communities]. We're the unhealthiest. All because of poverty." When we went to the community, the community taught me something more powerful to say. They responded, "I'm broke, but I'm not broken. I don't feel poor because I can go to the ocean and fish. I don't feel poor because I have my Ohana [neighbors] with me." If I choose statistically to be part of the working poor because I want to be a foster parent to my child... It's so common to take on somebody's relative. [They also shared] That there's so much abundance of wealth defined beyond financial. Guiding principles that honor native intelligence, which honors different kinds of wealth, and how we could appeal to that abundance. The community really provides more sharing and accountability within your neighbors, your Ohana. (Third Gen X Asian Pacific Islander Female CEO)

Women in leadership recounted giving support to, building confidence, and amplifying the voice of women within the organization. A Female leader recounted, "I crafted change by building coalitions, developing champions, giving persons ownership and voice because I knew that's the only way to carry the work forward" (Latino/Hispanic Female leader CEO). Data from the Women supported the CRT and GCT frameworks including glass ceiling, counter storytelling and experiential knowledge, intersectionality, and commitment to social justice.

Men's Gender Group

The themes that arose prominently in the research for the Men that support the CRT and GCT framework included counter storytelling, experiential knowledge, and commitment to social justice.

Implications for Further Research

This study presents an important look at minority community college CEOs, describing their perceptions of underrepresentation, preparation, and ascension to the presidency. Implications for further research on the underrepresentation of minority community college CEOs include the need for transparent reporting and strategies to develop and diversify the community college presidency, examination of the hiring process to include improving structural barriers, and training for gatekeepers along the continuum of the process. Future quantitative studies conducting a comparative analysis of white leaders and leaders of color and their trajectory to the presidency would add to the literature.

Participants from the first, second, and third generations described being direct or indirect benefactors of previous leadership development systems as part of the AACC's Leading Forward efforts. Future studies revisiting previous successful leadership development systems in support of the presidential pipeline supported by the Kellogg Foundation and AACC's Leading Forward

would add to the literature. A participant commented, "ACCT, AACC, League of Innovation, these organizations need to help build a pipeline, to cultivate, to train, to provide professional development opportunities for faculty members in the teaching ranks or low-level, mid-level administrators" (Asian Pacific Islander Baby Boomers II CEO). Future studies that evaluate the initiatives from the previous century with current strategies to increase the number of leaders of color in the community college presidents would add a practical contribution to the field.

Evaluation of formal leadership preparation programs and institutions programmatic curricula for culturally competent pedagogy/andragogy and instruction would contribute to the field. An evaluation of cultural competency training for stakeholders—including college presidents, national associations, and boards of trustees—and its impact on change would be practical contributions to the field. Such studies would strengthen and deepen our understanding of the issues, qualities, conditions and support critical to the efficacy of current and future community college leaders and presidents of color. Studies on the impact of cultural competency training among stakeholder groups and culturally relevant pedagogy/andragogy as part of formal leadership and professional development institutes and programs would benefit the field by clarifying how well these can address underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency.

Finally, research on institutional culture's impact on the community college presidency would help to inform practice. An evaluation of community colleges acknowledged as top colleges for excellence in diversity in higher education by Aspen, ACCT, and INSIGHT into Diversity and other associations could advance the conversation on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Studies examining how colleges in Colorado, Florida, and Texas profiled as excellent with regard to diversity in higher education have shared benchmarks for success and how those

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metrics can be replicated in urban/suburban, rural, and technical community colleges. These lend practical applications to the field.

Conclusion

This dissertation research study provided an important opportunity to query minority community college CEOs by ethnicity and gender. This study presented counter-stories from a diverse mix of thirty-four chancellors and presidents representing a breadth of leadership spanning twelve states, inclusive of all regions of the United States. Community college institution types comprised state colleges, university systems, technical, and multi-campus districts and colleges in urban/suburban, suburban, and rural communities.

Findings from the study indicate that the leadership development system that served a movement in the second half of the 20th century by investing in intentional identification, development, and succession planning and leadership development for the community college presidency may be insufficient for addressing ongoing underrepresentation in the 21st century. Of those who benefitted from structured and intentional development, a participant stated, "I had been a beneficiary, I believe, of a movement. A movement to diversify higher education" (African American Female Gen X President).

Despite efforts to turn the tide and diversify the ranks of the community college leadership, this study affirmed that the presidency is diversifying slowly. This study provided an analytical narrative about a multiplicity of factors that contribute to the persistence of underrepresentation of racial and gender diversity in the community college presidency. The archetype of a community college president as a white male presents an obstacle to assuring that newly hired CEOs are more representative of the diverse students they serve.

Counter-stories of the CEOs' perceptions, journey, and ascension towards the community college presidency by ethnicity and gender provided relevant insight for understanding how to increase representation in the leadership pipeline and narrow the gap. The leadership development system in the latter half of the 20th century, as well as the investment in leadership development programs for the community college presidency to increase the number of minorities and skilled talent in the leadership pipeline, may be inadequate when addressing leadership needs of ethnic minorities, women, and men of color today. This research study underscored the importance of continued investment and support in leadership development for leaders of color in diversifying the presidency. Today's college presidents fail to mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of their students. Counter-stories were valuable in understanding this phenomenon.

Practical implications of this study include adding voice to the literature on the phenomena experienced by African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic community college leaders during their journey to the community college presidency/CEO. The theoretical implications of this study consist of exploring the phenomenon through an integrated lens of CRT and Glass Ceiling theory in examining social constructs that impede progression. Exploring the perceptions of current and previous community college presidents will inform practice and makes a practical, theoretical, and social contribution by adding to the literature and field on the underrepresentation of minorities in the community college presidency.

Researcher's Reflections

This study impacts the field by providing an understanding of perceptions of CEOs through the lens of both their generational era of leadership as well as their leadership

development style. The researcher aligned generations of the American community college, citing Deegan and Tillery (1985) and Geller (2001), with distinct characteristics of leadership styles by generations as cited by Sullivan (2001) and Boggs and McPhail (2016), using Bolman and Deal's (2017) four-frame model to better understand counter-stories presented by Gen X II/Millennials I leaders. As the researcher analyzed previous studies, it became clear that while these topics had been explored, they had not been coupled or updated to correspond with the Pew Research Center's (2020) generation definitions and naming conventions. The researcher believed this to be an intuitive need to best understand the perspective from which this newest and little-explored generation of leaders contributed to the study.

An understanding of the newest generation of community college leaders is extremely impactful to the literature because it adds the voice of this enigmatic group. First, the study gave a glimpse into how leaders have benefited from strategies and efforts of various national associations in community college leadership development. Secondly, it provided a cursory view of how the CEOs' approach and style of leadership vary by the generational era in leading their respective community college systems and colleges against the backdrop of today's community college needs. Lastly, it proved extremely insightful to hear voices from the fourth generation of community college leaders, defined as Gen X II/Millennials I ages 35-44, whose generational leadership style emerged in the data as Equity Achievers.

This study also impacts the field by addressing the need and desire for accountability in reporting on the number of men and women of color serving as community college presidents today. Definitive and true reporting of the numbers of minority community college presidents currently serving is critical to acknowledging concerns reported in longitudinal studies over the decade, providing an opportunity to examine and improve upon efforts to diversify the

presidency. For example, new studies could closely focus on the leakages inherent in the hiring process. The impact of hiring and selection committees, presidential search firms, and boards of trustees as constituent groups in the hiring process is critical. Additionally, revisiting thestrategies employed for leadership development by the AACC Commission on Leadership and Professional Development, the Aspen Institute, and programs sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation that had a measurable impact on diversifying the presidency in the late 1990s and early 2000s could help reveal causes of the erosion of previous gains. Finally, the data identified governing boards and board of trustees in a flawed hiring process. Future studies should examine the impact of members of underrepresented groups on boards, a review of the replication factor, the board's role in the hiring process, and the responsibility college boards have in this dynamic.

Epilogue: The Supremes, Commodores and Miracles

Reflections of the "Supremes"

"Phenomenal Woman, That's Me"

I walk into a room, just as cool as you please,
And to a man, the fellows stand or fall down on their knees.
Now you understand just why my head's not bowed.

I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.

When you see me passing, it ought to make you proud.
I say, it's in the click of my heels, the bend of my hair, the palm of my hand, the need for my care.

Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

[Poet, Maya Angelou, 1994]

I am in awe of the thirteen phenomenal women, three chancellors and ten presidents, who graced my study. They are trailblazers reflecting the African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic ethnic groups. They represent historic firsts, including the first college presidency at the age of 36 years, and the only woman in a traditionally male-dominated field. Two are first-generation immigrants; three are first time in any college (FITIAC), and first-generation college graduates. Phenomenal women who reflect our nation and our newly elected presidential constituency, identifying as bi-cultural as African American and Asian Pacific Islander, multiple ethnicities including Filipino, as bisexual and ranging in ages from 45-65+ years. They embraced me and accepted me with their voices to tell their truth. They've encouraged me along with the writing of this research with their wisdom and inclusion in a "rainbow coalition" of sisterhood and support network. Phenomenal women, that's we.

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Reflections of the "Commodores"

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T"

Find out what it means to me

<div align="right">(Song, Aretha Franklin ft. Otis Redding, 1967)</div>

"A Change Is Gonna Come"

I was born by the river, in a little tent

Oh and just like the river, I've been running ev'r since.

It's been a long, a long time coming

But I know a change gonna come, oh yes it will!

<div align="right">(Song, Sam Cooke, 1964)</div>

I am in awe and indebted to the twenty-two men, seven chancellors and fifteen college presidents, who took me, the researcher, under their wings. They embody strength and fortitude; they are tenacious and have the grit and intrepidness necessary to lead ever-transforming 21st-century community colleges. They are more than the ethnic labels of African American, Asian Pacific Islander, Chinese, Filipino, Latino/Hispanic, Latino & White, and of bi-cultural Mexican and U.S. heritage. They are bilingual first-generation immigrants, first time in any college (FITIAC), and first-generation college graduates and represent numerous non-traditional pathways, including aerospace & chemical engineering, economics, finance as well as medical field science. They represent men whose first and only role is chancellor as well as the youngest Gen X/Millennials I generation of community college leadership. They blessed me with their authentic voices and were forthcoming in their perceptions and the thick rich descriptions they gave on the research topic under investigation. They are the first to penetrate glass and bamboo ceilings and have been the first to advocate on behalf of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in

defending the open-door mission of the community colleges and communities they serve. This group of twenty-two extraordinary and powerful men take pride in being inclusive, are social action-oriented, laser-focused on achieving student success and equity for all students, and are committed to improving the lives of their communities and developing more inclusive leadership. They are committed to being hopeful that this day, a change has come through their leadership.

Reflections of the "Miracles"

The Hill We Climb

"We've braved the belly of the beast, we've learned that quiet isn't always peace,

And the norms and notions of what is, isn't always just-ice.

...In this truth, in this faith we trust.

For while we have eyes on the future,

History has its eyes on us!

(Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate, 46th Inaugural Address, 1/20/21)

The Miracles are the thirty-four CEOs, a microcosm reflecting the diversity and richness of the great community colleges and mission of the open door for the diverse communities and students that we serve. The ten chancellors and twenty-four presidents spanning twelve states in the U.S. represent the diverseness of our students and communities at the state colleges and university systems, multi-campus districts, urban/suburban, suburban, and rural communities. Drawing on my positionality as a researcher, I have garnered a more informed perspective on the work of the Miracles through the minority community college CEOs' perceptions of underrepresentation, preparation and ascension to the presidency. The researcher was frustrated at the reporting of numerous longitudinal studies, over three decades, touting a need for and the value of diversifying the presidency. Reports provided data on the changing demographics of minority community college presidents and highlighted the gains by women as a gender group. In doing so, they were able to provide an analytical narrative that favored white women while marginalizing women of color and making invisible the abysmal numbers for men of color. This dissertation was a personal work as a woman of color and a senior community college leader in the trenches, reared in the political conscious and culturally nurturing city of Detroit, Michigan,

born as the phoenix in a time of civil rights activism and unrest that permeates my very well being.

Labeling by race is a powerful political social construct. It is wielded as a form of political capital to disenfranchise. However, it can never diminish the rich wealth of cultural and social capital that leaders of color inherently possess. These and other racialized social constructs are designed to be divisive, to separate, categorize, diminish and limit the power imbued by the collective and the force for change persons of color would wield in increased numbers.

The CEOs in this study resisted the term "minority," with many referring to either specific ethnic groups or "persons of color." The literature was ignorant about and scant in the reporting of low numbers and causes of the underrepresentation of minority community college presidents. The leaders interviewed in this research identified numerous structural perils in a corrupted leadership pipeline wrought with chuckholes, potholes and leakages that were not the focus of this study but that future studies should address. They also drew references of race and racism's impact on institutional and societal culture that can have an impact on culturally responsive instruction, pedagogy/andragogy and successful academic achievement and success for students of color in securing economic viability for themselves and their communities.

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Appendix A - Participant Profiles by Ethnic Group

Thirty-four CEOs of color participated in the study representing diverse ethnic backgrounds including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic. The gender representation of participants is twenty-two men and twelve women with ten identifying as Chancellor and twenty-two as President. Each ethnic group includes at least one male and one female in the role of Chancellor. The researcher coupled and aligned generations of the American community college with characteristics of leadership styles by generation and updating to correspond with the Pew Research Center's (2020) generation definitions and naming conventions for currency. Table A-1 represents that alignment for the composite group of all participants. What emerged were rich counter-stories and voices from each ethnic group including giving voice to the newest generation of Gen X and Gen X II/Millennials I leaders.

Table A-5-1. Composite Groups Generation of American Community College Development Leadership Style

First Generation American Community College Development	Second Generation American Community College Development	Third Generation American Community College Development	Fourth Generation American Community College Development
Silents/Baby Boomers I (1935-55)	Baby Boomers II (1956-65)	Gen X (1966-75)	Gen X II/ Millennials I (1976-85)
Access to HE (Deegan and Tillery, 1985) **21%**	**Comprehensive CC** (Deegan and Tillery, 1985) **41%**	**Learning Centered College** (Boggs & McPhail, 2016 Geller, 2001) **29%**	**Equity Centered** (Hines, 2021) **9%**
3rd Generational Leadership Style: **Collaborators** (Sullivan, 2001)	3rd Generational Leadership Style: **Collaborators** (Sullivan, 2001)	4th Generational Leadership Style: **Transformers** (Hines, 2021)	5th Generational Leadership Style: **Equity Achievers** (Hines, 2021)

The thirty-four participants in the study, categorized by ethnic group, identify as African American, Asian Pacific Indian, bi-racial including Asian Pacific Indian and Black, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic/ Latino, Latino & White, Mexican American, and Bi-cultural respectively as well as identifying as gender and bi-sexual. The CEOs include 1st generation immigrants, refugees and, 1st generation college graduates with 41% of leaders reporting as bi-cultural and bi-lingual.

Profiles for the thirty-four CEOs of color participants in the study are organized by ethnicity and gender. The three ethnic groups are: 1) African American, 2) Asian Pacific Islander, and 3) Latino/Hispanic. Characteristics by ethnicity groups contain: 1) an ethnicity group overview, 2) characteristics, 3) generations of community college leadership development style representation and 4) synopsis biographical profiles. The gender group includes participant characteristics and generations of community college leadership development style representation. Appendix A concludes with a profile of the name conventions created for the gender group and all group composite. A profile synopsis for each participant is presented by ethnicity group in alphabetical order as African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic. The profiles are provided to expound on the distinct demographic categories that represent their identities and to give thick rich descriptions and voice to their lived experiences as minority community college CEOs.

Characteristics by Ethnicity

African American (A2)

About the African American (A2) Group

The African American CEOs of color represent a resilient and brilliant group who have overcome a brutally harsh and long history of institutionalized slavery and social, political, and economic disenfranchisement, as well as racist and segregationist policies whose effects are still being felt, inflicted, and realized today. This amazing group of CEOs represents persons who are trailblazers as the first African American male or female chancellors or presidents in the 100^+-year history of the colleges they serve, who began their community college presidency at the age of 36 and reflect the newest generation of Leadership as Gen X and Gen X II/Millennials I. They are first-generation and first-time in any college (FTIAC) graduates, hail from both traditional and non-traditional pathways, and possess terminal degrees in various fields of specialty, including doctorates in finance and economics, and a Doctor of Medicine.

Twenty participants represent the African American ethnicity group comprising three chancellors and seventeen presidents, including thirteen in their first and/or only presidency and seven CEOs having served in the capacity two or more times previously. Their breadth of leadership spans eleven states in the U.S., comprising state college and university systems, multi-campus districts, and colleges, some with an urban/suburban population while others are suburban and rural. The breadth of service of participants serving in their current role indicates a seasoned perspective from the balcony of the phenomenological inquiry under investigation.

African American Participant Characteristics

The African American group is the largest of the three ethnicity groups, with a gender representation of eleven men and nine women. The greatest proportion of CEOs, at 35%, have

been serving between 10-15 years. Fifteen percent of participants have served 0-3 years, 15% for 3.5-5 years, 20% for 5-7 years, 10% for 7-10 years, and .05% 15+ years in their current role. Sixty-five percent of participants are in their first and/or only presidency, with 35% having served previously as a campus/college president twice or more. Twenty percent of participants are over the age of 65, 35% are aged 55-64, 35% aged 45-54, and 10% aged 35-44. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2020), U.S. states are divided into four regions comprising the Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. African American CEO participants for this study govern in all four regions of the U.S., encompassing eleven states, with 15% in the Northeast, 35% in the Midwest, 20% in the South (Atlantic and Central West), and 30% in the Pacific West. Table A-2 provides an overview of the A2 participant characteristics related to gender, ethnic identification, and age, years serving as CEO, and region where they are governing.

Table A-5-2. African American (A2) Participant Characteristics

Gender		Ethnic Identification		Region	
Male	11	African American	20	Midwest	7
Female	9			Northeast	3
				South	8
				West	2

Note: African American (A2) Participant Characteristics displayed by gender, number of years as CEO, generational leadership development style, age, and region composition.

The African American CEOs of color represent twelve states, three chancellors, seventeen college presidents, and four generations of community college leadership development styles, including the Millennial Generation. Thirty-five percent of participants represent the third

and fourth styles of community college leadership, reflected as Baby Boomers II and Gen X. Twenty percent have a third generation collaborator style, reflected as Silents/Baby Boomers I, and 10% as Gen X II/Millennials I reflect a fifth generation style of leadership that is equity centered. One chancellor is represented in each of the first through third generations. Twenty percent of the Baby Boomers II era have served in the role of president two or more times. One-hundred percent of the fourth generation Gen X II/Millennials and 75% of the first generation Silents/Baby Boomers I are in their first and only presidency. Eighty percent of all African American participants have over 10 years of serving as CEO. Figure A-2 shows African American participants by their generation of community college development leadership style.

Figure A-2. *African American Generation of Community College Development Leadership Style*
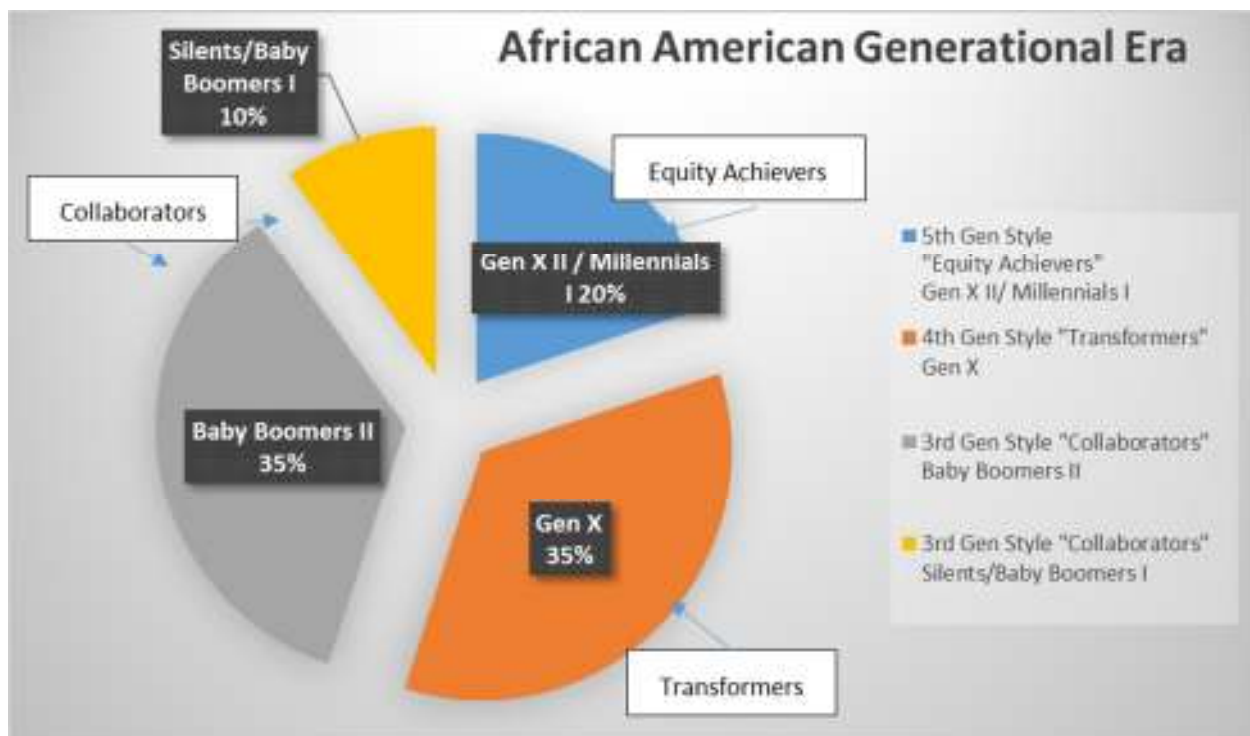
African American (A2) Synopsis Profiles

A2 CEO 1 is a chancellor and the first African-American leader in the 105-year history of the community college district and the only African-American chancellor (by ethnicity and gender) in that community college system in the Midwest. A seasoned leader with experience in other large community college systems, this chancellor hails from the traditional academic pathway as a tenured associate professor in English, is a graduate of a historically black college, serves on numerous state and national boards, and is the recipient of numerous awards for leadership, service, and commitment to diversity in higher education presented by the Congressional Black Caucus and Pacific West state academic senate. This CEO's generation of community college leadership style is reflected as Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformers.

A2 CEO 2 serves as the chancellor of one of the nation's largest multi-college community college systems in the Southwest and is a veteran CEO, amassing over three decades of experience serving in a variety of district leadership positions in higher education as chief financial officer and vice-chancellor while doubling the student enrollment during this tenure. Holding a terminal degree in higher education finance, the CEO was bestowed multiple honorary doctorate degrees from three universities, has an extensive roster of service, including as a trustee for the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), as well as advisory board service for the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) and Community College Research Center at Teachers College (CCRC), to name a few. This chancellor's generation of community college leadership style is classified as a Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 3 is an accomplished chancellor serving in senior CEO capacities in diverse state systems in both the Southwest and Northeast, with 30+ years of academic service in four-year colleges and universities and community college systems. With a terminal degree in public policy, degrees in the information sciences and economics, and extensive leadership experience from the traditional academic pathway, including as provost and professor of education, this chancellor is a staunch advocate for increasing the representation of minorities and women in the STEM fields. This CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborators and incurred pressures to be more accountable while serving as a minority male.

A2 CEO 4, known as a "student-centered president," is the seventh President of the fifth-largest community college in a central Southwest system and credits undergraduate professors for establishing him, as well two other African-American college classmates who also served as community college presidents, on the 30+ year career pathway of serving community college students. This veteran seasoned leader's prior role as a campus president in the Midwest region included progressively senior leadership roles in community colleges in Michigan. A first-time in any college student (FTIAC) with degrees in guidance and counseling who earned a doctorate in higher education and community colleges, this past chairman of the board of directors of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is known as a diversity expert identifying as a Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 5 is a first-time college president of a college in the suburbs of a large state university system in the Northeast, an Aspen Institute Presidential Fellow, and a Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer, holding a Juris doctorate in labor and employment law, with prior experience as faculty member and in student affairs administration. This president serves

on various state and national boards and commissions, including the AACC's Jobs for the Future's Policy Leadership Trust and the advisory board for the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) and has work published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Community College Times* and *Black Enterprise Magazine*.

A2 CEO 6 is a veteran two-time college president with a diverse professional background in higher education as a senior leader in the Eastern, Northwest, and Northeast Central regions with degrees in natural science from a historically black college and university (HBCU), and terminal degree and postdoctoral studies in the medical sciences. This president's extensive formal leadership development includes the prestigious Harvard Seminar for New Presidents and The Wharton Leadership Program for Higher Education, AACC Future Leaders Institute (LDI), League of Innovation (LOI) Executive Leadership Institute (ELI), and Thomas E. Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership. This CEO identifies as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator and is known as a proven, exemplary, and results-oriented leader who is a powerful advocate for students and the community.

A2 CEO 7 is a seasoned leader identified as a Baby Boomer II with a 36-year career in community colleges in the Northeastern, Southeast, and Pacific Northwest regions of the U.S., with prior roles as chief student affairs officer, director of college extension, and two times as a college president. With formal secondary education in parochial schools, degrees in psychology and higher education, and a terminal degree in education leadership, this college president is recognized for a proven ability to close student achievement gaps as well as work in equity. With active community service including hospital and zoo foundation advisory boards as well as the AACC Commission on College Readiness, Marketing and Public Relations, this CEO identifies as a 3rd Generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 8 is a first-time community college president who has a wide range of experience at four-year universities, following a non-traditional pathway of higher education administration formally as a university vice president for minority affairs, a university vice provost for diversity, and previous roles in academic and student services at institutions in the Pacific West and Southwest. Holding a terminal degree in educational leadership, this community college president was a perfect fit for the role and community given their extensive community advocacy work on increasing diversity and inclusion. Widely acknowledged with leadership awards from the public and private sector, this CEO serves on several national, state, and local boards that advance equity and inclusion in education, including the Art Museum's Education and Community Engagement board, and co-chairs the Mayor's Education Advisory Group and is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator.

A2 CEO 9 is a Gen X -II / Millennial I, 5th Generation Equity Achiever who is a first-time community college president with bachelor's and master's degrees from private research and liberal arts universities in the Midwest and a terminal degree from a public university in the South. An Aspen New Presidents Fellow, this president has held progressively senior leadership roles in academic and student services from institutions in the South Central, Southern and Northeastern regions. A first-generation college student who began their career in community colleges, this dynamic leader is a published scholar and a regional and national presenter who is inspired by helping all students achieve their academic and career goals.

A2 CEO 10 is the first president of color appointed and the fourth person installed as the leader of an institution in the largest state college and university system in the Midwest with an ethnically diverse student body where 46% of students are of color. A first-time community college president and a first-generation college graduate, this leader identifies as a Gen X -II /

Millennial I, 5th Generation Equity Achiever. This president has prior progressive experience in senior-level leadership roles including workforce development and continuing education at institutions in both the Central Northeast and Southeast, upbringing in one of the least diverse states of the originating thirteen colonies, and a terminal degree in psychology, which affords this CEO a culturally unique perspective in leading a diverse student body. Awarded College President of the Year by the state's college student association, this CEO's extensive service and formal leadership development includes chairing and membership on numerous American Association of Community College (AACC) commissions, being a governor's appointee on the Mayor's Task Force on Education, a member of the LGBTQ Presidents and Chancellors in Higher Education, and a member of the AACC Future Leaders Institute (FLI), Thomas E. Lakin President's Roundtable and the Higher Learning Commission Presidents' Program.

A2 CEO 11 is a Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer, a first-time community college president overseeing two campuses, and a first-generation college graduate with a terminal degree in higher education administration from a distinguished university in the Midwest. With more than 20 years of progressive experience in higher education in a range of positions, including student services and director of counseling at institutions in the South Central and Midwest regions of the U.S., this president has been nationally recognized with awards for work with underrepresented and underprivileged students, is a recipient of the Phi Theta Kappa Paragon Award for New Presidents, a Tribute to Success awardee for work in helping persons in poverty become self-sufficient, and serves on numerous boards, including the AACC affiliate Presidents' Round Table of the National Council on Black American Affairs and the American Association for Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC).

A2 CEO 12 is a first-time community college president who has served for more than a decade in the role and has extensive and broad experience in the private sector, has been a full-tenured faculty member at Carnegie research two universities, and held a senior leadership position in academic affairs at a community college. A seasoned educator, this president has published three books and been a contributing author to over 30 academic peer-reviewed journal articles on finance, policy, and technology, and holds a terminal degree in Law, Policy, and Society from one of the leading Research 1 institutions in the Northeast. This Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator is a life member of the NAACP, serves on the regional board of a major healthcare system, was selected as Newsmaker of the Year in Education and as an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow, and credits the experience and a paired mentor of the experience, a Latino/Hispanic chancellor of a large systems district, with the decision to pursue a career pathway in community colleges.

A2 CEO 13 is a trailblazer not only as a first-time community college president in the largest state college and university system in the Midwest, but also as a nationally recognized and sought out thought leader who uniquely defies stereotypes as a minority leader by ethnicity and gender, in an underrepresented field of manufacturing, engineering, technical trades, and workforce education. This CEO's work and extensive senior leadership experience serving in multiple technical college systems in the Southeast and Midwest have broken many barriers, including as a Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) community college graduate in industrial drafting, science and technical teacher education and earning a terminal degree in educational leadership. This preside is the first full-time faculty member in the technical education field at the community college by ethnicity and gender as well as work experience at one of the leading automotive sectors. The Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator presides at one of only 227 colleges

recognized with Achieve the Dream (ATD) status. This CEO's service includes membership on boards of directors for the American Association of Community College (AACC) and the National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers, and on former President Obama's Advanced Manufacturing Partnership Steering Committee (2.0).

A2 CEO 14 is the first African American appointed and the tenth college president in the 100+ years of the institution, and is a veteran with over 25 years of experience in higher education at both four-year universities and the community college, including senior-level experience in academic affairs and workforce and development. This Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer was educated at Christian colleges and universities, with a terminal degree from a research one public university in the Central Southwest. This seasoned CEO's professional development includes being an Aspen Institute Fellow for Future Community College Presidents, recognition as Newsmaker of the Year, and service on the board of trustees for the American Council on Education (ACE) Higher Learning Commission, as well as a governor's appointment to the executive committee of the state's economic development corporation.

A2 CEO 15 is the first African American president, by gender, of a premier community college in the Northeast, with prior experience as a college president in the Pacific West, who credits other trailblazing women of color CEOs for opening the door. The terminally degreed former faculty member is a highly decorated CEO, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York's Academic Leadership Award, which includes $500,000 support for the leader's academic initiatives, the American Association of Community College's (AACC) Emerging Leadership Award, the YWCA Women of Achievement Award and YWCA Women of Achievement Award. A Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer, her numerous professional service

roles include the AACC 21ˢᵗ Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, the

College Board's Community College Advisory Panel (CCAP), and formal professional

development in the AACC Future Leaders Institute (FLI), the American Association for Women

in Community Colleges (AAWCC) National Institute for Leadership Development (LEADERS),

and the Thomas E. Lakin Institute for Mentored Leadership, an affiliate of the AACC's National

Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA).

A2 CEO 16 is in their second presidency at a community college, having served for more

than a decade at institutions primarily in the Pacific West, with formalized secondary education

in parochial schools that led to degrees in phenomenological psychology and a terminal degree in

organizational change management. This CEO's extensive professional and academic

experience includes progressive levels of senior-level administration, including being vice

president of instruction and student services, dean of health sciences, and executive director for

career development at a major university also in the Pacific West. A Baby Boomer II, 3ʳᵈ

Generation Collaborator and lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement

of Colored People (NAACP), this president's formal leadership development includes the

League of Innovation (LOI) Executive Leadership Institute (ELI), the Thomas E. Lakin Institute

for Mentored Leadership, and service on numerous association boards and commissions,

including the advisory board for the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and

the Executive Committee of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

A2 CEO 17 has served as campus president at two colleges in the Midwest before

assuming the current role at a community college in the South, with more than two decades in

higher education administration at both a large research university in the Midwest and at

community colleges at progressive levels of senior leadership, including being associate vice

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chancellor for student affairs and director for alumni relations and later for diversity and equity. A first-generation college graduate, this CEO's educational background includes an undergraduate degree in psychology, a specialist's degree in higher education administration, and a terminal degree in urban leadership policy and education administration. A Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer, this president has received numerous distinctions, including the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Award of Distinction, PTK's Distinguished College President Award for the state region, and an ACE award from the Chamber of Commerce, and has participated in formal leadership training through the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Leadership Institute, the National Association of Blacks in Higher Education Leadership Institute and the Urban League.

A2 CEO 18 is a first-time president of a community college in the Midwest and the institution's first president by ethnicity and gender. This president's experiences growing up in the segregated south, attending an all-black elementary school, and later busing to integrate an all-white public school, forged a lifetime passion that appropriately mirrors the students currently served. A seasoned leader with more than 25 years in a community college environment, holding degrees in communication, guidance, and counseling and a doctorate in child development, this CEOs diverse educational background and journey graduating from universities in both the Northeast and South serve as an inspiration that barriers can be demolished and glass ceilings can be broken. Service is very important to this Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator, who has served extensively on national boards for the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), American Association of Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC), and a university foundation board, as well as locally for the regional hospital, chamber of commerce,

community development board, and as a governor's appointee to chair the state's water authority.

A2 CEO 19 is a first-time community college president, with a Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer style of leadership and 25+ years of combined experience in research, teaching, and executive leadership in higher education, who holds a terminal degree from a renowned public research system in the Northeast. This CEO's professional trajectory of experience is in student affairs, holding progressive levels of senior administrative positions, including faculty member, department chair, executive dean, vice president, and campus CEO. An American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow whose professional development and service commitment is equally diverse, including service on the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) College Readiness Commission and over 100 citations of published articles on diversity issues within higher education, institutional transformation, and student success, as well as book chapters and publications in national journals.

A2 CEO 20 is a veteran first-time community college president, the institution's first President by ethnicity and gender with the longest tenure in the large multi-college district in the South Central region, serving nearly a decade and a half in that capacity and bringing to the role an extensive background from the traditional pathway in both the four-year university and the community college, where they've held every position as faculty member, dean, chair, provost and ultimately president. A Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator, this CEO was honored with the Administrator of the Year Award from Minority Acces and the prestigious Phi Theta Kappa Lifetime Achievement Award for College Presidents. This president's degrees include a bachelor's in history, a master's in guidance and counseling, and a doctorate in lifelong education from a Big Ten university in the Midwest.

Asian Pacific Islander (API)

About the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Group

The Asian Pacific Islander (API) ethnic group describes a rich group of CEO participants of color who represent "persons with ancestry from countries on the Asian continent and islands in the Pacific Rim who live in and call the United States their home" (Hune & Takeuchi, 2008, p.5). The U.S. Census refers to this ethnic group as persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam (U.S. Census, 2018). This group includes five CEOs. The designation of API for this study is not to be confused with the monolithic distinction of identification used by the U.S. Department of Census but is rather a label to describe the distinct demographic categories of participants who lent their voices to this study.

These CEOs represent an amazing group of pioneering leaders, including the first Asian Pacific Islander male and female community college chancellors and first-time college presidents. They comprise rich cultural wealth as first-generation immigrants from China, Hong Kong, and the Philippines, identify as biracial as Asian Pacific Indian and African American, and are first-time in any college students (FTIACS). The Asian Pacific Islander ethnicity group of community college CEOs represents four states, two chancellors, and three generations of community college leadership development styles.

Asian Pacific Islander Participant Characteristics

In regard to years of service and experience, 80% of these participants are in their first presidency. In terms of ethnic identification, 40% identify as Filipino, 40% as Chinese, and 20% as biracial, including Asian Pacific Indian and Black. None governs outside of the Pacific and

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Southern regions. Table A-3 provides an overview of API participant characteristics related to gender, ethnic identification, and age, years serving as CEO, and region where they govern.

Table A-5-3. Asian Pacific Islander (API) Participant Characteristics

Gender		Ethnic Identification		Region	
Male	3	Chinese	2	South	2
Female	2	Filipino	2	Pacific & Southwest	2
		Asian Indian, Black	1	Pacific Northwest	1

Asian Pacific Islander Generations of Community College Leadership Development Styles

The Asian Pacific Islander group of minority community college CEOs includes two chancellors and three presidents. The gender composition of the CEOs is three males and two females. Forty percent have 10-15 years of experience, and the remaining 60% indicate 3.5-5 years of experience. Their leadership spans four states and comprises three generations of community college leadership development styles, including 60% of participants who are second Generation Baby Boomer II, 20% who are third Generation Gen X, and 20% who are fourth Generation Gen X –II/Millennials I who lead with an equity-centered agenda. All of the Asian Pacific Islander CEOs serve in the Western regions of the U.S. Figure 5-3 provides a snapshot of the Asian Pacific Islander CEOs' generational era of community college leadership development and style.

Figure 5-3. *Asian Pacific Islander Generation of Community College Development Leadership Style*
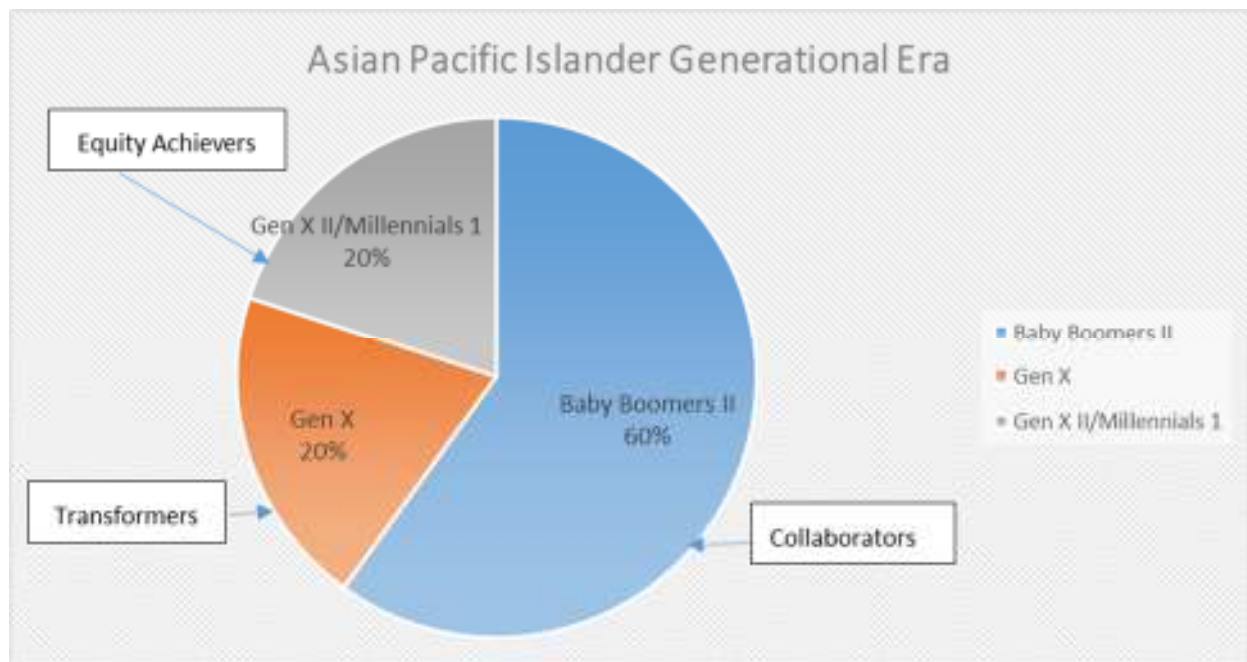
Note: The Asian Pacific Islander ethnicity group represents three generations of community college leadership development, including the least studied fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials with an Equity Achievers style of leadership.

Asian Pacific Islander (API) Synopsis Profiles

API CEO 1 is the chancellor of a diverse community college in a university and college system in the Pacific Northwest, with over three decades of experience in higher education as well as the finance and accounting sectors at several community colleges on the Pacific West Coast. A second-generation immigrant whose parents hail from the suburbs in the Philippines, this CEO is a passionate advocate of social justice for all students and believes education is the cure that will eradicate poverty noting, "If poverty is an island, I want to be captain of the boat sailing over to help." This Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer has a terminal degree in community college leadership, is a licensed CPA in the U.S. and Southeast Asia, and is a

published researcher. This CEO serves in numerous capacities, including on the National Asian Pacific Islander Council and as an American Association of Community College (AACC) affiliate with professional leadership development holding a prestigious Omidyar Fellowship, which was established by an eBay founder and entrepreneur.

API CEO 2 is the chancellor of a multi-college, urban/suburban district, with prior experience as a community college president, has over 25 years of experience in higher education including at four-year universities, and is multi-lingual. A first-generation Asian American immigrant from China who holds a Ph.D. in higher education, this CEO has held senior levels of administrative leadership at institutions in the Northeast, West, and South. Various roles on association boards include the AACC executive committee, chamber of commerce, United Way, and the recipient of numerous awards including Educator of the Year, the International Excellence in Leadership Award, and the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. This CEO's Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborative leadership style was honed through formal executive training as a Kellogg Foundation Leadership Fellow as well as at the League of Innovation's Executive Leadership Institute (ELI).

API CEO 3 serves as the third minority president in the 44-year history of a diverse community college in the Southwest and is a first time president with extensive experience in higher education and the traditional academic pathway, whose past roles include oversight of academic and student success and being a dean, program chair and English faculty member in community colleges as well as the private sector work in the Army Community Services. A first-generation immigrant and first-time in any college student (FTIACS) who identifies as biracial (Asian Pacific Islander and African American), this president is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator with a doctorate in higher education administration. With a profound

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commitment to service, this president has served on numerous councils and affiliates of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), including as chair of the National Asian Pacific Islander Council and Global Education Commission. An Aspen Presidential Fellow, chosen as Teacher of the Year by the Texas Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TexTESOL), this president also gained professional development experience through the AACC Future Leaders Institute (FLI) and League of Innovations Executive Leadership Institute (ELI).

API CEO 4 is a first-time college president of a comprehensive community college in the Pacific Southwest serving a diverse Asian-Pacific Islander and Latino student population reflecting the local community. A first-generation immigrant from Hong Kong who spoke no English when first arriving in the U.S., this CEO overcame the language barrier to become highly credentialed and educated in culturally diverse institutions throughout the U.S. This president holds a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering and a master's in astronautics from a prestigious private land-grant research university in New England, a master's in business from a prestigious private Christian research university, and a terminal degree in educational leadership. A Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator who values making higher education accessible, this CEO is an Asian Heritage Award for Educational Leadership recipient and provides service on the AACC's National Asian Pacific Islander Council, the Future of the Community College, and the Center for Innovation in STEM.

API CEO 5 is a first-time college president serving in one of the largest multi-campus districts in the South, with extensive leadership experience in rural, urban, suburban, and large systems colleges spanning three states from the West to the Midwest. This president's Millennial generation community college leadership style is akin to the student-focused learning-centered paradigm, as demonstrated by a strong background in senior level positions in student affairs,

including oversight of student success and a role as director of student programs. A first-generation immigrant born in the Philippines and educated in the South, this Gen X, 4th Generation Millennial Transformer CEO holds a doctorate from the oldest university community college leadership program and has completed the Executive Leadership Education for Asian Pacific (LEAP) formal leadership program. This passionate leader serves on the AACC's National Asian Pacific Islander Council (NAPIC) and the AACC's Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Commission, and has been a League of Innovation (LOI) excellence awardee.

Latino/Hispanic (LatH)

About the Latino/Hispanic (LatH) Group

The Latino/Hispanic (LatH) ethnic group describes a rich grouping of CEO participants of color using a pan-ethnic definition that attempts to describe participants who self-identified in this category as "persons of Cuban, Dominican Republic, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and other Spanish speaking cultures including Salvadoran, Dominican, Columbian, Ecuador, and Guatemalan who may share a common language, culture, heritage distinct from their parent's country of origin" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). This definition is an attempt to honor the ethnic identity of Latino/Hispanic (LatH) participants and give a voice that honors the values, beliefs, and cultural capital of their ancestral customs.

The Latino/Hispanic (LatH) group of community college CEOs of color includes six chancellors and three presidents. This amazing group of trailblazing CEOs included one leader whose first and only role is as chancellor, the first and only Latino/Hispanic male and female serving as chancellor and president, founding CEOs of learning-centered campuses, and representatives of the youngest Gen X/Millennials I Generation of community college leadership development style. These CEOs encompass a diverse range of cultural wealth, including first-generation immigrants, bicultural and bilingual English language learners, and first-generation college graduates. One is a Fulbright Scholar and another opened doors as one of the first community college CEOs to serve as chair for the American Council on Education (ACE). Their leadership spans four states and comprises three generations of community college leadership development. The gender composition of these CEOs includes eight males and one female, with three CEOs having more than 15 years of experience. Each of the participants is currently serving as a leader, with three identifying as emeritus.

Latino /Hispanic Participant Characteristics

The Latino/Hispanic group includes a rich group of CEOs with 89% of participants identifying as chancellors, 11% as presidents. The majority of participants in this group are male. These CEOs are an ethnically diverse group identifying as Hispanic/Latino, Latino and White, Mexican American and bicultural from Mexico and the U.S. All the Latino/Hispanic participants serve in the Western and Southern regions of the U.S.

Participant ages align with their generational era of community college development. Forty-five percent are aged 55-64, 33% ages 65+, and 22% are between the ages of 45-54. The majority of participants from the Latino/Hispanic group have a Baby Boomer generation of leadership development style with a mission focused on the comprehensive community college's access to higher education for all. Table A-4 provides an overview of the Latino/Hispanic participant characteristics related to gender, ethnic identification, and age, years serving as CEO, and state where they govern.

Table A-5-4. Latino/Hispanic (LatH) Participant Characteristics

Gender		Ethnic Identification		Region	
Male	8	Hispanic / Latino	6	Pacific West	3
Female	1	Latino & White	1	South Atlantic	1
		Mexican American	1	West Mountain	1
		Bi-cultural (Mexico/U.S.)	1	West South Central	4

The Latino/Hispanic CEOs hail from three generations of community college leadership development style. Thirty-three percent of participants represent the first Generation Silents/Baby Boomers I -Collaborators, 45% are second Generation Baby Boomers II–Collaborators, and the remaining 22% are third Generation Gen X –Transformers. In regard to

the generational style of leadership, 78% are 3rd Generation Collaborators and 22% are 4th Generation Transformers. The Latino/Hispanic group comprises diverse pathways and experiences ascending to the presidency. Sixty-seven percent of participants are in the role of CEO for the first and only time or have never been a college president. Thirty-three percent have held two or more positions as college president before assuming the role of Chancellor. Figure A-4 provides a snapshot of the Latino/Hispanic CEOs' generation of community college development leadership style.

Figure A-4. *Latino/Hispanic Generation of Community College Development Leadership Style*
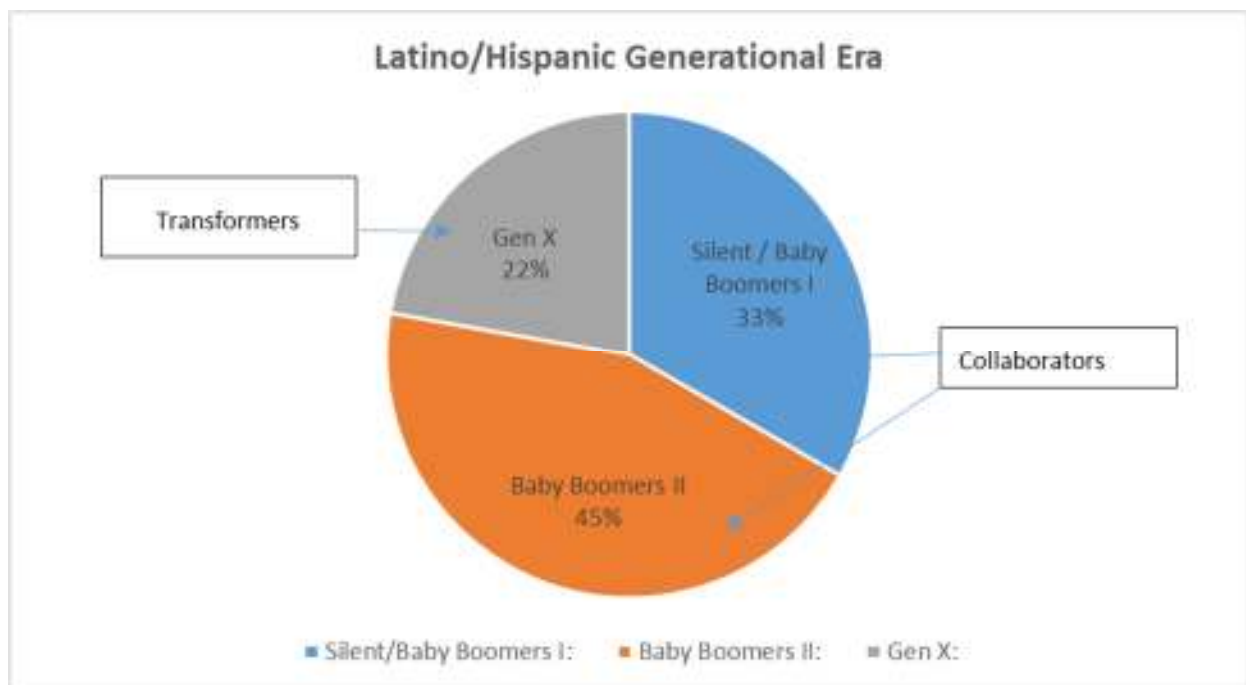
Note: The Latino/Hispanic ethnicity group represents three generations of community college development leadership style, including third Generation Gen X Transformers.

Latino/Hispanic (LatH) Synopsis Profiles

LatH CEO 1 is Chancellor Emeritus of one of the largest multi-college, urban/suburban districts in the Pacific West Coast and has significant experience as chancellor that encompasses

close to a decade and a half of leadership. This chancellor self-identifies as Mexican American. With degrees in education and psychology, this dynamic leader has held numerous progressive levels of senior leadership roles in the traditional pathway in higher education at the university and community colleges as director, dean, and provost, in student services, and academic affairs, and as campus president. The second community college CEO to serve as a chair for the American Council on Education (ACE) in that organization's history, this leader has held numerous affiliations of service as a chair, including the 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and the College Board's National Commission on Community Colleges. Nominated by *Change Magazine* as one of the 21 most influential leaders in higher education, this CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents the Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator.

LatH CEO 2 is a first-generation community college graduate with a terminal degree in economics. This chancellor is one of the most decorated and tenured CEOs in office, an Aspen Ascend Fellow and recipient of the nation's highest civilian honor awarded by Former President Barak Obama. The CEO's breadth and distinction of service has been recognized at every level of higher education (AAC&U, ACE, ACCT, AACC, and the College Board); civic service (Federal Reserve Board of Atlanta, NAACP); and the private sector (The Carnegie Foundation, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Washington Center) as well as by national media (CNN, *Time Magazine, Wall Street Journal*). A refugee by choice, this CEO's generation of community college leadership style is the Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator, one who values access to higher education as preeminent and whose legacy is a powerful testament to the mission of the open door of community colleges for all students.

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LatH CEO 3 is a chancellor and nationally recognized leader whose non-traditional pathway from the private sector to leading the fourth largest community college district in the state brings a wealth of cultural capital as a native of Mexico. A second-generation college graduate with degrees in the hard sciences of chemical engineering and systems engineering who self-identifies as Hispanic, this accomplished business and civic leader has led and serves on numerous boards, including as a governor-appointed regent for a statewide college system. This CEO's breadth and depth of experience dually in the business sector and secondary and post-secondary education are indelible factors in the success of the system this chancellor leads. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style represents the Silent/Baby Boomer I, 3rd Generation Collaborator; this chancellor is very adept at managing scarce resources and leveraging industry relations to successfully lead an institution in the Southern region.

LatH CEO 4 is a chancellor who has the distinction of being both the first CEO by ethnicity and the first CEO by gender for one of the largest community college systems in the Southwestern region of the U.S. With extensive experience as a prodigy of the district's grow-your-own leadership succession development and having served for over a decade in the executive cabinet under the system's first minority CEO, this leader built a sound reputation for collaborating successfully with the external community and college administration. A bicultural and bilingual native of the Dominican Republic and educated at a private university, this Fulbright Scholar holds a master's degree with a Ph.D. in educational technology. This chancellor's generation of community college leadership style is classified as a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator and is focused on access to higher education.

LatH CEO 5 is a veteran educator with more than 30 years in higher education, including two tenures as president in large districts, before the current position of chancellor of

one of the nation's largest urban community college districts in the Pacific West. A noted

scholar, education activist, and former university lecturer, this Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation

Collaborator has dedicated their career to championing diversity, equity, inclusion, and high-

quality public education for underserved communities as influenced by the civil rights and social

activist events of the community college leadership era. A first-generation, bilingual English-

language learner with a Ph.D. in education who was proudly reared by immigrant parents, this

CEO's extensive service for numerous state and national associations includes being a

governor's appointee to state commissions, chair of the National Science Foundation, and service

to the National Endowment for Financial Education, to name a few.

LatH CEO 6 is the chancellor of a large multicultural community college district with a

broad portfolio of experience in community colleges spanning 30+ years in progressive levels of

senior leadership, including ten years as a college president whose leadership is representative of

the diverse student population and in the region. A bilingual, first-generation immigrant native

of El Salvador with education in English and urban planning, this CEO has broad community

college leadership experience and proven track record of student success and budget

management. This CEO is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborator, and is very adept at

managing challenging budget shortfalls and successfully navigating labor relations. This

chancellor's experience and commitment to service include being the president of the state's

CEO board as well as having a commitment to developing the next generation of leaders by

preparing, developing, and supporting leaders in the pipeline in leadership programs.

LatH CEO 7 is a Gen X, fourth Generation Millennial Transformer president with a

diverse portfolio. This leader is an instructional technology scholar, a visionary, and dynamic

leader with broad experience at undergraduate, graduate, public and private higher education

institutions. A bicultural and bilingual leader, rich in cultural capital garnered from being acculturated in both Latin America and the U.S. as well as educated in both countries, this president is a founding CEO of a learning-centered campus dedicated to non-traditional STEM learners. A benefactor of formal leadership preparation as a Millennium Leadership Fellow of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities as well as a Frye Leadership Institute Fellow, this president has leadership experience that encompasses both four-year and community colleges and is a twenty-five-year veteran faculty member in STEM with formal degrees in the sciences from a university in Latin America and a doctorate in technology from the U.S. This president is dedicated to service on various local, regional and national governing boards and is a peer reviewer and author for academic journals in the U.S., Latin America, and European Union.

LatH CEO 8 is also a Gen X, fourth Generation Millennial Transformer leader with an impressive track record of both leadership development and excellence derived from over twenty-five years of progressive leadership in higher education. A first-generation college student, this president's tenure has brought their institution numerous awards, including the AACC Award of Excellence for student success, a regional equity award, and recognition as one of ten finalists for the prestigious Aspen Prize for community college excellence. An Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow and recipient of an Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) award honoring chief executive officers who demonstrate a commitment to excellence in advancing the community college movement, this president's commitment to service on numerous local and state boards is laudable.

LatH CEO 9 is a bilingual/bicultural community college president with twenty years' experience on the non-traditional side of the house in international trade and workforce

development. This president's unique trajectory in the public and private sectors of international trade, experience as faculty member in business, and formal doctoral preparation from one of the oldest community college leadership programs has positioned this leader well for this first presidency. The CEO's generation of community college leadership style is a Baby Boomer II, 3rd Generation Collaborators.

Characteristics by Gender and All Composite Group

Pseudonyms for Participant Groups - The Miracles, Supremes & Commodores

Thirty-four CEOs of color participated in the study, representing diverse ethnic backgrounds including African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latino/Hispanic. The researcher developed pseudonyms for participants for both the composite and gender groups, based on popular singing groups of Motown Records in Detroit, Michigan, home of the researcher. The name "The Miracles," representing the first successful male and female Motown recording group, refers to the group of thirty-four CEOs of color who participated in the study.

The name "The Supremes*,*" named for the quintessential all-female singing group at Motown, represents the twelve quintessential women CEOs of color who participated in the research study. The name "The Commodores" references a famous all-male band at Motown whose membership comprised two groups of college schoolmates from the historic Tuskegee University that merged to form the top-selling band. "The Commodores" is the pseudonym chosen to represent the combined twenty-two male CEO participants of the study.

# About the Supremes - All Women CEOs of Color

The women represent a distinguished group of women that includes three chancellors and nine college presidents. The women have ethnic identifications of African American, Filipino, and biracial, identifying as African American/Black and Asian Indian/Black. The currently serving and/or emeritus CEOs' leadership spans eight states representing three generations of community college leadership development styles.

Characteristics of the Women

The dominant number of years of experience is between 3.5-five years with the highest number of years as CEO between 10 and 15 years. Eight of the CEOs are in their first tenure in the role, with three having served previously as president twice or more; another is in her first presidency. Fifty-seven percent of the women are classified as 3rd Generation Collaborators and 43% as a 4th Generation Transformers. Figure A-5 displays the women by their generational era of community college development.

Figure A-5. *The Women's Generation of Community College Development*
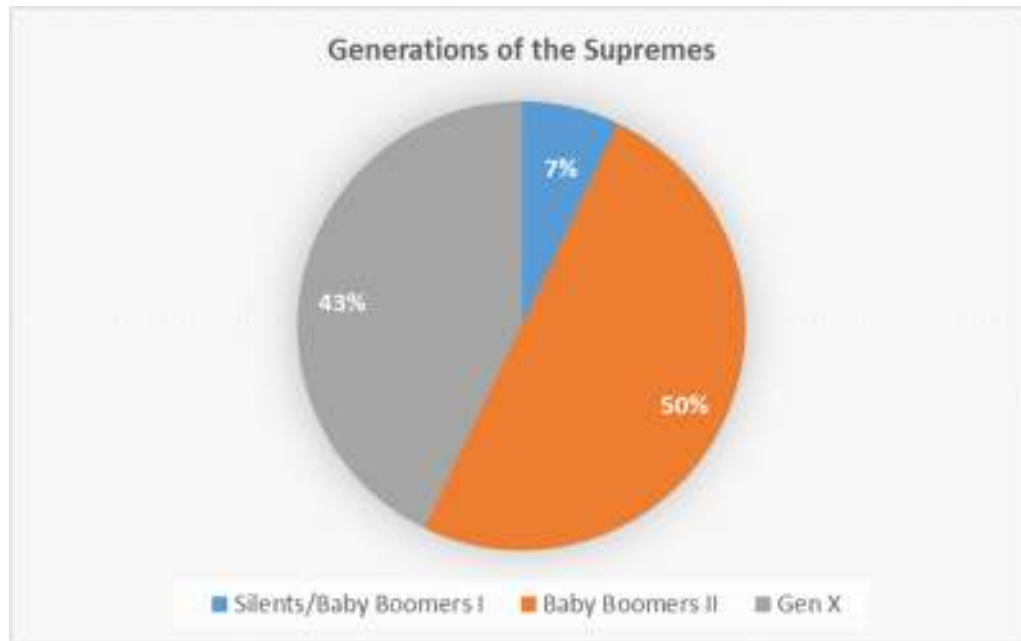
Note: The women's gender group represents three generations, with significant representation of second Generation Baby Boomers II and third Generation Gen X.

This group of extraordinary women comprises a multiplicity of firsts, including the first African American by ethnicity and gender as both chancellor and college president and the first African American female college president from a non-traditionally white male-dominated field. They encompass first-generation immigrants, received their first presidency at 36 years of age, and are first-generation college graduates. As unique and powerful as these women are, they recognize, as one Latino/Hispanic CEO observed, that "It's still a men's world."

About the Commodores - All Male CEOs of Color

The Commodores represent a distinguished group of men that includes seven chancellors and fifteen College Presidents. The men have ethnic identifications of African American, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic/Latino, Latino & Mexico, Mexican American and biracial, identifying as bicultural from Mexico and the U.S. The currently serving and/or emeritus CEOs' leadership spans nine states representing each of the four generations of community college leadership development styles.

Characteristics of the Men

The dominant number of years of service for the men is between 10-15 years. Of the seven chancellors, three have only served in this capacity, two served previously as presidents three times prior, and two served in the role of the president before the current position of chancellor. Of the fifteen presidents, six are in their first presidency, with the remaining four presidents having served twice or more. Thirty-two percent of the men have 10-15 years' experience as CEO, and 27% have 15 or more years of experience, with both classified as 3rd Generation Collaborators. Twenty-seven percent are 4th Generation Transformers with 7-10 years of experience and 14% are classified as 5th Generation Equity Achievers with 5-7 years' experience as CEO. Figure A-6 displays the Men by their generational era of leadership development.

Figure A-6. *The Men's Generation of Community College Development*
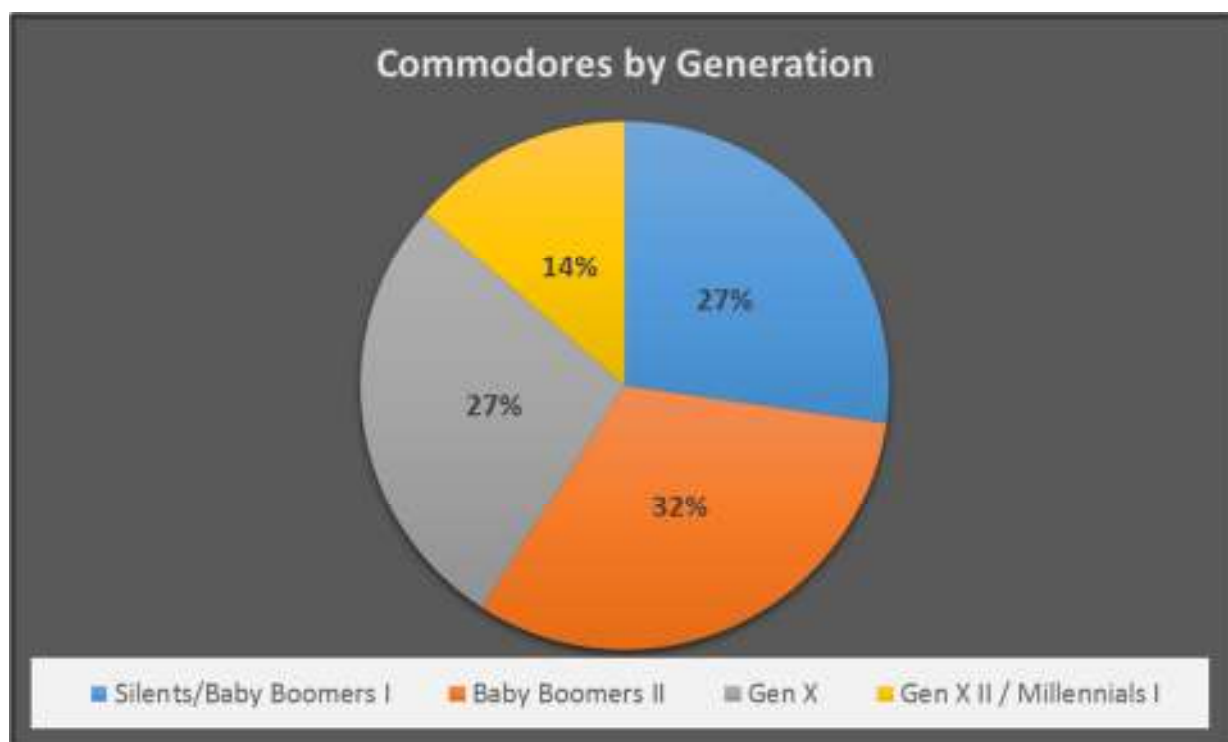
Note: The men's group represents all four generations of community college leadership development style, including the least studied fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials I.

This group of extraordinary male CEOs of color comprises leaders whose first and only role is as chancellor, who are the first as chancellors and presidents of color by ethnicity and gender, and are leaders who represent the youngest fourth Generation Gen X II/Millennials I. They possess an incomparable breadth and depth of cultural wealth as bicultural and bilingual English language learners and include first-generation immigrants and first-time in any college (FITIAC) graduates. They are highly credentialed, come from both traditional and non-traditional pathways, and possess terminal degrees in fields that include but are not limited to aerospace and chemical engineering, finance, and the medical sciences.

This exceptional group of powerful men is socially action-oriented, laser-focused on achieving student success and equity for all students, and has an action agenda for the next generation of community college leadership that some institutions may not be receptive to embracing. One leader stated, "Most applicants of color, have an agenda related to racial equity, social justice, educational opportunity, and those sorts of things. And those are constructs that some institutions aren't ready for CharMaine" (LatH Male Second Generation Baby Boomers II Chancellor). Student success and equity for all students was identified as a theme by the men.

Participant Characteristics by Ethnicity Summary

This section presented an overview of participants in the study organized by ethnicity and gender groups as 1) African American, 2) Asian Pacific Islander, 3) Latino/Hispanic, 4) The Supremes' as an all-women group and, 5) The Commodores as an all-male group.

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Appendix B - Interview Protocols

Demographic Information

Questions, during the interview to determine demographic information of participants include:

1. Please indicate your gender: __ Male   __ Female

2. Please select the category that includes your age:
    35-44   55-64

    45-54   65 or above

3. How would you describe your race or ethnicity:
    American Indian / Native   Hispanic / Latino

    American   Multiracial (two or more

    African American / Black   races; please indicate)

    Asian / Pacific Islander   Other (please indicate)

4. Number of Years as a President/CEO:
    0 – 3 years   10 – 15 years

    3.5 – 5 years   15+ years please indicate

    5 – 7 years   exact number _____

    7 – 10 years

End demographic interview questions

Appendix C - Interview Questions

The following research questions guided the interview investigation.

[R = Research Question; IQ = Interview Question that corresponds with the research question].

R1: **How do participants describe the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents**?
- IQ1: Describe your experience as a minority community college president.
- IQ2: Based on your experience, what factors do you believe have contributed to the underrepresentation of minorities among the ranks of community college presidents in the United States?
- IQ3: Using brief descriptors, describe the factors that you believe contribute to racial and gender disparities among community college presidents today.
- IQ4: To what extent do you believe that race and racism contributes to racial and gender underrepresentation in the community college presidency?
- IQ5: Please describe an incident where race and gender have positively influenced your career.
- IQ6: Describe an incident where race and gender have negatively influenced your career.

R2: **How do minority community college presidents describe their ascendency to the presidency**?
- IQ1: Describe how race and gender played in a role in your pursuit to the community college presidency.
- IQ2: What challenges or barriers did you navigate on your journey to becoming a community college president?
- IQ3: Using brief descriptors, list perceived gatekeepers that exist for minority's ascending to the community college presidency.
- IQ4: Tell me about your views on why these gatekeepers exist for minority's pursuing the community college presidency?

R3: **What do participants identify as the leadership preparation necessary for attaining the presidency in community colleges**?
- IQ1: Please tell me about your leadership preparation towards the presidency.
- IQ2: Which if these do you believe were most beneficial to you?
- IQ3: Which if these do you believe were least beneficial to you?
- IQ4: Using brief descriptors, list the leadership competencies most relevant to you being successful as a community college president today.
- IQ5: Please describe how your experience and training are valued by different stakeholder groups in community colleges.

Appendix D - Literature Review and Research Question Matrix

Table A-5: Literature Review and Research Question Matrix

Topics in the Literature Review	Research Question Aligned
Historical Overview of American Community Colleges	RQ1
Overview of Milestones and Key Legislation for Community Colleges	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Generations of Community College Development	RQ2
Generations of Community College Leadership Styles	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Overview of Leadership Theories	RQ3
Framework for Community College Leadership	RQ3
- Profile of Today's Community College Leadership	RQ1
- A Graying Presidency	RQ1
Community College Leadership Preparation	RQ2 & RQ3
- Organizational Change and Culture	RQ2 & RQ3
- The Leadership Pipeline and Pathways	RQ2 & RQ3
Gatekeepers to the Presidency	RQ1 & RQ2
Women in Community College Leadership	RQ1
The Underrepresentation of Minorities in Community Colleges	RQ1
Theoretical Frameworks: Critical Race Theory	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory in Education	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory in Pedagogy	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory's Emphasis on Structural Paradigms	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
- Critical Race Theory Applied to Gender and Ethnic Subgenres (AsianCrit and LatCrit/o)	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Theoretical Frameworks: Glass Ceiling Theory	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3
Additional Themes Added Post-Research	
- Stereotype of a Model Minority	RQ2
- Tokenism	RQ2

Appendix E - Participant Informed Consent Form

comply@k-state.edu | 785-532-3224

PROJECT APPROVAL DATE:	07/27/2020	**PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE:**	07/2023	**LENGTH OF STUDY:**	.45 minutes

Dear Community College President/CEO

You are invited to participate in a voluntary research project being conducted by CharMaine Y. Hines, a doctoral student in the Department of Education's Community College Leadership Program at Kansas State University.

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to explore minority presidents' perceptions of the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges.

Participants will be given informed consent and interview protocols. An interview will be conducted with the researcher. The interview will be recorded and transcribed at a later date.

Criteria to be considered for the study consisted of current or previous serving minority community college president/CEOs, or chancellors, at a member college identified by the AACC and self-identify from one or more of the following groups: American Indian/ Native American, African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latina/o.

There are no known physical risk or consequence. However, there may be a social, legal, or economic consequence or risks for completing the interview and having the results published. However, these risks and consequences are eliminated by the use of pseudonyms instead of actual participant names.

It is possible and hopeful that this study will shed light on the experiences of participants to understand the underrepresentation of minorities in presidential roles in community colleges.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or may discontinue participation at any time.

No identifying information will be collected in the study and the informed consent will not be shared with anyone outside of the researcher and committee co-chairs. Along with pseudonyms for the participants, the college where each participant is employed will not be identified by name but simply described by general location and type.

Notes from the interviews, transcripts and electronic recordings will be saved and password protected on a computer that is also password protected. Written notes will be labeled with pseudonyms and scanned into an electronic file along with the informed consent for each participant. These files will also be password protected on a computer that is also password protected.

If you have any questions about this study, you may email CharMaine Y. Hines at chines1@ksu.edu or committee co-chairs: Dr. Terry Calaway (terry74@ksu.edu) and Dr. Christine McPhail (cjmcphail@ksu.edu).

I have read the information provided above and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. My completion and the return of this packet will serve as my consent. I have been given a copy of this consent form for future reference.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant   Date:

Appendix F - Human Subjects Research (HSR) CITI-IRB

Certificate of Completion

CITI Program Certificate of Completion - Human Subjects Research (HSR) IRB Researchers and Personnel on IRB Protocols under requirements set by Kansas State University.

Appendix G - Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) CITI-IRB

Certificate of Completion

CITI Program Certificate of Completion – Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) under requirements set by Kansas State University.

Completion Date 24-Jun-2020
Expiration Date 24-Jun-2023
Record ID 37171177

This is to certify that:

CharMaine Hines

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) (Curriculum Group)
Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course (Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

Under requirements set by:

Kansas State University

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w463f81df-3b2c-4ae2-b45e-85b47e2d8b1d-37171177