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# African American faculty: A study of their experiences related to intercultural competence at predominantly white institutions

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AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY: A STUDY OF THEIR EXPERIENCES RELATED TO
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AT PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS


by


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**Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Inez, who has been my friend and partner for nearly 40 years. She has made me better in every way. I also dedicate this dissertation to my father, who encouraged, inspired, and motivated me by being an excellent role model. Finally, I dedicate this publication to the memory of my mother, who passed away in 1985 but who continues to inspire me throughout my academic journey through the words she left me and the life she lived.

**Acknowledgements**

I want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His presence during my dissertation journey and throughout my entire life. He has given me the protection, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding necessary to overcome obstacles through inspiration, motivation, and encouragement.

I have been sincerely blessed to work with some extraordinary professors and advisors throughout my pursuit of a doctoral degree at the University of the Pacific. The massive number of hours of direction and advice given to me was extremely meaningful. I look forward to sharing the knowledge I have gained in this program with other people.

Using the Jackson Scholars Program as a purposeful sample provided an opportunity to explore the influence of a well-established network. Current and former administrators, faculty, students, and staff of the UCEA were very helpful and accessible in providing insights and making recommendations for activities and additional participants for this study. Some individuals already participating recommended additional participants in this study. Their actions are greatly appreciated.

AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY: A STUDY OF THEIR EXPERIENCES RELATED TO INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AT PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

Abstract

by Hervey A. Taylor III

University of the Pacific

2018

Underrepresentation of faculty of color in higher education is a phenomenon that has been studied and well documented by researchers for many years (e.g., Aguirre, 2000; Aguirre, Martinez, & Hernandez, 1993; Bair, Bair, Mader, Hipp, & Hakim, 2010; Chai et al., 2009; Collins, 1990; Turner & Myers, 2000). This issue is even more evident as it relates to the underrepresentation of African American faculty at predominantly White institutions (PWIs). Many studies have addressed the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs (e.g., Alexander & Moore, 2008; Bower, 2002; Brown & Dancy, 2010; Cleveland, 2004).

According to the United States Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistics Administration, United States Bureau of the Census (2016), African Americans represent 13.3% of the United States total population. However, African American faculty account for 6% of full-time faculty in higher learning institutions in the United States according to the 2016 release of the National Center for Education Statistics. This disparity forms the essential component of my investigation and sets the stage for my examination of the experiences of African Americans as they perform their duties as full-time faculty at PWIs.

This study takes a new approach to investigating the low number of African Americans serving as full-time faculty in higher education by examining their perceptions of the

intercultural competence of their colleagues on campus based on their experiences. Intercultural competence is the ability to proficiently interact with people from different backgrounds using acquired knowledge and experience (Elosúa, 2015). Intercultural competence has been studied in a number of areas including business, government, healthcare, military, and religion (e.g., Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003; Benkert, Tanner, Guthrie, Oakley, & Phol, 2005; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Deardorff, 2009). There has also been research on intercultural competence in education regarding students studying abroad in other countries, teaching in different cultures, and global citizenship (e.g., Banks, 2017; Byram & Nichols, 1997; Deardorff, 2009). However, my review of the literature indicates that there has not been research about the impact that intercultural competence has on the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education. This is a qualitative multiple case study that engaged full-time African American educational leadership faculty who were employed at PWIs in post-secondary education as participants. The data were collected through interviews. The collected data were analyzed and the findings used to make recommendations to improve the experiences of African American educational leadership faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education.

**Table of Contents**

**List of Tables**

**List of Figures**

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

*"The only grain of pepper in the salt shaker"*

*—Jacquelyn Ollison, 2016*

The statement above by my colleague regarding her experience as an African American college student at a predominantly White institution (PWI) seems to capture the essence of underrepresentation of faculty of color at higher learning institutions in the United States. Siegel, Barrett, and Smith (2015) contended that the lack of significant diversity on college and university campuses has been examined and the desire to increase minority faculty on college and university campuses has been an ongoing goal of institutions of higher learning for quite some time; yet the situation continues. Turner, González, and Wood (2008) noted that even though there have been a number of studies on faculty of color, along with programs designed to increase diversity in faculties, minority faculty are still underrepresented and their accomplishments are not frequently recognized. The review by Turner et al. (2008) supports the viewpoint that minority faculty remain underrepresented at higher education institutions.

Gasman, Abiola, and Travers (2015) indicated a void in the actions of college administrators to recruit and retain faculty of color at higher education institutions other than historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU). Siegel, Barrett, and Smith (2015) found that only 17.5% of all full-time faculty in institutions of higher learning in the U.S. are minority professors. This problem is further exacerbated for African American faculty. According to Pittman (2012), African American faculty only make up 4.9 % of tenure-track positions. When non-tenured track full-time faculty positions are included at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, African Americans still make up

only 6% of the faculty (United States Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistics Administration, National Center for Education Statistics, 2016).

This study examines the experiences of African American educational leadership faculty members on college and university campuses by reviewing the role and impact of *intercultural competence*. In exploring the impact of intercultural competence, this study seeks to identify remedies for the experiences of African American faculty that negatively impact their recruitment and retention at PWIs. As defined by Elosúa (2015), intercultural competence is the influence of cultural awareness that is achieved through a process of continuous learning about culture through observation, listening, and instruction. In noting that intercultural competence can be beneficial in improving communication between educators, students, and business professionals, Deardorff (2009) provided a general definition of intercultural competence and acknowledged that there are many definitions for the term in research. She defined intercultural competence as the ability to proficiently communicate and take appropriate action in situations that involve people from different cultural backgrounds through a lifelong process. When a student studies abroad or a company employee spends time working in another country with a different culture, these individuals may receive an intercultural experience that over time and with feedback from other people, may lead them to becoming interculturally competent.

**Background of the Study**

Since people who attend or work at universities may come from different geographical locations, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses, it is reasonable to believe that individuals on campus may not understand the cultural norms of each other. Han (2012) contended that students and faculty do not automatically have cultural

awareness or an appreciation for diversity. The lack of cultural awareness that characterizes most American college campuses may impact the experiences of all faculty members on campus. This may be particularly true when it comes to African American faculty. African American faculty members have experiences that make their time at universities and colleges difficult based on racial stressors in the classroom such as a perceived lack of respect and lower scores on end-of-course evaluations from White students (Pittman, 2010). Racial stressors include a variety of micro-aggressions such as being ignored or insulted by White colleagues, being passed over for positions, and being accused of overreacting to racial issues (Pittman, 2010). These types of experiences by African American faculty lend credibility to the idea that they are facing a culture that could be different from their own culture at PWIs.

Intercultural competence can be a two-way process that includes the experiences and perceptions of someone from the incoming culture and the experiences and perceptions of those within the dominant culture (Deardorff, 2009). African American faculty often find themselves in an unfamiliar culture when they arrive at PWIs. They may diminish their personalities and change their ways of communicating to try to blend in (Bonner, Tuitt, Robinson, Banda, & Hughes, 2014). African American faculty may be unfamiliar with PWI procedures, policies, and practices. This may cause them to appear incompetent and unprofessional and can have a negative impact on the perceptions of students, staff, and other faculty on people of different cultures (Stebleton, Soria, & Cherney, 2013). In addition, intercultural competence may affect the perceptions that African American faculty members have toward the university. Ponjuan, Conley, and Trower (2011) noted that minority faculty members might experience a perception of discrimination in their academic departments. Victorino, Nylund-Gibson, and Conley

(2013) observed that minority faculty members typically have a negative view of the racial climate on campus. Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, and Han (2009) noted that the racial climate on many campuses involves a feeling of isolation and lack of administrative support for faculty of color. All of these occurrences may serve as obstacles to the overall success of African American faculty at PWIs.

Since intercultural competence can be considered an individual characteristic (Elosúa, 2015), it may be possible for African American faculty and their peers at PWIs to acquire this skill and thus improve communication and interactions with each other. intercultural competence can be a two-way process that represents the ability of African American faculty to successfully navigate through the predominantly White culture, and White faculty's ability to receive and accept individuals from other ethnicities or cultures, such as African Americans, into their own culture at the university. This study focused on African American faculty perceptions of the intercultural competence of their White peers. Examining this aspect of intercultural competence provided an opportunity to build on the overall knowledge of intercultural competence. Determining how African American faculty at PWIs perceive intercultural competence can show if there is a connection that improves or encumbers their experiences on campus. It will also help ascertain how African American faculty navigate campuses. This is a critical step in developing strategies and best practices for recruiting and retaining African American faculty at PWIs. Once this process takes place, current African American faculty at PWIs can serve as mentors to new faculty and they can work to recruit undergraduate and graduate students who aspire to become faculty as well.

This study investigated how different the campus climate, atmosphere, and culture is at PWIs for African American faculty in relation to their own culture. In addition, it

examinee African American faculty experiences at PWIs, perceptions of intercultural competence, and the impact of intercultural competence on the recruitment and retention of African American faculty members at PWIs.

## Problem Statement

African American faculty are underrepresented among faculty at colleges and universities in the United States. African Americans comprise 13.3% of the United States population (United States Census Bureau, 2016) and only represent 6% of full-time faculty at degree-granting post-secondary institutions. Whites make up 61.3% of the population in the United States (United States Census Bureau, 2016) but they represent 77% of the total faculty at universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016).

The issue of the small number of African American faculty is a problem that continues to exist even after years of research in the area. Perna, Gerald, Baum, and Milem (2007) stated that there has not been much progress in increasing the number of African Americans who are full-time faculty at higher education institutions. They examined African American faculty and administrators at public academic institutions in 19 states. They found that Blacks were underrepresented at higher education campuses in 18 of the states and there was a greater disparity in racial inequities between tenured African American faculty and those on track to become tenured. Minor (2014) contended that the underrepresentation of minorities and women in higher education has had a negative impact at colleges and universities. Some of the negative aspects of this underrepresentation include having fewer role models and mentors, more isolation for the few members of these groups on campus, and extra service work with minority and women students and staff.

Intercultural competence has not been previously studied as it relates to the impact it has on the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs. Intercultural competence has been examined in the areas of students studying abroad, employees working overseas, government, military, and religion. It is therefore essential to investigate this topic to inform academia and the general public of the importance in not only accepting different cultures on campuses but also of fostering strong positive relationships and communication between people from a variety of backgrounds and, in particular, African American faculty. This could promote the idea of a more inclusive atmosphere at PWIs and may serve as a practice that will be beneficial in other areas such as business and government. My review of published research indicates that the topic has not addressed the relationship between the underrepresentation of African American faculty and the level of intercultural competence on college campuses.

There are a number of ways to identify intercultural competence. It can be recognized as a set of skills, attitudes, or components that allow us to be aware of cultural issues and take action to resolve those issues (Deardorff, 2009). When someone in a group acknowledges and understands the cultural differences of another person or when we are aware that someone is different, disconnected, or isolated from a group and take action to improve the situation, we would be considered to possess intercultural competence. For example, when an African American faculty member is not attending department faculty meetings or attends the meetings but does not actively participate, a non-African American faculty member or administrator with intercultural competence would show cultural empathy and seek to be more inclusive by encouraging the African American faculty member to feel comfortable enough to begin participating. Being more welcoming to the faculty member can help that person to establish and maintain a sense

of belonging that leads to a longer duration of employment. When intercultural competence is present at a high level in an organization, it is likely that there is a variety of ethnic diversity and the employee or member recruitment and retention of these individuals at the organization is consistent and robust.

Some areas of intercultural competence have been addressed in higher education and other areas. Sandell and Tupy (2015) discussed changes in intercultural competence with undergraduate students. They noted that college students who were exposed to cultural activities for a semester showed an increase in their understanding and appreciation of cultures different from their own. Elosúa (2015) contended that intercultural competence could help people in establishing cultural identity and familiarity. In addition, she stated that it is a continuous process that we can never outgrow and it must be implemented intentionally throughout all phases of students' college experience. Dimitrov, Dawson, Olsen, and Meadows (2014) examined how teaching development programs facilitate the intercultural competence in graduate students and prepare them for interacting globally. Their research led them to conclude that students who were exposed to intercultural competence were better prepared to lead a culturally diverse workforce. LeGros and Faez (2012) studied the intersection between teaching behaviors and intercultural competence. They examined how participation in a course on intercultural competence affected the teaching behaviors of international teaching assistants. Their findings indicated there was an increase in teaching behaviors such as communication, empathy, and understanding for students who took the class. However, there is a gap in the literature as it relates to the connection between intercultural competence and the experiences of African American faculty members at a university. This study seeks to remedy the gap by examining how intercultural

competence impacts the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs and therefore influences the recruitment and retention of African American faculty members.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore and identify effective ways to improve the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs by investigating the connection of intercultural competence to the African American faculty experience. The experiences examined included ways African American faculty face situations they are unfamiliar with on campus; the strategies they use to become familiar with processes, practices, and procedures on campus; and the way they navigate the change process. Reviewing this information can identify a blueprint to help African American faculty become more successful at PWIs. The study also provides recommendations and strategies for increasing the number of full-time African American faculty at PWIs and their experiences at these colleges and universities.

The experiences of African American faculty members who had completed a university educational administration leadership program were examined as part of the study. The Jackson Scholars program of the University Council Educational Administration (UCEA) is a two-year mentoring program that prepares doctoral students to become faculty members. Educational Administration leadership programs focus on training individuals to become school leaders in the K-12 education system and to become faculty members at colleges and universities. Jackson (2002) stated that exceptional and innovative educational administration leadership programs could provide practical experiences and professional networking opportunities to participants. The type of preparation and resources that individuals receive in an educational education leadership program may include coping strategies for graduates that may lead to greater

retention and eventually increased recruitment of faculty members at institutions of

higher learning. By studying faculty members who had participated in an educational

administration leadership program, it was possible for a unique perspective to emerge

that may provide a viable model for improving the experiences of current and future

African American faculty in higher education at PWIs.

## Research Questions

Three inquiry questions guided the research for this study. The first question

sought to examine the day-to-day lives of African American faculty and the interactions

they encounter as they carry out their duties at a PWI. The second question attempted to

determine the mindset and opinions that African American faculty had about working at

PWIs regarding the way they were treated by other faculty. Question number three relates

to the change process of intercultural competence and included factors such as culture

shock, identity change, relationship issues, and cultural atmosphere conditions pursuant

to the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence as described by

Deardorff (2009). This model describes the journey through the intercultural competence

process. It includes system-level factors, individual factors, and change factors that are

used to navigate through the intercultural competence practice. It was adapted from the

intercultural adaptation model (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

1.  What are the experiences of African American educational leadership full-
    time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education and how do these
    experiences relate to the intercultural competence on campus?

2.  How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in
    post-secondary education view the intercultural competence of their peers?

3.     How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education manage the impact and change process of intercultural competence?

## Significance of the Study

There are four key reasons why this study is significant. First, the study explores the experiences of African American faculty so that the results can be used to improve their overall experience at PWIs. Finding ways to improve the African American faculty experience on college and university campuses may help improve the experiences of all minorities on campus. Second, this study provides recommendations for areas of additional study on the topic. Third, it builds on previous research about underrepresented African American faculty and provides a new perspective that incorporates intercultural competence. Finally, this study can help fill the gap in the literature between what has been studied about intercultural competence and what has not. Previous research identified reasons for the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs but has not addressed the relevance of intercultural competence to the issue. This study examines the importance of intercultural competence in the experiences of African American faculty.

## Conceptual Visual Representation

This study uses the lens of intercultural competence to determine the experiences of African American faculty, the impact of intercultural competence held by African American faculty, and the change process and the impact of intercultural competence on African American faculty. Figure 1 is a conceptual map of African American faculty at PWIs.
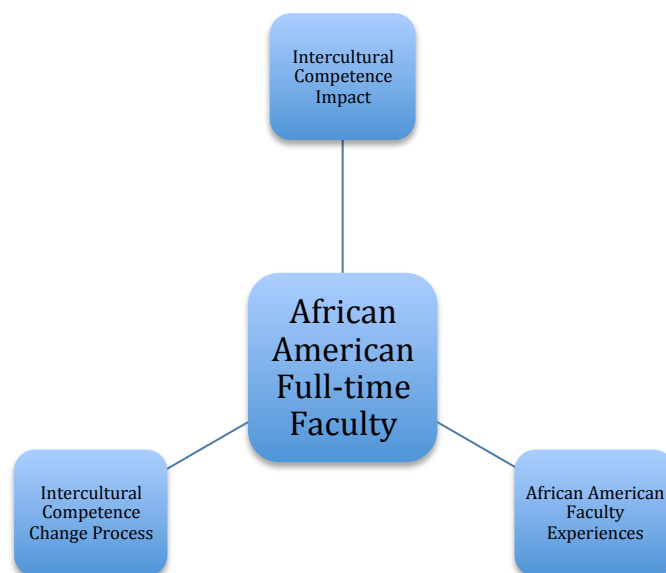
*Figure 1.* Conceptual Map of African American Faculty at PWIs. This is a

visual representation of African American full-time faculty at predominantly White

institutions in higher education. To capture the essence of how intercultural competence

relates to African American faculty and administration at PWIs, a version of the

multilevel process change model of intercultural competence (Ting-Toomey, 1999, as

adapted by Deardorff, 2009) was used as the theoretical framework for this study. This

model was selected because it provided a logical sequence for examining the role of

intercultural competence in the experiences of African American faculty through the use

of system-level factors, individual-level factors, interpersonal-level factors, change

process factors, and outcome factors.

**Description of the Study**

This was a qualitative research study. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), a

qualitative study is a research approach that allows the researcher to capture the

experiences of the participants in their environments. This study consisted of a multiple

case study design. A case study is a thorough investigation of a specifically limited

system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Case studies can be of a single or multiple-case design (Creswell, 2007). A case study design was selected here because it provided an opportunity to study a bounded system and to use multiple methods of data collection to complete the investigation. By examining more than one PWI system, the similarities and differences were compared and contrasted, which led to the identification of common experiences and themes among the participants. The study examined the experiences of African American faculty in several PWIs where participants in the study were employed. Pseudonyms were used for all participants and universities identified for this study. I used interviews for data collection.

## Delimitations of the Study

This study only covered some areas related to the African American faculty experience including the change process and impact of intercultural competence, and perceptions of intercultural competence by Black faculty members within their PWIs. These areas were purposely selected because the topic had not been previously studied in the literature. This study only recruited participants from the Jackson Scholar Program. The study did not include participants who were currently serving as adjunct or part-time faculty because full-time faculty were believed to provide a more comprehensive representation of experiences for African American faculty on PWIs. The method of selecting African American faculty was based on purposeful convenience sampling and it may not have been enough of a sampling to accurately reflect the experiences of all African American faculty members in higher education at PWIs. The participants had 15 years or less in their roles as faculty members, and the experiences might be different for Black faculty with longer tenure.

**Organization of the Study**

In Chapter 1, I introduced the topic, discussed the purpose of the study, provided the research questions, gave background information about the topic, described the conceptual framework, and provided definitions for key terms. In Chapter 2, I review the literature regarding the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs and intercultural competence. I also provide a detailed description of the conceptual framework that forms the basis for this study, and I outline the next steps for the study. I provide the methodology and research design for the study in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 I discuss the data analysis of my findings. Chapter 5 contains a summary, implications for action, and key recommendations yielded from the study.

**Definition of Key Terms**

**African American**

An African American is a person born in the United States having origins in Black racial groups from Africa. This term includes individuals who have been called Black and Negro (Mackun, Wilson, Fischetti, & Goworowska 2011).

**Minority**

A minority is a heterogeneous group of people from different ethnic, racial, and cultural migration backgrounds who have been historically and systematically excluded from resources and power (Coll & Garrido, 2000).

**Intercultural competence**

Intercultural competence is a level of knowledge about other cultures that exceeds awareness and is achieved through a process of continuous learning through experience, observation, listening, and training (Elosúa, 2015).

**Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

African American faculty are also underrepresented among faculty at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in post-secondary education within the United States. According to the United States Census Bureau Report (2016), African Americans make up 13.3% of the population and Whites make up 61.3%. However, there is a disparity in the racial composition between the two groups in higher education institutions. African American faculty make up 6% of full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions and White faculty make up 77% (U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016). Growth has been slow in increasing the number of African American full-time faculty at higher education institutions (Madyun, Williams, McGee, & Milner, 2013). A PWI has a population of at least 50% White students (Brown & Dancy, 2010). PWIs may also be historically White institutions or traditionally White institutions due to the segregation by race that existed prior to the enactment of desegregation laws in 1964 (Brown & Dancy, 2010).

This study reviewed the impact of intercultural competence on the experiences of full-time African American faculty in the academy. Intercultural competence offers a unique lens for viewing the experiences of Black faculty in that milieu. One definition of intercultural competence is the level of awareness that an individual or group may have about the culture of another individual or group that is acquired through continuous interactions, observations, and training (Elosùa, 2015). This study looked at African American faculty knowledge of PWI faculty culture and their view of other faculty members' knowledge of African American culture. To narrow the scope of intercultural

competence during this study, the perception of intercultural competence from the non-African American faculty perspective was not addressed; instead, it focused strictly on African American faculty at PWIs and their experiences. Throughout this document, *African American faculty* and *Black faculty* are used interchangeably; participants were all full-time faculty members at PWIs.

This study explored three critical questions.

1.  What are the experiences of African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education and how do these experiences relate to the intercultural competence on campus?

2.  How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education view the intercultural competence of their peers?

3.  How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education manage the impact and change process of intercultural competence?

Nine research streams as subtopics structure the literature review. I begin by examining African American culture. Then I discuss the typical experiences faced by African American faculty at PWIs. These experiences offer some insight into what Black faculty are subjected to as they navigate through the practices, procedures, and policies at PWIs. Next, I explain how these experiences formed the basis for my research questions and why this topic was worthy of further study. Subsequently I explore the definition of *intercultural competence*. I then discuss the importance of intercultural competence. Following that discussion, I introduce the multilevel process change model for intercultural competence as the theoretical framework for this study. After that, I describe

the change process of intercultural competence and I look at how African American

faculty navigate through that process. Then I explain the impact that the intercultural

competence change process has on African American faculty. Then I examine the factors

and preexisting or acquired skills used by African American faculty through their

experiences in higher education with other cultures. In the final section I discuss how this

study will fill a gap in the literature and I summarize the review of literature.

**African American Culture**

There are many aspects of African American culture in the United States but this

review focuses on three: religion, communication, and lifestyles. Religion is very

important in African American culture. It is often referred to as "the church." Many

African Americans have been raised to believe in God and to follow Christian teachings.

The church is considered an essential part of being in the good grace of God and it serves

as an instrument for members to worship and praise God as they seek to overcome trials

and tribulations in their lives (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990).

In communicating within African American culture, it is often important to

vocalize in very emphatic language when speaking and trying to make a critical point.

Others from different backgrounds who hear the tones used and the language used may

take offense at this or may even consider it a threat. For example, when a Black person

speaks out in disagreement with a particular university policy or action, that individual

may use language with a strong tone, saying something like "you are sitting here in your

ivory tower making decisions that will hurt Black students, staff, and faculty." This may

cause non-Black faculty or administration to believe that the African American is an

"angry Black woman" or a "volatile Black man." During a pilot interview for this study,

a female participant stated that when she speaks up about topics at faculty meetings, the

other faculty members think she is upset or may ask her if she is all right. If people

become more familiar with Black culture, they will be more likely to listen to the words

of Black faculty and not feel intimidated or threatened. Another example of

communication in the Black culture is nonverbal communication. This may happen when

an African American does not say anything regarding his or her feelings but gives a look

that is perceived as disapproving. For example, African American mothers can give their

children a look and their children will automatically know they need to either start doing

something or stop doing something. When a White administrator of a university sees a

Black administrator or faculty member giving that same look, it might be perceived as

negative or not going along with the established actions or norms.

African American culture includes a lifestyle that often involves frequently going

to church, having big family gatherings, going to and participating in sporting events

such as basketball and football games. So when the faculty, department, or university

decides to have a golfing or skiing activity and they invite Black faculty to attend or fail

to invite Black faculty, it represents either a culture difference or cultural isolation. If the

non-Black faculty and administrators gain intercultural competence, they will possess

more awareness and will be more inclusive of African American culture into university

and individual activities.

## Typical Experiences by African American Faculty at PWIs

African American faculty face a variety of experiences as they work on campuses

controlled by White faculty and administrators. I have drawn heavily from Bonner et al.

(2014) to capture many of these experiences. This work captures the stories of the

experiences of prominent African American faculty who have navigated successfully

through the PWI world. The five authors shared their narratives for negotiating identity

and achieving career success at PWIs. Bonner et al. (2014) noted that one African American assistant professor reported being told by a seasoned White peer not to spend excessive amounts of time working with minority students but rather to focus on more important areas that have a greater chance of leading to tenure. This experience seems to be unique to faculty of color since working with students of the dominant culture would most likely not lead to similar suggestions from peers. Persons of color at PWIs overwhelmingly believe they must assimilate into the dominant culture and follow the rules to survive (Bonner et al., 2014). Assimilation is the way that individuals or groups such as minorities adapt to the cultural norms of a majority society (Ibarra, 1995). This occurs when African American faculty hide their cultural identity, norms, and traditions to become part of the White majority at PWIs. Other African American faculty find that they feel labeled for negative reasons. For example, in one scenario, a Black faculty member was told that he was just there because of affirmative action (Bonner et al., 2014). This example is common across the literature including studies by Beachum (2015), Turner and Myers (2000), and Stanley (2006). These types of interactions have an impact on African American faculty because it causes them to feel that they are not welcome at the institution.

On another occasion, White students gave an African American faculty member a poor course evaluation and accused the faculty member of focusing too much on race (Bonner et al., 2014). In addition, the administration began to question whether the faculty member was a radical, thus essentially endorsing the view of the White students. Because of these types of situations, an African American faculty member may decide to follow the rules and make no challenges to perceived injustices. In one case, when a White administrator who had been supportive of an African American faculty member

resigned, another White faculty member suggested that the African American faculty member could survive without his master (Bonner et al., 2014). These types of occurrences cause some African American faculty at PWIs to feel like they have to constantly prove themselves (Beachum, 2015). In another case, a Black faculty member was regularly challenged regarding the subject matter she was teaching and the contents of the syllabus by White students who were then defended by a White faculty member (Bonner et al., 2014). Even when African American faculty have been successful at PWIs, they are subjected to negative comments from their White peers. An African American faculty member who was selected for a distinguished professional professorship and endowed chair was told that he was too young to achieve that status (Beachum, 2015). Some African American faculty may balance their negative experiences in connection with the internal work-related environment and benefits of working at the university to make a decision as to whether they will remain at the university (Siegel et al., 2015).

These types of experiences endured by African American faculty indicate there is a need to examine the environment they are often exposed to at PWIs and the challenges that need to be overcome to improve recruitment and retention. Through my research questions, I focused on the experiences, intercultural competence interactions, and the change process of Black faculty to confirm the challenges that exist and provide possible recommendations for improvement. I also offer strategies to implement the recommendations.

## Defining Intercultural Competence

There are a variety of definitions for *intercultural competence* in education and other areas. The ability to understand each other across cultural challenges is intercultural

competence (Huber et al., 2012). The authors here referred to a global perspective that includes international organizations. Byram and Nichols (2001) stated that "the components of intercultural competence are knowledge, skills, and attitudes complemented by the values one holds because of one's belonging to a number of social groups, values which are part of one's belonging to a given society" (p. 5). Deardorff (2006) stated that there is no clear agreement in defining intercultural competence. The differences in the definitions may be partially based on whether the term is applied to business, governmental service, education, or other areas. Intercultural competence is also called *intercultural communicative competence* (ICC; Fantini, 2000). This term is used in the business world where companies send their employees to other countries as representatives. Fantini (2000) stated that ICC is based on three key concepts: the ability to establish and maintain relationships, the skill to communicate effectively, and the capability to gain cooperation from others.

However, intercultural competence has also been defined as the ability to interact with people from different backgrounds (Deardorff, 2006, 2011). It also represents a way to manage and interact proficiently with different cultures on a consistent basis through experiences, observations, and training over time (Sandell & Tupy, 2015). The capability to function effectively in another culture has also been defined as intercultural competence (Gertsen, 1990). Intercultural competence is the skill to recognize differences in cultures and the ability to manage the differences during interactions so that the person or group in each culture is at ease (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat, & Crozet, 1999).

Intercultural competence has different meanings in different contexts. Government employees and people such as Peace Corps volunteers require skills such as empathy, knowledge of other cultures, and openness to other cultures, which is part of

intercultural competence (Dinges, 1983). In the area of global leadership, intercultural

competence has been described as the ability to function effectively in another culture

(Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010). In the military, a leader is considered to

have intercultural competence when he or she understands and manages team differences,

improves the team despite challenges, comprehends the mission, and is able to assess

situational issues (Seiler, 2007). By using leadership skills accumulated from intercultural

competence experience, the military leader may be able to improve the performance of

the military unit. In religion, intercultural competence has been defined as the ability to

respond appropriately and with empathy to cultural differences experienced (Sandage &

Jankowski, 2013). Intercultural competence in the healthcare field is the ability of

workers and organizations to respond to the diverse needs of their patients as they interact

with them (Office of Minority Health, 2000).

Even without consensus on the meaning of the concept, there are enough

similarities in each definition to form a conclusion that intercultural competence plays a

significant role in the ability of people to interact in various settings with others who

come from different cultures. As individuals acquire knowledge and experience with

people from other countries or  cultural backgrounds, it could improve their overall

relationship between people from the dominant culture and the non-dominant culture

within a particular location or system.

**Defining Intercultural Competence in Education**

In education, intercultural competence can mean being aware of the role of

language in intercultural encounters and being able to understand the differences and

communicate respectfully (Barrett, Huber, & Reynolds, 2014). There can be differences

in perceptions and understanding when individuals or groups do not speak the same

language. For example, when asked by a newcomer for the location of the administration building on campus, a person who tells the newcomer to look at the map to find the location may be perceived as lacking in intercultural competence because that person did not show empathy or compassion toward the newcomer. In another scenario, a facilitator or educator may be considered to have intercultural competence by providing materials for learning and opportunities such as role playing or pairing travelers with translators who are familiar with the new culture so that the experience is more pleasant. Another point of view of intercultural competence in Education refers to someone who has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and traits to communicate effectively with educational stakeholders (Sercu, 2004). The ability to communicate effectively between one culture and another culture is considered intercultural competence (Williams, McGee, & Milner, 2013). When that skill is established, it will likely enhance the quality of interactions between individuals.

## The Benefits of Intercultural Competence

Historically, intercultural competence has been beneficial to companies doing business internationally. These organizations seek to hire managers who can adapt to different cultures and respect differences (Shaftel, Shaftel, & Ahluwalia, 2007). In the business and education fields, intercultural competence is very important because it helps employees to become skillful in an intercultural work climate and it helps educators to acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in reaching learning goals across cultural lines (Sercu, 2004). Intercultural competence is also important when multinational and multicultural teams work together. These teams are called *high-performance teams* when they obtain intercultural competence because they are able to

accomplish specific goals effectively while interacting with each other from many different locations (Matveev & Milter, 2004).

The research also indicates that knowledge and skills in intercultural competence are important to the international service learning community because it helps to boost the participants' confidence and personal development, thus improving the quality of service provided (Nickols, Rothenberg, Moshi, & Tetloff, 2013). Each of these sectors offers perspectives on the importance of intercultural competence. These sectors also show how the topic is applicable to cross-cultural and multi-business sector organizations.

## Importance of Intercultural Competence in Higher Education

Intercultural competence takes on an important significance in higher education. Educational experiences by those who participate in academic settings abroad offer learning opportunities that can benefit students and faculty (Shaftel et al., 2007). Below I examine the student and faculty perspective of intercultural competence in education.

### Student Benefits

Previous research on intercultural competence in higher education has addressed the benefits of intercultural competence for international graduate students who travel or take classes abroad. These students experience language barriers, difficulty in learning another culture, and being categorized based on language, literature, music, and other categories that may not fully represent the student (Dimitrov et al., 2014; Sandell & Tupy, 2015; Stebleton et al.,2013) These experiences lived by students show there is a need to develop intercultural skills to help graduate students to be successful abroad. Graduate students interact with people of different cultures in the classroom and in departments at academic institutions (Dimitrov et al., 2014). Students who attend a university in another country must sometimes withstand the difficulty of learning another

language, adjusting to different cultural values, and interacting with people from different social backgrounds (LeGros & Faez, 2012). Students who are interculturally competent will make adjustments to fit in appropriately and these adjustments will help them to be more successful as a non-dominant member of a new group. This suggests that students must gain knowledge and the ability to navigate the cultural terrain of another country.

Deardorff (2009) reported that more than 200,000 United States students travel and study abroad each year. The author noted that it is important for students to learn about other cultures and to be able to interact with people who have different cultural views. It is also important for students in universities and community colleges to gain a level of intercultural competence because these students need to be able to live and compete in a global society (Riley, Bustamante, & Edmonson, 2016). When intercultural competence is present, an individual or group will have greater understanding about a different culture or ethnicity. This knowledge can be used to empathize with an individual or group, and to provide greater communication and positive support (Deardorff, 2009). It is clear from the research that intercultural competence plays a vital role in our encounters with people from other cultures.

The intercultural competence of students can be enhanced through post-secondary actions. Deardorff (2011) indicated that universities could improve the intercultural competence of students by incorporating it into the curriculum and the school activities. For example, a university could create an international food day or have an annual cultural fair, a cultural fashion show, or a mock United Nations council meeting as part of a world history or government class. This could provide greater understanding and empathy for other cultures.

**Faculty Perspective**

Intercultural competence is important in education institutions. It provides a tool for faculty members to teach students how to get along with people who are different than they are (Deardorff, 2009). Deardorff (2011) suggested that higher education faculty must understand intercultural competence comprehensively and be willing to integrate all aspects of it into curriculum and international courses. The author further noted that faculty must develop ways to teach and assess intercultural competence. The research indicates that the more knowledgeable and skillful faculty members are in maintaining intercultural competence, the better off faculty and students are on campus. LeGros and Faez (2012) suggested that faculty should become proficient in intercultural communication issues and intercultural competence to improve the experience of all university stakeholders. Their research indicates that the intercultural competence of faculty is essential to higher education; however, it seems that even when faculty incorporate intercultural competence into the curriculum to help diverse students understand each other, the faculty themselves may not demonstrate intercultural competence towards their fellow faculty.

**Intercultural Competence of African American Faculty in Education**

Intercultural competence is also important for African American faculty. In their article about the importance of African American faculty in higher education, Madyun et al. (2013) stated that intercultural competence is important for African American faculty because faculty of color are in a position to help students obtain intercultural competence through modeling and instruction. Intercultural competence may also be beneficial to Black faculty in helping them cope with the difficulties they encounter at PWIs; however, not much is known in this area. Madyun et al. noted that faculty could serve as role

models by displaying intercultural competence in their higher education classrooms. In this section I examine the intercultural competence experiences of African American faculty at PWIs. I contend that the experience of African American faculty members at PWIs is comparable to someone traveling to an unfamiliar country, such as a student studying abroad or an employee of an international company working in a foreign country. As part of the change process that I discuss in more detail later in this chapter, Black faculty represent the non-dominant culture on campus and make changes to adapt to the dominant PWI culture. A non-dominant person learns to adapt to the dominant culture in many ways. For example, an immigrant continuously and directly exposed to another culture over an extended period of time will experience acculturation (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Acculturation can occur when two cultures interact and can be impacted based on how deeply one is entrenched in one's own culture (Gibson, 1998). When people are new to a segment of their own culture and need to experience a cultural adjustment, they become part of enculturation, which is another part of the adaptation process (Ting-Toomey, 1999). When educators are new to an academic setting, they experience enculturation (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). This may help to facilitate the adaptation process. People also seek to adapt to another culture through assimilation. To assimilate into another population, an individual or group will seek to blend in with the new culture (Deardorff, 2009). These adaptation strategies are impacted by antecedent factors. Ting-Toomey (1999) states that there are three antecedent components of the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence.

**Theoretical Framework: The Multilevel Process Change Model of Intercultural**

**Competence**

According to Deardorff (2009), the multilevel process change model is an integrative model that has incorporated the key components of previous intercultural competence models to emphasize a change process that can be accomplished toward specific outcomes between different cultures. These outcomes include socioeconomic conditions, multicultural positions, institutional support, inclusion in groups, and cultural distance. In addition, the use of skills in managing cultural shock, identity change, new relationships, and surrounding environments help individuals to successfully navigate the change process of intercultural competence. The multilevel process change model of intercultural competence contains three antecedent factors: system-level factors, individual-level factors, and intercultural-level factors (Deardorff, 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1999). This model also contains change process factors and outcome factors. An example of a change process factor is the way faculty or administrators from a non-dominant group adapt to join the dominant group. Outcome factors can consist of effective or ineffective intercultural adaptation by immigrants as they interact with members of another country they have traveled to for an extended period of time (Ting-Toomey, 1999). The changes explored through this model focus on African American faculty as they navigate college or university processes and move to departmental procedures and individual practices at PWIs.

**System-Level Factors**

The system-level factors for the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence include elements such as socioeconomic conditions, multicultural stance and politeness, institutional support, inclusion in groups, and cultural distance.

Socioeconomic conditions that can impact intercultural competence include a high unemployment rate, low wages, or limited housing opportunities. People in host countries show their multicultural stance or politeness by the way they receive immigrants into their culture when the immigrants arrive (Ting-Toomey, 1999). When a host school in another country offers some type of adjustment process or transitional assistance to an international student, that organization is providing institutional support. A student studying abroad and living with a host family could become part of the in-group of that family. On the other hand, that student may be excluded from the neighborhood in-group and instead be relegated to an out-group of other students from other countries that are now living in the host country.

There are some situations where the newcomer may be unaware of a particular custom or tradition and will need to learn by observation and eventual participation if no one from the in-group clues the newcomer in about the cultural practices. For example, if a sojourner or traveler comes from a country where people greet each other with a kiss on both cheeks and then travels to a country where people shake hands when they meet, that difference is cultural distance. Cultural distance represents the differences and similarities between the newcomer and the host country (Crotts, 2004).

**Individual-Level Factors**

The individual-level factors of this model consist of motivations, expectations, cultural knowledge, and personal attributes. The interpersonal factors comprise contact networks, ethnic media, and adaptive interpersonal skills (Deardorff, 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1999). For example, the support networks that a person brings as well as the community-based resources impact how individuals from non-dominant groups adapt to the dominant culture.

This multilevel process change level of intercultural competence model is also referred to as the intercultural adaptation model (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Adaptation refers to how a person changes in a new environment. It is a process that facilitates changes in interactions between people of different cultures (Sawyer & Chen, 2012). According to the multilevel process change model, the change process includes factors such as managing culture shock, managing identity change, managing new relationships, and managing the surrounding environment. Each of these areas often leads to specific outcomes at the system, interpersonal, and individual identity levels (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

The combination of the antecedent factors, change process factors, and outcome factors make up the intercultural competence model. For example, there are institutional practices that are part of the system-level actions that place African American faculty at a disadvantage. The workload for African Americans is more difficult and they experience a lower level of job satisfaction (Allen, Epps, Guillory, Suh, Bonous-Hammarth, 2000). When African American faculty are disgruntled or dismayed by racial stressors that occur at their academic institution, they will more than likely endure the difficulties because the institution policies or practices do not support them (Pittman, 2010).

**Intercultural-Level Factors**

Deardorff (2009) in her adaptation of the multilevel process change model for intercultural competence used intercultural factors to replace interpersonal-level factors. Ting-Toomey (1999) designated interpersonal-level factors as an important antecedent element that includes contact network support, ethnic media, and adaptive interpersonal skills. Examples of contact network support can include any personal or social connections such as clubs or associations that help newcomers gain access and adjust to

the new culture (Ting-Toomey, 1999). The ethnic media segment consists of ethnic magazines and publications, television, radio, and other forms of media that may be unique to a particular culture. For example, a Latino new to the United States might be able to uses the Spanish television channels to help adjust or adapt to the country. Interpersonal skills can be used to help the sojourner, immigrant, or new person to adapt to the culture. According to Ting-Toomey (1999), these skills include the ability to communicate effectively, establish relationships, and the ability to endure anxiety associated with the culture differences. These interpersonal skills promote better communication between cultures by increasing cultural knowledge about what is important and when certain actions should occur within the culture (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

The multilevel process change model of intercultural competence here allowed investigation of the connection between the underrepresentation of Black faculty and their experiences at PWIs. Creswell (2013) stated that a theoretical approach can set the foundation for a clearer understanding of how concepts are related; this permits the researcher to establish a blueprint and build a strategic technique to investigate an issue. Creswell (2007) further supported the viewpoint that patterns and philosophies of the researcher regarding the strategies for implementation of research are based on the researcher's conceptual or theoretical framework. Once a researcher has formulated a plan, then he or she can decide how to implement the plan. In this study, the selected theoretical framework complimented the qualitative approach to examine the experiences of the participants. When a researcher chooses to focus on investigating the journey and experiences of participants in a study, it results in a qualitative study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

The model selected for this study is aligned with the purpose of the study, which is to explore African American faculty experiences at PWIs and identify effective ways to improve those experiences. In addition, the selected model allowed for a thorough investigation of the research questions generated by the problem statement. Therefore this model will serve as the theoretical framework for this study. The original model, created by Ting-Toomey (1999), was called the intercultural adaptation model. That version included a category in the change process section for managing goal-based issues that represented goals such as a United States citizen obtaining a graduate degree overseas. In the revised model used in this study, referred to as the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence, Deardorff (2009) suggested that the management of goal-based issues, while removed, can be incorporated into other areas such as the surrounding environment category or the individual expectations segment. Table 1 is a visual representation of the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence and it was used to guide the implementation of this study.

Table 1.

*Multilevel Process Change Model of Intercultural Competence*

| Antecedent Factors | | |
|---|---|---|
| **System-Level Factors**<br>• Socioeconomic conditions<br>• Multicultural stance and politeness<br>• Degree of institutional support<br>• Ingroup/outgroup definitions<br>• Degree of cultural distance | ↘ | |
| **Individual-Level Factors**<br>• Newcomer's motivations<br>• Individual expectations<br>• Cultural knowledge<br>• Personality attributes | **Change Process Factors**<br>• Managing culture shock process<br>• Managing identity change process →<br>• Managing new relationship issues<br>• Managing surrounding environment | **Outcome Factors**<br>• System-level outcomes<br>• Interpersonal-level outcomes<br>• Personality identity change outcome |
| **intercultural Level Factors**<br>• Contact network support<br>• Ethnic media<br>• Adaptive interpersonal skills | ↗ | |

Source: Deardorff, 2009. *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence,* Sage
Adapted visualization from Ting-Toomey (1999). *Communicating across cultures, New York: Guilford*

     Now that I have discussed the components of the multilevel change process

model, I explore how the antecedent factors at the system level, individual level, and

intercultural level affect how African American faculty adapt to the environment of

higher education. I also show how organizational and personal factors impact the way a person adapts to a new environment and I examine the related experiences of African American faculty.

## Factors Experienced by African American Faculty

System-level factors are aspects of intercultural competence that relate to institutional support, socioeconomic conditions, inclusivity and receptivity to diversity (Ting-Toomey, 1999). In addressing the system-level factors, I am using two subcategories: pipeline issues and obstacles that prevent African Americans from becoming or remaining faculty at PWIs.

### Pipeline Issues

While African Americans make up 13.3% of the United States population (United States Bureau of the Census, 2016), they comprise 14.5% of the total college enrollment (Snyder, deBrey, & Dillow, 2016). African Americans received 13.6 % of graduate degrees, 8.4% of postgraduate degrees, and 8.4% of the doctoral degrees. However, Blacks only make up 5% of fulltime faculty at United States colleges and universities (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2016). The educational pipeline reduces the number of African American students and thus potential faculty who enroll and graduate from colleges and universities. Even when the enrollment increases, African American students have difficulties at PWIs because of inadequate preparation, poor university climate, and institutional racism (DeSousa, 2001). The socioeconomic status of higher education institutions, financial restrictions, and a poor United States economy have an impact on low African American student enrollment in colleges and universities (Allen, 1992). Even when African Americans make it to college, they are more likely to be required to enroll in remedial courses before taking courses that lead to a degree at PWIs.

At four-year universities, 66% of Black students are required to take remedial courses compared to 36% of the White students (Snyder et al., Dillow, 2016) The graduation rates for African American students are also lower than the rates of White students. In the cohort of students that started college in 2009, 20.6% of the African American students graduated compared to 44.2 White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016).

There has not been a significant increase in the number of African American faculty at PWIs. In K-12 elementary and secondary schools, Black students have low enrollment numbers in college. In 2011-2012, approximately 14.8% of the total number of high school graduates were African American and the dropout rate for Black students was 5.5% of the total number of students who dropped out between the ninth and twelfth grade (Digest of Education Statistics, 2013). Although these numbers show some improvements over previous years, there is no indication that this improvement leads to more African American faculty at PWIs.

In K-12 schools, African American students are underrepresented in gifted and talented (GATE) classes because of screening processes and teacher selection practices (Ford, 1998). In 2006, Black students accounted for 3.6% of the total number of gifted and talented students in public and secondary schools (Digest of Education Statistics, 2013). This publication also indicates that only 22.2% of African American graduates were enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Advanced Placement classes are another area where African American students are underrepresented because it is a system filled with challenges that reduce their opportunities to go to college (Solórzano & Ornelas, 2002). African American students are retained at the same grade level at higher rates than White students in K-12 schools. According to the National Center for

Education Statistics (2016) between 1994 and 2014, 3% of African American students were retained at the same grade level. During that same timeframe, 2% of White students were retained.

Black students are overrepresented in areas such as special education because the education system includes unprepared teachers, inadequate curriculum, and a lack of teaching strategies and differentiated instruction that engage students in learning and this leads to more African Americans being placed in special education (Blanchett, 2006). In the 2011-2012 academic year, African American students made up 18.7% of the total number between the ages of 3 to 21 years who were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Digest of Education Statistics, 2013). More African Americans are suspended, expelled, or drop out of school because the educational system practices institutional racism (Skiba et al., 2011). In 2006, Black students accounted for 15% of the total number of suspensions from elementary and secondary schools (Digest of Education Statistics, 2013). Each of these areas contributes to lack of entry into college for African Americans and is representative of the educational pipeline disparities. Yet once African Americans make it into universities as students and eventually as faculty, they face another series of challenges.

**Obstacles to Becoming or Remaining Faculty**

Although 13,278 African Americans have been awarded doctoral degrees in recent years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016) that number only translates into 8.4% African American faculty. There are obstacles that impede the recruitment and retention of African Americans as faculty at PWIs. African American faculty are sometimes subjected to a chilly climate on campus and they feel like they do not belong or they feel unwelcomed (Turner & Myers, 2000). This can cause them to feel isolated

and to lose confidence. This is similar to the multicultural stance or politeness categories of the system-level intercultural competence factors that a sojourner or visitor may experience when they travel to another country and have interactions with people in the host country (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Some African American faculty experience what they believe is an educational infrastructure that is designed to give White faculty advantages at the same time that it creates and maintains disadvantages for African American faculty (Bonner et al., 2014). This system-level factor is associated with institutional racism, actions by an organization that harm minorities because it permeates the very fabric of our society (Lopez, 2000).

Previous research indicates that racism is permanently etched into our legal and educational systems when viewed through the lens of critical race theory (Bell, 1993; Capper, 2015; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Under this lens African American faculty and other faculty are continuously facing an uphill battle against the system. African American faculty also experience the effects of White privilege as they see White faculty display a sense of entitlement, access and expectations that they may take for granted (Jayakumar et al., 2009). This may be reinforced when minorities see that faculty of color are not retained or recruited to universities at a high level.

Life can be difficult for African American faculty at PWIs. They consistently experience feelings of exclusion and lack of appreciation. African American faculty experience low expectations, alienation, and marginalization of their work at the academy (Beachum, 2015). Some African American faculty members face racial- and cultural-related actions, situations, and comments that serve as micro-aggressions and eventually take enough of a toll to force their departure from the field (Pittman, 2012). This can cause Black faculty to feel there is a lack of support. In addition, African American

faculty do not always have adequate mentoring and consequently they may feel unprepared (Stanley, 2006). There are not enough mentors available for African American faculty and when mentors are available, they do not effectively mentor faculty of color. Mentoring is a critical element to the success of faculty of color.

New African American faculty may find themselves unaware of the requirements for scholarship, research, teaching, and service. As a result, they may emphasize the wrong areas, sit on the wrong committees, or spend too much time focusing on an area that does not enhance their ability to gain tenure (Bonner et al., 2014). For some African American faculty, there is a great cultural distance between them and their White peer. This exemplifies the intercultural competence factors showcased in the multilevel process change model. African American faculty can experience a double consciousness. They often feel that they must live in two worlds, a Black world away from campus and a White world on campus (Turner & Myers, 2000). Other African American faculty experience a loss of identity, which involves completely losing their own culture to adapt to the dominant White culture on campus (Beachum, 2015). The research also shows that Black faculty often separate from or diminish their own background and culture to fit in at PWIs.

The research on tenure and promotion for African American faculty at institutions of higher learning shows some common threads in their experiences. The road to tenure and promotions is paved with inequity and barriers, according to a study by Perna et al., 2007). Their study of the status of equity for Black faculty in the South showed that faculty of color have more difficulty gaining tenure and promotion than White faculty. They face greater workloads, and more time is spent working on service projects that do not necessarily lead to tenure or promotion even in community colleges (Levin, Haberler,

Walker, & Jackson-Boothby, 2013). African American faculty may work harder at PWIs because they are not as familiar with the landscape of practices, policies, and procedures on the campus. This could again be due to the lack of appropriate mentoring (Stanley, 2006).

African American faculty and other minorities at PWIs have noted that their race or ethnicity can be recognized more often than their qualifications and credentials. Turner and Myers (2000) shared a narrative about a faculty member who was introduced as faculty of color without any reference to the person's qualifications. Universities, colleges, and departments create an atmosphere that promotes African Americans being visible even when there are small numbers. African Americans and other groups face pressure to be the person of color in the room and to handle all minority issues in the department (Beachum, 2015).

There is a need for underrepresented faculty of color to receive continuous professional development to help prepare them for the job (Siegel et al., 2015). African Americans often feel unprepared to be successful as a faculty member. They believe that they do not receive adequate advising and mentoring for faculty positions. Going through the process of obtaining a graduate degree is not enough preparation to expect success as a member of the faculty (Harvey, 1994).

The research on courses taught by African American faculty at PWIs shows that when they are allowed to teach courses that they want to teach, retention is higher (Siegel et al., Smith, 2015).  When Black faculty teach courses that contain Black graduate students, they serve as mentors and they are expected to be empathetic, trusting, and approachable to the students (Tuitt, 2012). This is very different from what African American faculty experience at PWIs when teaching White students. These students often

challenge African American faculty, question them, and show a lack of respect (Bonner et al., 2014). These system-level factors show what the experiences are like for African American faculty.

## Individual Factors Experienced by African American Faculty

The second antecedent factor that relates to the intercultural competence experience is the individual-level factor. Ting-Toomey (1999) described this aspect of the process as consisting of newcomer motivation, individual expectations, cultural knowledge, and personality attributes. I have previously discussed how system-level socioeconomic conditions impede African American growth in higher education. These conditions can also apply at the individual level for a newcomer to a culture.

Socioeconomic conditions can have an impact on how a person is able to adjust or adapt to a new surrounding (Ting-Toomey, 1999). African Americans often come from low socioeconomic and disadvantaged backgrounds and may not have the financial means to pursue a doctoral degree (Allen, 1992). Blacks are less likely to pursue a college degree or to select their first college of choice because of a lack of funding (Perna, 2000).

When African American faculty face challenges or categories that overlap, they are experiencing intersectionality (Johnson & Rivera, 2015). In Crenshaw (1989) the author connects the combination of race and gender. These intersecting identities essentially combine barriers associated with each category. For example, African American faculty who are young, Black and female are likely to experience ageism, racial and gender bias. Intersectionality can cause negative experiences for faculty if the

multiple categories of a particular individual do not match the identity of the dominant

culture (Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey, & Hazelwood, 2011).

When African American faculty are employed at PWIs, they sometimes feel they

are being watched and must work harder than their White counterparts to accomplish the

same goals (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000; Turner & Myers, 2000). This feeling is magnified

when there are only a few minority faculty members or if the person is considered the

token person of color at the university, college, or department (Turner & Myers, 2000).

Tokenism occurs when a member of an ethnic group, such as African American, is

working alone or nearly alone with the dominant culture or race. This can cause anxiety

and discomfort to the individual considered the token person (Alexander & Moore,

2008). For African American faculty at PWIs in this position, it is challenging to

prioritize their time on campus because they have to represent minorities on committees

and other multiple minority issues at the institution (Turner & Myers, 2000).

When faculty of color working at PWIs start to believe that jargon, names,

actions, and other items said about their race actually apply to them, they are succumbing

to "*stereotype threat*". African American faculty members at PWIs sometime hear

derogatory terms expressed about them or their race and may start to believe or

internalize the negative stereotypes attributed to their race by society (Steele & Aronson,

1995). This could trigger them to portray the perceptions they are subjected to on

campus. For example, if the White students or faculty say that Black faculty teaching or

research is not as good as that of White faculty, the African American faculty may start to

believe that pronouncement and decrease their quality of teaching or researching, almost

like a self-fulfilling prophecy. This could increase their level of fatigue and impact their

level of confidence, self-esteem, performance, and their willingness to remain at the campus (Kang & Inzlicht, 2014).

### Intercultural Factors Experienced by African American Faculty

Some of the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs are intercultural experiences, occurrences between individuals of different backgrounds who interact, ignore, communicate, and co-exist in the same space creating some type of consequence (Deardorff, 2009). For example, the Black culture that African American faculty bring with them to the university setting is often ignored or marginalized by the dominant White culture at the university (Beachum, 2015). In addition, African American faculty often believe that they do not belong at the academic institution because of systemic issues that make the climate and atmosphere unwelcoming to them. At the same time their scholarly work is often not recognized for its true value (Scott, 2016). Black faculty face institutional racism in their job and that makes it very difficult for them to navigate the tenure process (Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey, & Hazelwood, 2011). In addition, Black faculty have to endure the negative perceptions of them by White students (Zambrana et al., 2017). These occurrences support the use of the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence as the theoretical framework for this study. Although this model could be applied to other areas of intercultural competence such as students and staff at PWIs, I decided to focus only on the perspectives and experiences that African American faculty have regarding the intercultural competence of their White peers.

African American faculty may use a variety of networks as part of the intercultural factors available to them in higher education. The American Association of University Professors could be a network resource for new faculty. The Black Doctoral Network might be a tool used by Black faculty. In addition, African American faculty

could benefit from a network such as the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. This could help faculty become scholarly researchers and writers (Pennamon, Moss, & Springer, 2015).

The use of ethnic media is another tool that can serve as an intercultural tool. For African American faculty, publications such as the *Journal of Negro Education*, *the Black Scholar*, and *the Journal of Black Studies*, could support Black faculty as ethnic media. To establish adaptive interpersonal skills, African American faculty can use cultural intelligence. The term *cultural intelligence* is expressed when an outsider somehow senses what a person from an unfamiliar culture says, wants, or intends to do (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004).

When an individual is traveling to another country, networks, ethnic media, and associations can help a sojourner, visitor, or an immigrant facilitate the adaptation or assimilation to the host country (Ting-Toomey, 1999). This is similar to the experience of an African American faculty member who comes to a new academic institution with limited knowledge about the culture of the university. There is a difference in cultures and the individual needs to gain knowledge to become familiar with the dominant or host culture. African American faculty use professional associations, networks, and mentors to work with the dominant culture (Zambrana et al., 2015). These resources can help Black faculty to navigate the difficulties they encounter at PWIs.

The intercultural competence change process can consist of interactions between the newcomer and the prevalent culture. It can include culture shock, identity adjustments, relationship issues, and environmental influences (Ting-Toomey, 1999). When foreigners intermingle their cultural norms with the local culture of the host country, that interaction becomes part of the change process (Fang, 2005). If foreigners

manage the change process well, they are more likely to fit in well and be accepted by the society. However, if the foreigners do not manage the process well, they are unlikely to be accepted by the dominant culture and will be excluded from the group. The outcomes of the intercultural competence change process can include revision of academic institutional culture policies and practices and the impact on racial minorities (Dowd, Sawatzky, & Korn, 2011). By engaging in the intercultural competence change process, Black faculty may be able to affect change and improve their overall experiences and the ability to be accepted into the dominant group at PWIs. On the other hand, if African American faculty do not manage the change process adequately, they will likely face more obstacles and a higher level of isolation from their White peers at PWIs.

## The Intercultural Competence Change Process

The change process of the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence consists of managing the culture shock process, the identity change process, new relationship issues, and the surrounding environment (Ting-Toomey, 1999). An immigrant, sojourner, or tourist to another country might experience some real cultural differences in language, clothing, food, and customs. These changes could create difficulties for the person who is new to the area. That person may be inclined to make adjustments in his or her style and actions to blend in or at least to keep from standing out in a negative way. African Americans who travel to or become part of PWIs may face the same characteristics and obstacles on campus.

## Change Process Factors for African American Faculty

The change process for Black faculty in higher education involves recognizing that they do not quite fit in and the need to make adjustments along the way to be accepted into the dominant culture (Bonner et al., 2014). Although all faculty have to

learn how to be successful, African American faculty face a more challenging pathway to a positive change outcome at PWIs. A positive outcome for Black faculty going through the change process at PWIs is to be able to receive adequate support, mentoring, and resources to help them adapt and succeed in their roles. A negative outcome results in a lack of support for Black faculty, a feeling of alienation, and a failure to adjust to the position. Black faculty consistently feel they must prove their teaching and scholarly ability at PWIs (Beachum, 2015). The author further suggests that Black faculty must adjust their own temperature gauges to account for the climate on PWIs.

Some faculty of color make goals and continue repeating those goals to themselves as they face adversity on campus to help adapt to the culture at PWIs. These goals can include striving to fit in at the university, avoiding confrontations with colleagues, and learning the culture of the department (Tuitt, Hanna, Martinez, Salazar, & Griffin, 2009). From an intercultural competence perspective, managing culture shock is the way that a sojourner, immigrant, or visitor handles perceived threats from the host country or culture (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Research shows that African American faculty have been able to manage the culture shock of being new to a PWI by networking, seeking mentors, and working hard (Bonner et al., 2014). Black faculty manage identity change by learning the dominant culture and making adjustments. This can result in a negative outcome of African American faculty losing or diminishing their Black culture and only taking on the White culture (Turner & Myers, 2000).

To manage new relationship issues, Black faculty may reach ou to interact with the other culture or they may isolate themselves to avoid confrontations. When African American faculty are unable to manage the change process successfully, they may experience anxiety or lack of self-esteem (Beachum, 2015). Therefore, African

Americans have employed ways to manage the changes they find themselves facing in their new environment. African American faculty have worked with racial and cultural stressors in the past. Black faculty seek relationships with peers (Ponjuan et al., 2011). To manage the surrounding environment, the Black faculty cope by using the expertise of their peers. In Gasman et al., (2015) the idea of a welcoming and inclusive environment that included Black faculty was sought. Further, research shows that there is a desire among Black faculty to create and maintain a welcoming environment (Siegel et al., 2015). This is another tool that African American faculty can use to manage the change process of intercultural competence.

## The Intercultural Competence Skills of African American Faculty

This study expands the examination of intercultural competence by focusing on the experiences of Black faculty in higher education. African American faculty members have developed skills to cope with the challenges they face working at PWIs. Black faculty draw on their upbringing, church background, friends, mentors, and their own sense of survival to respond to challenges (Bonner et al., 2014). To cope with some of the challenges, some African Americans call upon their faith and spirituality (Patitu & Hinton, 2003). They frequently attend church services, read biblical passages, and strive to inspire, motivate, and encourage themselves to remain strong as they endure challenges at PWIs (Beachum, 2015). Black faculty also draw on their family and community for support throughout their academic journey.

One of the most important factors that Black faculty and other faculty of color depend on is developing strong professional relationships with quality mentors (Stanley, 2006). Mentors serve a key role in coaching faculty of color in areas such as research, service, publication, and seeking tenure or promotion (Turner et al., 2008). These

mentors can be peers at the same institution or colleagues at a different institution or department. Black faculty have also used networks, associations, and minority organizations to find support at the academy. These groups provide a way to keep Black faculty informed about evaluation processes, research areas of focus, key contact people, service, and opportunities for professional development (Beachum, 2015; Turner et al., 2008).

Padilla (1994) defined a term called *cultural taxation*. This term refers to a duty to have an allegiance to the university, college, or department where a faculty member works and at the same time, represent a committee or service that places the institution in high regard. African American faculty experience a level of cultural taxation as they are frequently called upon to represent the university at special events and on specialized committees (Beachum, 2015). The skills developed by Black faculty help them during the intercultural competence change process. Though Black faculty have been able to find coping mechanisms to help manage change, there is room for improvement. Cleveland (2004) acknowledged that there is a lot more to accomplish in the area of diversity on university campuses.

Until the number of African Americans in faculty positions increase significantly at PWIs, there must be further study on the topic of intercultural competence and the change process associated with it. We can pursue additional ways for Black faculty to navigate the change process and eventually reduce or eliminate the need for them to change as a more welcoming culture is built on PWIs. The goal of this study is to be a tool toward changing the culture at PWIs.

**Intercultural Competence Change Outcome Factors for African American Faculty**

The outcome factors of the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence include system-level outcomes, interpersonal-level outcomes, and personal-identity-change outcomes (Ting-Toomey, 1999). These components allow African American faculty to gauge socioeconomic conditions, institutional support, politeness, and relationship issues. Each of these factors can indicate some type of outward manifestation of a noteworthy change related to intercultural competence.

**African American Faculty System-Level Outcomes**

System-level outcomes are the factors that relate to the organization or the university as a whole. In addition, they can occur in more than an institution. They can occur in the entire higher education structure or a large segment of the infrastructure such as the economy or immigration (Ting-Toomey, 1999). African American faculty can adapt to system-related issues by choosing to leave or to remain in higher education when they experience challenging situations such as lack of camaraderie, disrespect, and feeling invisible on campus. If Black faculty decide to remain on campus and they perceive that the institution has provided adequate support, the system-level outcomes can result in an increase in diversity on other campuses. This is an example of how Black faculty who engage in the intercultural competence change process are able to change the intercultural competence at PWIs. It is important for African American faculty to successfully navigate the system-level change process because they can add value to the PWIs where they are employed and thus can enhance the intercultural competence of students at higher education institutions (Williams et al., 2013).

**African American Faculty Interpersonal-Level Outcomes**

The system-level factors mentioned above pave the way for the interpersonal outcomes that African American faculty call upon. These interpersonal outcomes are the results of exchanges between the newcomer or sojourner and individuals from the dominant culture (Ting-Toomey, 1999). When an African American faculty member gets a new job at a PWI and tries to interact with the experienced White faculty in an unfamiliar climate, that is an interpersonal outcome. Another example is a conversation between an exchange student as he or she interacts with the host family or the local retailer in another country. The interpersonal outcome can lead to more connectivity between the African American faculty and White faculty or students on campus. For example, African American faculty could use their recently gained cultural knowledge to revise teaching strategies (Tillman, 2002). One way Black faculty may be able to improve their experiences at PWIs is by building positive relationships with students, staff, and faculty. This is more likely to occur when individuals use interpersonal skills (Spitzberg, 2015).

**African American Faculty Personal-Identity-Change Outcomes**

Personal-identity-change outcomes are ways that newcomers consistently create to adjust, cope, adapt, and fit into the existing society they are part of in an unfamiliar location (Ting-Toomey, 1999). If successfully navigated, the change outcomes for personal identity can lead to more cross-cultural communication and the ability for African American faculty to keep their identity because of a more diverse environment on campus (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Even so, African American faculty can still feel unappreciated and they can experience a sense of isolation, lack of confidence, and feelings of invisibility. In addition, the actions they take to blend in often result in them

losing their identity as they assimilate into the dominant culture (Stanley, 2006; Whitfield-Harris, 2016). Some African American faculty leave their personalities and ways of operating at home when they begin working at a PWI (Beachum, 2015). This is a negative situation for them because they have to essentially reduce or eliminate part of who they are.

## Bridging the Gap in the Literature

Intercultural competence is essential to helping people from different backgrounds and cultures to communicate and get along well with each other (Deardorff, 2009). Previous research on African American faculty has addressed a number of areas; however, there have been limitations to the research. In my review of the literature on intercultural competence and the experiences of African American faculty, I did not discover any connection between these two areas and the underrepresentation of Black faculty at PWIs. Previous research in the area indicates that Black faculty could have a positive influence on helping all students and specifically White students become interculturally competent (Madyun et al. 2013). Studying this area could reduce the gap in the literature and provide a meaningful contribution to the field. The relation between the education pipeline and the shortage of people of color as students or faculty is an area that has been previously studied. Jackson (2003) examined the journey of African American males through the education system from high school to serving as faculty at higher education institutions. Ladson-Billings (2012) studied the educational pipeline as it relates to the critical stages in the academic process African American students and faculty travel. These studies do not address the intercultural competence of Black faculty or the PWIs where they work.

Critical race theory (CRT) has been used as a lens to examine minority faculty of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Hiraldo (2010) pointed out that CRT could be important in promoting a more wide-ranging and diverse workplace in higher education. The author talked about the five tenets of CRT, which include counter-storytelling, the permanence of racism, Whiteness as property, interest conversion, and the critique of liberalism work with faculty of color. The CRT framework seems to offer more of an examination of the problems minorities face in higher education than a sound strategy for creating and implementing solutions. CRT may need to be combined with other theories to be more effective (Burton, Bonilla-Silva, Ray, Buckelew, & Freeman, 2010; Su, 2007)

Another approach to studying the plight of African American faculty at PWIs has been through the lens of their experiences with micro-aggressions. Pittman (2012) pointed out that Black faculty go through a lot of subtle, accidental, and intentional experiences at PWIs. She stated that all of these actions by White peers result in creating a hostile work environment for Black faculty. While this approach does address a specific aspect of the challenges faced by faculty of color, it does not provide a long-term solution for the problem.

Racial privilege has been studied in job satisfaction and retention of faculty of color. Racial privilege has been associated with the idea that White faculty benefit from the dominant culture and climate on university campuses (Jayakumar et al., 2009). While this is an important idea to examine, it alone does not provide an in-depth formula for increasing the number of Black faculty at PWIs. There have been studies that addressed the marginalization of African American faculty. For example, Harley (2007) described how Black faculty, especially Black women faculty, are relegated to roles in higher education with limited intellectual value such as teaching only courses related to diversity

or race-related topics. Black faculty have been shown to be marginalized in previous research by having their research devalued or ignored by their peers and other higher education stakeholders (Frazier, 2011).  Although these research studies show some of the negative experiences of African American faculty, the studies leave room to explore the intercultural competence experiences of Black faculty at PWIs.

A number of studies have addressed the lack of adequate mentoring for African American faculty as a reason for the low number being recruited and retained at PWIs. Stanley (2006) found that while faculty of color spend time mentoring students of color, they do not receive adequate mentoring from their higher-ranking peers on campus to help promote their success. Mentoring was found to be an essential component to the success of faculty of color in academia (Turner et al., 2008). My study reviews some areas not covered in these studies such as cultural adaptation and cultural identities.

Institutional culture has been examined in higher education as a system of practices and traditions that make it difficult for a variety of individuals or groups to interact with each other within an organization (Ismail, 2007). Other research reviewed ways of changing institutional culture through the commitment to new values aimed at modifying the organizational culture.  Previous studies can be expanded to draw a comprehensive connection to the experiences of African American faculty (Lakos & Phipps, 2004). I believe my study expands on what we have learned about institutional culture.

Stereotype threat is an area that has been reviewed in relation to students of color but not African American faculty. Steele (2006) explored how African American students could perform academically at the level that is associated with the low expectations that

other people have of the group as a whole. This topic has not thoroughly examined the impact on the total number of Black faculty in academe.

Byram and Nichols (2001) viewed intercultural competence as an important skill that does not require an individual to be proficient in a foreign language but rather a learner who becomes familiar with another culture. This outlines how intercultural competence can be beneficial in higher education. Studying the underrepresentation of African American faculty through the intercultural competence lens provides an approach that has not been comprehensively addressed. This lens could allow the researcher to explore what Holmes and O'Neill (2012) called a type of intercultural encounter where people of different backgrounds and viewpoints interact in search of common ground. I believe that by exploring the relationship between intercultural competence and the recruitment and retention of Black faculty, I provide critical information toward increasing the number of African American faculty at PWIs.

Intercultural competence is becoming increasingly important in post-secondary education in the United States and in our global society (Deardorff, 2011). It is critical to provide a greater link between all higher education stakeholders and the importance of being interculturally competent (LeGros & Faez, 2012). Being able to communicate and interact effectively with people who are different is important in facilitating more unity, cooperation, and collaboration in society and in higher education. It adds value to our society when we are able to work and develop positive relationships with people in different cultures (Deardorff, 2009). I believe intercultural competence impacts the challenges and successes of African American faculty.

This study explored whether intercultural competence can provide a greater platform to improve the experiences of African American faculty. In addition, it provides

a clearer understanding of what Black faculty perceive to be problems and assets in their experiences in the academy. This study also builds on existing research to identify additional supports for the challenges faced by Black faculty at PWIs. My study looked at ways Black faculty can remain who they are without having to change and at the same time offer other faculty insight on how to interact more effectively with Black faculty.

**Conclusion**

I began this chapter by considering the typical experiences faced by African American faculty at PWIs. Then I explained how these experiences formed the basis for my research questions and why this topic was worthy of further study. Next I introduced intercultural competence and I elaborated on its importance. From there I discussed the multilevel process change model for intercultural competence as the theoretical framework for my study. I then described the change process of intercultural competence and I looked at how African American faculty navigate that process. Following that discussion I examined the skills used by African American faculty through their experiences in higher education with other cultures. Finally, I discussed how this study would fill the gap in the literature.

In Chapter 3 I review the inquiry and the methodology used for the study. Then I address the inquiry approach used for this study. In addition I discuss the methodology, methods, and provide a description of the study's participants. The next section includes the data collection process and data analysis procedures. The final section examines the trustworthiness of the data, ethical concerns, threats to validity, and limitations of the project.

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to explore and identify effective ways to improve the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs by investigating the connection of intercultural competence to the African American faculty experience. The experiences examined included ways African American faculty face situations they are unfamiliar with on campus; the strategies they use to become familiar with processes, practices, and procedures on campus; and the way they navigate the change process. Reviewing this information was used to identify a blueprint to help African American faculty to become more successful at PWIs. To that end, this study provides recommendations and strategies for improving Black faculty experiences with the idea of increasing the number of full-time African American faculty on campus at PWIs.

'This project sought to answer three questions:

1.  What are the experiences of African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education and how do these experiences relate to the intercultural competence on campus?

2.  How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education view the intercultural competence of their peers?

3.  How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty, at PWIs in post-secondary education manage the impact and change process of intercultural competence?

**Inquiry Approach**

This was a qualitative study, an organized investigation of a system (Merriam &

Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative research allows the investigator to review the experiences of

participants in their own words (Roberts, 2010) and to examine a specific problem within

a system by using a type of qualitative action research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this

study I used the qualitative research approach to investigate the experiences of African

American faculty at PWIs because it provided an opportunity to examine the

phenomenon of the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs in higher

education.

This qualitative study specifically focused on the case study design model

because it allowed me to complete an in-depth study of the experiences of African

American faculty members within PWIs to determine and understand what limits their

success. Case study research provides a detailed account of one or more cases (Johnson

& Christensen, 2014). I selected the case study design because it provided an avenue to

investigate and interview multiple participants in different locations throughout the

United States.

The case study approach allowed me to study each African American faculty

participant separately and to determine what participants' everyday experiences were like

at their particular PWI. I examined the individual perspectives of specific PWIs as a

bounded system. Then I compared all of the individual cases for common themes as part

of a multi-case design. Using all of the individual cases to build the multi-case study

supports a thorough and balanced strategy to investigate the lives of the participants as

they engage in their academic duties on campus.

**Case Study Definition**

Case study research has been well defined. Yin (2003) stated that the case study is an approach that allows a researcher to investigate a phenomenon that is occurring in a real-world setting within a particular boundary. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) defined a case study as a thorough review and a specific unit of study within some type of system. Case studies can be an inquiry into understanding how a detail works individually or within an integrated system (Stake, 1995). Creswell (2007) described a case study as a methodology that allows an investigator to study a problem and issue by using a variety of data collection methods.

**Multi-Case Study Definition**

Case study research can include individual cases or multiple case studies (Yin, 1994). Multiple case studies are a combination of individual cases that include related situations with each other (Stake, 2006). These cases are investigated separately as part of a bounded system. The cases are then analyzed to determine common themes related to the specific phenomenon being studied. A multi-case design approach was best suited for this study because it allowed me to investigate the phenomenon of the experiences of African American faculty at different PWIs within a bounded higher education system. By looking at a collection of individual cases, an investigator can determine whether there are common themes between each case that can be applied to future cases. Such an approach also provides an opportunity to examine differences in the individual participants' experiences.

<div align="center">

**Methodology**

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To complete this study, it was necessary to select sites for participation that reflected the stated purpose of the study. To that end, universities with a White student

population of at least 50% or universities that had been categorized as historically White institutions and traditionally White universities were considered PWIs (Brown & Dancy, 2010). The universities selected also were institutions where the selected participants, all African American Jackson Scholars, were currently employed as full-time faculty. Since the UCEA is a group of higher education scholars from different universities who are working to strengthen educational administration and leadership in K-12 schools, it serves as a great pathway to creating and maintaining quality school leaders, mentors, and faculty. Through the establishment and implementation of the Jackson Scholars Program and Network, UCEA provides greater opportunities and access to quality educational leaders throughout the educational pipeline. With a primary focus on improving the leadership preparation of underrepresented groups such as African Americans and Latinos, the Jackson Scholars Program offers a pool of candidates that could embody the very essence of the information being sought for this study. This is especially relevant as it relates to the African American Jackson Scholars alumni because they have been prepared to lead and have received resources such as education in professional practice, mentoring, and networking.

Therefore, the Jackson Scholars were selected for this study because of the scope of preparation they receive through the educational continuum from graduate student status to full-time faculty. Each of these African American faculty members have been supported through participation in the two-year mentoring and support program, which sets the stage for them to be more successful in PWIs. This study sought to move beyond the mere identification of the hindrances to recruitment and retention of African American faculty at PWIs but also to identify best practices and strategies for coping at PWIs through the eyes of successful African American faculty. The Jackson Scholars

alumni offer a viable model for to obtaining this information. The sites selected for this study included public and private universities located across the United States.

In this study I sought to help the institutions and the participants identify differences and similarities in the experiences of African American faculty members. This information may be beneficial to resolving issues that impede the recruitment and retention of African American faculty. To contact participants, I communicated through emails, telephone, and colleague recommendations to gain access to the participants for the study and their respective institutions.

This study may well benefit the participants, colleges and universities, and future faculty of color in the academy by identifying obstacles to diversity and strategies to improve it. The study may have a direct positive impact on the African American faculty members who participated. I have benefited from the knowledge obtained during the study and I believe the study provides guidance for future application in areas related to the impact of intercultural competence on African American faculty in academe.

I am an African American male. My goal during this study was to remain professional and unbiased during the entire research process. I made every effort to make sure the information reported was honest and without intent to deceive or to misrepresent the work to suit a particular subjective outcome. Roberts (2010) stated that researchers must be ethical, truthful, and nonbiased without withholding negative or conflicting information in order to deceive others.

My position as a researcher is that of an outsider studying insiders. In studying the underrepresentation of African American faculty members at colleges and universities, I am considered an outsider even though I am an African American because I am not part of the college faculty. I assumed the position as an outsider with limited

knowledge of the actual experience of an African American faculty member at a college or university. As the researcher, I am obligated to pursue facts and the truth yielded by the data without regard to prior knowledge or personal beliefs.

## Methods

The study collected data through interviews with designated participants. Using this method allowed me to acquire knowledge regarding the personal experiences and real-life stories of the participants.

### Interviews

The interviews focused on individual African American faculty members and their experiences. I developed an interview protocol that was aligned with the study research questions and the theoretical framework model. Therefore, the interview questions provided opportunities to address the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs and their exposure to intercultural competence on campus. To complete the case studies on individual African American faculty members, I arranged meeting times to complete the interviews by telephone. Interviews are one of the most important ways to obtain information from participants (Yin, 2003). Creswell (2013) stated that interviews provide useful information that cannot be obtained through observation.

I believe that using interviews to obtain the perspectives of participants offers information that cannot be obtained through observations. I used the interviews to acquire data on the lives of participants individually and collectively. I conducted the interviews using structured open-ended questions and recorded the answers.

Since the Jackson Scholars participants were located in different locations the interviews were conducted by phone, then recorded, transcribed, and coded to identify common themes. Interviews allowed me to capture the essential experiences of the

interviewees in their own words and establish a clear understanding of what each

participant faces in his or her daily life on the campus of his or her PWI employer and

any similarities or differences in their experiences. Interviews can show how interviewees

are separated or connected by their experiences (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012).

I engaged in two pilot interviews with participants who were not included in the

final study. I received feedback on the interview questions from the participants in the

pilot sessions, peers, and the chair of my dissertation committee. I received training

during my doctoral courses and through research on the process of interviewing

participants. I used an interview protocol to implement a semi-structured interview that

included the date, time, and location of the interview. It also contained the name of the

interviewer, the interviewee, and the job title of the interviewee. Before the interviews

began, I gave a brief description of the project and stated the reason for the interview. I

thanked the interviewees for participating and verified my receipt of their signed

informed consent forms to participate and to record the interview session. There were 12

open-ended questions in the interview protocol. The interview sessions lasted between 27

and 65 minutes. Once the sessions were completed, I thanked the participants and asked

if there were any final questions.

### Description of Participants

The target population in this study were male and female African American

faculty members who currently worked at a PWI. These participants were selected from

the list of recipients of  Jackson Scholars Program. By researching the list of graduates

of the Jackson Scholars Program and contacting key individuals associated with the

program, I identified African American members. The program focuses primarily on

graduate students of color (UCEA, 2017). Since these recipients receive consistent

resources and support from UCEA, they may receive professional development that may improve their awareness of intercultural competence. That made the scholars good candidates for participation in this study. African American Jackson Scholars from 2006 through 2017 who had transitioned into full-time faculty positions were selected as participants.

It was important to study Black faculty in an educational administration program because they are education leaders who are supporting other future leaders and they are uniquely suited to address some of the challenges that Blacks face within the educational system. Since the Jackson Scholars have received the kind of support and resources through the mentoring program that will give them the tools they need to make it as PWI faculty, they are likely to be able to transfer that knowledge and skill to others. Although the Jackson Scholars Program does not specifically consist of professional development in intercultural competence, it does offer extensive learning opportunities for the members. That makes the Jackson Scholar alumni very suitable for this study.

I used purposeful sampling and snowball sampling to build a participant pool of African American faculty members for the study. The Jackson Scholars participants served as key informants in identifying additional participants for the study. I engaged 12 participants for this study. This number was selected because I believe that the sample size may begin to show theoretical saturation and multiple variation of the data collection. Creswell (2007) noted that up to five participants could be used in a case study. Since this is a multi-case study, a pool of up to 12 participants falls within the range articulated by Creswell (2007). This sample size is comprehensive enough to allow for the development of common themes. I conducted interviews and used researcher

reflexivity and peer review as part of the process to maintain validity and reliability. I made a written request for volunteers to participate in the study.

The Jackson scholar participants were included in this study because the two-year program prepares them for transition to faculty life. Though the program does not specifically teach participants about intercultural competence, the support and resources provided puts each graduate in a position to be successful as faculty. Therefore, this group could well have well-defined intercultural competence skills and a keen awareness of the intercultural competence skills of their peers.

## Data Collection

. Data was collected over a three-month period from February to April 2018. In January 2018, I contacted African American Jackson Scholars who were currently serving as faculty members at PWIs to request participation in the study. Once they agreed, I sent out email letters requesting participation in early February.

I followed up with additional emails and telephone calls to the requested participants again in early February. Next  I sent out confirmations to the individuals who agreed to participate with the acknowledgement that confidentiality and anonymity would be protected during and following the study. Soon after that, I spoke by telephone with participants. I sent out and received signed IRB-approved informed consent forms. Then I implemented appropriately developed interview protocols related to the research questions and the theoretical framework for the study and IRB approval requirements.

## Data Analysis

The data from the interviews were reviewed for indications of the level of intercultural competence perceived by the interviewee. Intercultural competence can be identified and evaluated in education (Collier, 1988; Elosúa, 2015). In addition, the data

were examined to summarize how engaged the African American faculty members were at their institutions. When faculty engagement at an institution is high, there can be a connection to the level of intercultural competence (Riley et al., 2016). The analysis of the data included a review of the impact of intercultural competence on the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs and covered the ability to present research, facilitate learning, and speak with confidence about cultures (Dimitrov et al. 2014). These data were obtained by using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and institutional fact books.

I used a thematic analysis coding system to analyze the collected data. Coding is the use of words or phrases that represent specific topics or subjects that manifest during the review of interviews (Saldaña, 2015). These data were divided into categories in several stages, and then the categories were refined until they reflected a true picture of the combined data as they related to mapping into the multilevel process change model of intercultural competence, which served as the theoretical framework for this study.

**Coding Process for This Study**

The coding process consisted of initially using the research questions and the theoretical framework to form themes. I used the process of developing a family of codes as articulated by Bogdan and Biklen (1992). Then I reviewed the interview transcripts and made notes regarding areas of interest pursuant to Merriam and Tisdell (2015). Open coding was used from that point to see what themes would emerge during the analysis of the data. Open coding is useful in helping researchers to allow the data to develop the possible categories or themes of the transcribed interview (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The data analysis process incorporated principles of conventional content analysis after some themes were developed from the research questions and the theoretical

framework. This type of approach is useful in developing more authentic themes and when previous research has not yielded a suitable existing group of themes that are relevant to the current study (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This is very similar to the inductive coding process that also allows the themes to emerge as a result of reviewing and analyzing the interview transcripts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

After reading the transcript and making notes of my thoughts and impressions of the data, I reviewed the notes and used information from the notes and transcript text to begin creating labels for the codes. The codes were then placed into categories and grouped into similar areas. This helps synthesize the data and offers an advantage of obtaining information directly from the interviewee (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

The themes that I identified during the coding process were critical in answering the research questions of the study, and the results of the overall data collection process were aligned with the theoretical framework.

**Specific Code Examples**

The coding information below represents specific examples I used during this coding process. Although the process was incremental and comprehensive, it was valuable in helping me to establish themes and categories.

**Research Questions Connection**

Here is how the coding process connected to the research questions. One of the research questions related to African American faculty experiences with intercultural competence. Therefore, one of the thematic categories was culture and climate on campus because this relates to intercultural competence. From there the category was confirmed through inductive coding. The climate and culture category emerged when a participant

responded to a question about the topic. Tracy, an assistant professor at the University of Northeast, responded by saying:

> Very White…. So, I am one of only two Black professors at the university….
>
> It's a smaller liberal arts university, so the last time it was like 136, I
>
> believe, full-time faculty members.

**Theoretical Framework Connection**

The multilevel process change model of intercultural competence served as the theoretical framework for this study. During the coding process, this model was a point of consideration in developing themes. For example, the model recognizes system-level, individual-level, and intercultural-level factors. It also denotes change process factors such as managing culture shock, identity, new relationships, and the surrounding environments. Therefore "change process" became a theme and eventually was labeled as a subtheme "making adjustments" within the "survival strategy" theme that emerged.

**Open Coding**

During the open coding phase, I made notes using specific categories throughout the interview transcript. One of the themes that emerged was "survival" for African American faculty. An example of this developed when Vivian, a participant from the University of South Atlantic responded to a question about fitting in at the university by saying:

> I can't say I fit in at all. Again, I will tell you, instead of fit in, I would tell you
>
> that maybe even consider, how did you survive? As a bridge to that question,
>
> because for me and my first institution, I was definitely on survival mode. I
>
> needed to go in there and do a good job and also position myself to move out

of that space and to a different institution that better matched my own

concept that I wanted to reside in.

So the combination of using some preselected coding themes from the research

questions and the theoretical framework along with the use of emerging themes from the

interviews served as the coding process for this study.

## Trustworthiness

Roberts (2010) stated that trustworthiness relates the idea of validity and

credibility, particularly in the use of qualitative studies. Credibility allows the reader to

believe the researcher's findings. To verify the reliability of the qualitative portion of the

study, I used maximum variation of participants, researcher reflexivity, and peer reviews

to verify the validity and the findings. These techniques can be used in qualitative studies

to determine reliability and validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Roberts, 2010). In this

study I collected data using multiple interviews during the data collection process.

To promote a higher level of trustworthiness of the data, I followed guidelines for

ethical practices and then the review of issues related to the study. To improve my

credibility, feedback was sought from the participants of the study. In addition, I carefully

reviewed and analyzed the collected data to prevent errors or omissions of important

information.

## Researcher Positionality

I am an African American male who has worked for over 25 years in education

including as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal in the K-12 educational system. I

have also worked as an evening administrator at a community college and I have served

as an adjunct instructor at several community colleges. In addition, I have served as a

coach for teachers, current administrators, and future administrators. Finally, I have a

desire to increase the number of African American educators and leaders in the K-12 system and in higher education to help create a pipeline of resources through a continuum from K-20 in our educational system.

## Ethical Considerations

Making sure that all participants were informed of the purpose for the study was an important step in the process. I made an effort to convey honesty and avoid deception to each participant. I sought to make sure the data were collected ethically and I maintained sensitivity to the needs of each participant to maintain a level of trust. I protected the confidentiality of each participant by making sure each faculty member's personal information was not revealed either intentionally or accidentally. In addition, each participant remained anonymous. I used pseudonyms to represent the participants and the higher education institutions where they were working. I made sure that personal feelings about the questions related to the study did not influence what I reported. I also made sure the information was accurately reported and determined if all information obtained during the study should be reported. I obtained approval to complete the study and obtained written informed consent forms from each participant. The collected data were recorded and secured on a password-protected device. The data will be destroyed pursuant to University of the Pacific Institutional Review Board requirements.

## Threats to Validity

Creswell (2013) defined *validity* as the development of sound evidence to demonstrate that test interpretations match their proposed use. In this study data were collected from individual participants, colleges and university sources, and governmental sources. I could not directly measure the accuracy of the published information and the characteristics of the data. Furthermore this study only addressed the experiences of

African American faculty members at universities where the participants were employed and may not be truly representative of the experiences of African American faculty members in California, other states, or nationally.

To address the potential threats to the validity of this study, I strove to be transparent and take precautionary measures such as reviewing the process, looking at the impact and potential for errors, and effectively communicating to verify the validity of the study.

## Limitations of the Study

This study addresses the perceptions that African American faculty have about the intercultural competence of their peers. To ascertain this information I interviewed the participants. The study, however, did not use an instrument such as a survey to obtain the information sought. The study only reviewed the opinions of African American faculty participants about the intercultural competence of their peers and did not include the perspectives of other faculty regarding intercultural competence and experiences. The sample size of the study only captured the views of some of the African American faculty participants who had participated in the Jackson Scholars Program and who were employed in educational leadership administration departments at PWIs. In addition, this study did not include senior African American faculty who had served 20 or more years as a faculty member at a PWI and who had been promoted through the ranks to become full professors and administrators.

## Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the methodology for my study, including the focus of the inquiry, inquiry questions, and the inquiry approach. Next the methodology, methods, and description of the participants were discussed. In the third section, the data collection

and data analysis processes were reviewed. In the final section, I examined the

trustworthiness of the data, researcher positionality, ethical concerns, threats to validity,

and limitations of the project.

**Chapter 4: Findings**

This study examined the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of African American faculty in higher education through the lens of 12 participants who were working in educational leadership administration departments at 12 different PWIs, and were all graduates of the Jackson Scholars Program. In this study each participant was treated as a separate case.

For this study, one or more of the following characteristics represented a PWI: an academic institution that had been historically or traditionally composed of a majority of White students, an academic institution currently with a White student population of at least 50%, or an academic institution currently with a White faculty population of at least 50%. Since each participant was taken as an individual case study bounded by his or her experiences at the institution of employment, the 12 case studies were then combined to make a multiple case study. Three research questions guided this study.

1) What are the experiences of African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education and how do these experiences relate to intercultural competence on campus?

2) How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education view the intercultural competence of their peers?

3) How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty, at PWIs in post-secondary education manage the impact and change process of intercultural competence?

This chapter is organized to show how the participants' interview responses about their experiences at the PWI of employment connected to the research questions. First I discussed the background of the participants. Then I examined the PWIs where the participants are employed. Next I revisited the definition of intercultural competence and I described what intercultural competence looks like in relation to the research questions. I then used the research questions to organize a discussion of the four critical factors that emerged while examining the participants' experiences related to intercultural competence at their PWIs: daily life on campus, support and resources, challenges and survival strategies for the change process, and off-campus community. I also included a section on the role of the Jackson Scholars Program. Then I examined the impact of rank on the participants of this study.

## Background of the Study Participants

A total of 12 African American faculty participated in this study, eight women and four men. The participants were employed fulltime at PWIs in various geographical areas of the United States. Their experience level as professors at PWIs ranged from two years to 12 years. None of the participants worked at the same university. Two participants were serving in non-tenure track positions, one as a lecturer and the other as an assistant clinical professor. Seven of the participants were serving as assistant professors on the tenure track. Three of the participants were tenured associate professors, and one of those participants was also an associate dean. Below I describe each participant using pseudonyms for their names and universities.

Participant 1, Sadara, had over ten years of experience working in higher education. She had worked at three different universities in three different states and was currently an assistant professor at her third PWI. Her current institution, known here as

Southeast State University, is in the southeastern region of the United States. It had a White student population of 72.7% and a White faculty population of 67.6% at the time of the study.

Participant 2 had worked in higher education for eight years. S Muriel had worked for two PWIs in different states. In addition, she obtained her doctoral degree from a PWI. Her current position was as an assistant professor. Her current institution, known here as Gulf State University, is also located in the southwestern region of the United States. It had a White student population of 65.3% and a White faculty population of 71.6%.

Participant 3, Keisha, had has worked in higher education at a PWI for two years and had obtained her graduate degree from a PWI in another state. She was an assistant professor at what is known here as Pacific Northwest University, located in the northwestern region of the United States. It had a White student population of 56.6% and a White faculty population of 73.2%.

Participant 4, Hezekiah, was from the area where he was currently employed as an assistant professor at the University of Red State, located in the southwestern region of the United States. He had attended three other PWIs in different parts of the country to obtain his undergraduate and graduate degrees. His current university had a White student population of 43.3% and a White faculty population of 65.4%.

Participant 5, Malachi, served as an assistant professor at the University of East Coast, located in the northeastern region of the United States. He has been in that position, his first faculty position, for two years. He attended a PWI for his graduate degree. The University of East Coast had a White student population of 49.2% and a White faculty population of 72.5% at the time of the study.

Participant 6, Sharon, was employed at the University of East Atlantic, located in the northeastern region of the United States, as a lecturer and she has been there for two years. Sharon has also worked in higher education administration for five years. Her current university had a White student population of 36% and a White faculty population of 61.3%.

Participant 7, Abraham, was currently an associate professor at the University of Great Lakes in the midwestern region of the United States. He had over 12 years of experience in higher education and he had worked at several PWIs. His current institution had a White student population of 67.7% and a White faculty population of 77.1%.

Participant 8, Vivian, was an assistant professor at the University of South Atlantic located in the southeastern region of the United States. She was currently in the second year at her current institution and the fourth year overall as an assistant professor. This was the second institution she had worked for and she had also worked in higher education in administration for 12 years. Vivian's current academic institution had a White student population of 56.7% and a White faculty population of 72.3% at the time of the study.

Participant 9, Nehemiah was an assistant clinical professor at the University of Appalachia in the southeastern region of the United States. He had been with this academic institution for three years. Nehemiah had served as a secondary school administrator for several years in the community where this university is located. The University of Appalachia had a White student population of 83.3% and a White faculty population of 78.5%.

Participant 10, Karen, had been in higher education for 12 years and currently worked at the University of Huron, located in the midwestern region of the United States.

Karen had also worked at another PWI in a different state. Her current academic institution had a White student population of 47.7% and a White faculty population of 75.1%.

Participant 11, Tracy, was an assistant professor at the University of Northeast in the northeastern region of the United States, and she had been there for three years. It had a White student population of 50.8% and a White faculty population of 88.6%.

Participant 12, Toni, had worked in higher education for 11years at three PWIs in different states. She was currently an associate dean at the University of Northern in the midwestern region of the United States. It had a White student population of 70.6% and a White faculty population of 74%.

All study participants were graduates of Jackson Scholars Program between 2005 and 2017. Six of the participants were in the same Jackson Scholar cohort in 2007, 2013, and 2015 (two in each cohort). The demographics and characteristics of the 12 Jackson Scholars graduates are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Participant Demographics and Characteristics

| Name (Pseudonym) | Gender | PWI Experience | Position | University (Pseudonym) | Location |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sadara | Female | 10 yrs. | Asst. prof. | SE State | Southeastern USA |
| Muriel | Female | 8 yrs. | Asst. prof. | Gulf State | Southwestern USA |
| Keisha | Female | 2 yrs. | Asst. prof. | Pacific NW | Northwestern USA |
| Hezekiah | Male | 2 yrs. | Asst. prof. | Red State | Southwestern USA |
| Malachi | Male | 2 yrs. | Asst. prof. | East Coast | Northeastern USA |
| Sharon | Female | 2 yrs. | Lecturer | East Atl. | Northeastern USA |
| Abraham | Male | 12 yrs. | Asso. prof. | Great Lakes | Midwestern USA |
| Vivian | Female | 4 yrs. | Asst. prof. | South Atl. | Southeastern USA |
| Nehemiah | Male | 3 yrs. | Asst. prof. | Appalachia | Southeastern USA |
| Karen | Female | 12 yrs. | Asso. prof. | Huron | Midwestern USA |
| Tracy | Female | 3 yrs. | Asst. prof. | Northeast | Northeastern USA |
| Toni | Female | 11 yrs. | Asso. dean | Northern | Midwestern USA |

**Background of the Participating Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)**

Twelve universities were represented in this study and selected because the participants were employed at them when the interviews for the study occurred. As we've seen, each institution had a predominantly White faculty population at the time of the study and all were considered historically or traditionally White institutions. In addition, all had a majority White student population; thus, White students were the largest ethnic group of students at each university.

The PWIs used in this study were selected because the participants worked there, and there was no affiliation between any of the institutions in terms of administration or operation. Each university in this study was functioning autonomously. Table 3 presents critical information about the universities in this study.

Table 3
Participant Universities' Demographics and Characteristics

| University (Pseudonym) | United States Location | White Students | Black Students | White Faculty | Black Faculty |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Southeast SU | Southeast | 72.7% | 6.3% | 67.6% | 11.5% |
| Gulf SU | Southwest | 63.3% | 4.6% | 71.6% | 8.2% |
| Pacific NWU | Northwest | 56.6% | 3.3% | 73.2% | 2.6% |
| Red State | Southwest | 43.3% | 3.9% | 65.4% | 5.8% |
| East Coast | Northeast | 49.2% | 9.9% | 72.5% | 11.2% |
| East Atlantic | Northeast | 36% | 19.9% | 61.3% | 14.3% |
| Great Lakes | Midwest | 67.7% | 4.0% | 77.1% | 5.1% |
| South Atlantic | Southeast | 56.7% | 21.6% | 72.3% | .09% |
| Appalachia | Southeast | 83.3% | 6.6% | 78.5% | 12.9% |
| Huron | Midwest | 47.7% | 5.4% | 75.1% | 7.5% |
| Northeast | Northeast | 50.8% | 7% | 88.6% | 5.5% |
| Northern | Midwest | 70.6% | 5.6% | 74% | 10% |

**Review of the Definition of Intercultural Competence**

Previously I used the definition of intercultural competence articulated by Elosúa, (2015) stating that intercultural competence is a level of knowledge about other cultures that exceeds awareness and is achieved through a process that includes continuous learning through experience, observation, listening, and training. In addition, Deardorff (2009) has defined *intercultural competence* as the ability to proficiently communicate and take appropriate action in situations that involve people from different cultural backgrounds through a lifelong process.

## Recognizing Intercultural Competence

In this study I focused on how the African American faculty participants interpreted the intercultural competence of their White faculty colleagues. Although the intercultural competence of the participants themselves might have impacted their ability to recognize whether their White peers actually possessed the skill, the focus of this study was the participants' perceptions of the other's intercultural competence, which is one way to determine how much a White faculty member on campus actually knows about getting along with a Black faculty member and successfully working with him or her to facilitate his or her success. If a White faculty member has intercultural competence, that person notices that a Black faculty member is not participating in faculty meeting discussions or is not being well received by students or other faculty members. The White faculty member would show empathy toward the Black faculty member by taking action to be more inclusive and accommodating in helping the African American faculty member be successful instead of being complicit in isolating, ignoring, or not recognizing the plight of the African American faculty member's negative experience.

Next, I examine how the experiences of the participants aligned with my three

research questions based on the four themes developed from the data: daily life on campus, support and resources, off campus community, and challenges and survival strategies for the change process.

**Experiences of African American Faculty and Intercultural Competence**

I reviewed the participants' experiences in their daily lives through their descriptions of the campus climate and culture. These experiences can vary, of course, depending on the person and the institution. I also sought to connect the participants' everyday experiences to their interactions with others on campus and their desire to navigate the university system's policies, practices, and procedures. I looked for indicators of intercultural competence of White faculty members who were in a position to make the experience of African American faculty members more pleasant by offering to mentor them, publish with them, and advocate for them in order to create a more inclusive climate and culture.

For some African American faculty, their experiences were similar to someone who travels to another country and remains there as a foreigner trying to fit in and learn how to survive. They may not speak the same language or have the same customs, mannerisms, and traditions. The difficulty in communicating with others who are different may prevent them from interacting effectively and being successful in the environment. This takes some type of support or resources from the insiders within the new culture or climate to help the foreigner or newcomer to flourish. Without that mechanism in place, the foreigner or newcomer will feel unwelcomed and possibly threatened.

Most of the participants in this study indicated there was a tendency for the PWI where they worked to exhibit an overall personality or culture that was uninviting and at

times hostile to African American faculty. Sadara described her experience this way.

> I think the biggest challenge, and it's one that I still grapple with, is finding colleagues that I feel like I can really work with, collaborate with, write with, think with. It seems like everyone's into their own thing, and I guess I'm doing that somewhat. And I've actually started doing a little with a couple of my students, so that's helping us in a way. But that was my biggest challenge, and something I could never, you know, seem to get going like I wanted to.

Sadara went on to explain what she was seeking in terms of working with colleagues.

> Although I do have a couple of copublications, really my dream would be to have like one or two people that I really, really worked well with, and that, you know, we bounce ideas off of. I kind of had that expectation as a faculty member. I thought, ""Well, this is what people do. They sit around and they talk about all these great things, and then they write about them and they do more research. They keep fueling each other's energy back and forth."" That's what I would have wanted. Still would love to have, but I feel like it's kind of like, you know, you just kinda do one thing at a time versus having this great thought partner. And that was my biggest challenge, and what I would really, really have loved and would love as a faculty member.

Another quote from Sadara represents the challenges she faced in working with peers at her institution and the way she addressed it.

> Well, really reaching out and talking to people, I think has been helpful. 'Cause the worst thing is to feel like you're completely isolated. And sometimes you can't really do that at your own institution, like you don't have a mentor that you

can really trust. Because the worst thing would be just to have someone at your institution, and you open yourself up and then they use that information against you, you know? So you have to really be wise as to who you confide in. And you know, even people that are not at your institution, sometimes you just don't want it to get back, like if you're really struggling in an area. So just finding, I think, those trusted people who can give you wise counsel, like when things get rough or, you know, when you just really need to just talk about like a bad day or an interaction that you weren't sure of. Just having somebody wise about those things also, I think, for me has been a great coping strategy. And it's not always the same person. You know, it could just... Or you know, different times, different people have stepped up, or I've run into trusted people that I was able to share with.

Sadara's words show that there is some level of difficulty functioning in the academic environment of a PWI. Her comments indicate there is not a particularly strong interculturally competent environment on campus but it is not necessarily unbearable for the African American faculty member being subjected to it. On the other hand, Keisha described a more hostile educational setting at the PWI where she worked.

So, to be honest, I have a folder called "Hell." HELL. Because I have had to keep data on all the things and stages that I've gone through. So I know that in the folders is communication to me. Some of that in the folder is about my responses and then the other part is me trying to write about it. Then the documentation too is about all the things I went through my first year and a half. So...I did not have a good experience. Not at all. Full of micro-aggressions. I've learned a whole lot, though, about academia and my own response to the things I can't help and I

cannot control. So... But... Right. And fighting. You know. So, I think the folks of color coming to a traditionally white institution... Most of us... I think... What I know about the research is that a lot of scholars of color do things that are about social justice in their own community. So they tend to understand, at least in my case, I feel like I have a good grasp on what gender racism looks like because that's been my scholarship. So then when I face it, it's hard. So, like, you start to have all the things that I was reading about. Racial battle fatigue.... It's like those things were happening to me and I knew they were happening to me. And so... and then when you hear the micro-aggression, I know that they are micro-aggressions and, man, you know, for me I always thought because I knew, I could figure out how to... I would then have a different response that wasn't going to adversely impact me but I still have the same responses of...with or without their knowledge. Like, that knowledge, I think, almost heightened it sometimes. Like, everything that was happening.

Keisha went on to say that she was leaving the institution. Here is how she explained her rationale for departing.

Yeah, I will be leaving my current institution. I will say there are the dispositions that they say are here at this university in terms of the graduate school of education. So, you know, I'm attracted to any place that speaks to social justice and equity in their model. But, in practice, things look different when you get in…. Well, I'm saying I know that I'm experiencing racism. Or, you know, different forms of Whiteness. White racism. Whatever. Or sometimes it was ageism. Like, I kind of got different intersections of oppression I was experiencing. So, at the time, was unconscious of or whatever. The other half the

time, I just kind of... I was, like, "Well, you know this is wrong."

While Keisha did not articulate any specific micro-aggressions during the interview, she felt uneasy about her situation on campus. It appears that her colleagues on campus were not interculturally competent enough to promote a positive experience at her academic institution; therefore, it led to her early departure from the university. Other study participants talked about their negative experiences as well. Tracy described her experience based on the culture she has faced. She suggested that her White colleagues didn't have a clue about the things Black faculty were experiencing and they did not pay a price for that lack of knowledge.

> I just feel like it's the culture, its just Whiteness, you know? And as I've started bringing up issues that students would tell me, and I would say it at the diversity inclusion council meetings, about how they don't feel comfortable in class, and how the professors comment and everything, but they don't feel like they have the voice to say anything back, because the professor has more power, they're grading them or whatever, and it's just like, "Oh, wow! I had no idea I was so unaware." I'm just so tired that, they get off the hook for acting so clueless about things. And you are gonna be so unaware if you keep walking in your White privilege. They don't see it.

Karen talked about her experience as an associate professor at the University of Huron.

> I had a good foundation to help me do what I needed to do to get tenure, but I experienced psychological warfare or distractions. Psychological distractions that could potentially drag you down or just get you depressed. Not necessarily did it slow down my productivity, but it just wasn't helpful mentally. I had a faculty

member, and this person may have, maybe was trying to be helpful, but to me it

was... to me it was a hindrance and it was sexist and it was racial or racist,

because I don't see this person doing it, saying these same things to White

males... to his own White male students. The first or second year, I think it was

my first year there, 'cause you know at the end of every year we have to submit

our CVs, do a review, and each department has a committee that reviews all the

faculty's productivity for that year. And he was, this particular faculty member

was on that committee, and we were at a conference or whatever, and he pulled

me aside and he says, "Oh I saw I'm on the review committee and I saw your

dossier, and there's no need to produce that much. You can slow down." In terms

of my publications? That has never been a message that I've been given from

people who have told me what is needed to make tenure…And I went straight to

my faculty mentor and told her what this particular faculty member said, and she

was upset about it and she told me, "Do not listen to him."

Karen felt that having a White male faculty member tell her to slow down on her

road to tenure was different from what he would tell her White peers. This type of

difference could be due to the White peer's lack of intercultural competence and either

not knowing how to effectively communicate with an African American faculty member

or it could be something more extreme such as racism being used to obstruct Karen's

progress toward gaining tenure.

In another case, Toni was not necessarily a victim of a bad experience personally

but she saw other Black professors subjected to micro-aggressions.

You're a lot more aware of watching sort of whiteness play out for other people.

And so, whenever... just my own personal motto is "When you get positions or

you're in leadership or whatever is to make things happen for other people." I always tell people it's not necessarily 'cause I'm just, "Oh, I just want to be the leader of something and I wanna be in the mix." Then yeah, we should have people of color at the table for things, but also be in a position to make things happen for other people. But I see a lot of stuff happening to other people and having to sort of advocate for other people, but then I think that's what... I don't know, I feel is the responsibility, just personally…. There's an assistant prof in our department, Black female. I hear conversations when... And she's like, "What's wrong with so and so?" And I was like, "Yeah. No. We're not gonna do that." So even how narratives get framed about certain people, I... Not on my watch. You're not gonna do that. I'm like, "Yeah. No. She's perfectly fine." Yeah, and just being aware of how things get talked about. Even with me in the room, this is another Black woman, but just, "Oh, she's in administration. She'd get this." And I'm like, "Yeah, no. No." So stuff like that. Usually micro-aggressions play out in a different kind of way for other people. And here she is, an assistant professor, frame her like you do the other white assistant prof. And so, it's like, "Yeah, we're not gonna do that." That kind of thing. You know what I mean?

The experiences expressed by the participants here clearly indicate that there is a lack of intercultural competence on the part of their White faculty colleagues. These participants were able to determine what daily life was like for them as African American faculty. Their best experiences in daily life often occurred at the department level.

**Daily Life on Campus: Department Life as the Foundation for Experiences**

Not surprisingly, participants were most familiar with their experiences at the department level. Those departmental experiences are where they overwhelmingly drew from in describing their interactions at their PWIs. Some participants indicated that periodically university-wide incidents permeated through to the department level. However, overall the departments operated separately from the university or school. The experiences of participants within their departments were both isolating and comforting. The departmental experiences were somewhat isolating because the participants had limited involvement with others at the school and university levels. The department was comforting to participants because it served as a refuge from the larger and often unfamiliar landscape of the university, even though some of the most eventful occurrences happened in the department. Clearly the study participants viewed the impact of the department where they worked as a critical element and foundation of their overall experiences at the PWI. Whether their experience was positive or negative, the department served as the foundation as they navigated the university system. To describe their experiences, participants talked about the climate and culture on campus. To capture a true representation of their experiences, the participants explained the culture and climate mostly through the departmental lens pursuant to their interactions on the campus.

**Campus Climate and Culture**

The campus climate relates to the overall environment on the university campus. It includes the attitudes, beliefs, and values of the various stakeholders on campus such as the faculty, students, and staff and the way they respect or disrespect each other. Campus culture consists of the norms, routines, policies, practices, procedures, and events

consistently conducted on the campus. The campus culture and climate represent the essence of the way a particular university operates and the way a person can perceive his or her experience during his or her time on campus. In this study, some participants saw their departments in the same way they viewed the entire university. Other participants saw their departments as different from the university. Some participants were unable to determine whether the departments they worked in were truly representative of the whole university because they were unfamiliar with the university culture. Here is an example of a participant who suggested that different PWIs operate similarly in terms of culture and climate.

When Hezekiah described the climate and culture of the university where he was working, he mentioned that the institution operated the same way as other universities while also periodically displaying evidence of making life difficult for Black faculty or staff. He made a reference to a prominent African American football coach who was fired from his position at the university even though he had a better winning percentage than a lot of White coaches at other institutions who still had their jobs. He stated it this way.

> What happens here happens at other places. So, yeah, I think ... there's nothing that really stood out, per se. I think more of the stuff that stood out was more within the context of the city itself than the university. But that's not to say the university is just like there's nothing there. I think a good example of   that was what happened to our football coach last year. He was a Black man, and you got to see the good old White network operate here at the university. But yeah that's not surprising as someone who's done Division 1 athletics and had to interact with that good old White network at the university I came from or played sports at. It is what it was. So, yeah, nothing stood out, per se, because you get

kind of used to it.

When referring to the department he was working in at the University of Red State, Hezekiah related a very different experience from the overall university experience. He made it clear that the department experience was more diverse and inclusive.

> So if all the professors are in the office area, we're getting work done, but we're also just catching up. So it actually makes the job lots of fun when all of the professors are in here together. As a faculty member, because this is the department that's racially diverse and it's not the typical or those horror stories of the assistant professors sit in the corner, doesn't say anything, it's super-inclusive so I'm not afraid, the majority of time, not to speak up or say something. My opinions are valued. It's not to say that some stuff maybe I'm quiet on or there's a meeting after the meeting where I'm like, "Yo, what was up with that comment?" or whatever else. But really, I feel valued here. I feel important, and by important I mean that my work matters, I bring value to the department. I just enjoy it and part of it is I'll recognize I'm at the University of … which, as a… means a big deal to actually be here. So I pinch myself almost weekly about the fact that they let me into this place.

Even without revealing specific actions by White colleagues seeking to improve the culture and climate on campus, Hezekiah's responses show that he perceived the culture and climate on his campus in a positive light. This connected to his experience on campus and allowed him to draw on the possible intercultural competence of his colleagues on campus. Since the colleagues worked together collaboratively, it created an inclusive environment that could indicate some level of intercultural competence by

faculty members.

    Muriel considered it important to research the culture of the university before actually working there to help facilitate a more interculturally competent experience, especially at the department level.

    I worked at a predominantly White conservative institution in the South, so there are real pieces to that when it comes to the way the institution addresses climate issues, potentially around race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, and I think they have some growth that they could do. But I specifically chose... and I would not have come to work here if my colleagues and my department were not similarly minded.

    Although Muriel did not offer specific examples about the climate issues she faced, she insinuated that it had enough of an impact to facilitate her transition to another academic institution. Muriel also noted that she found it necessary to become more involved in the daily life and culture of the university as she spent more time working there and began to become more invested there especially when an egregious incident occurred. In this situation the university culture and actions were more essential than the actions at the department level. She articulated it this way.

    The second piece is, I think, the more time I spend here, probably the more climate issues I'm going to need to address because A, I see more of the institution, I see more of the way it works. And then also B, the longer I'm here, the more invested I am in the institution and its growth, its improvement. So a concrete example would be that we have had, as with many institutions have since the recent administration shift, we've had a number of incidents with neo-Nazis posting posters, and those sorts of things on campus. And at a certain point, that

actually happened, and I had to be on campus that day. It was over a weekend

[and] I was teaching a weekend class. And the institution wound up waiting to

notify us for 12 hours, and so that was my sticking point, and I went ahead and emailed

my dean and said, "I don't know who I'm supposed to talk to about this. I'm sure it's not

you, so I apologize in advance. Could you just let me know who I'm supposed to talk to

about this? But I definitely..." I made it much more professional than this, but basically it

boiled down to "I feel some type of way about the fact that the hate crime occurred on

campus, I was there, and y'all didn't tell me, because I'm a visible minority. The jig is

up."

By first experiencing the racist propaganda on campus and then experiencing the

lack of communication, empathy, and action by the university administration, Muriel felt

unsafe and unsupported on campus. Since she had to address the topic with school

administrators before the administrators came to her, it shows a lack of intercultural

competence by university officials.

Malachi offered a different view. He talked about how difficult it was for him to

fit in on campus within his department and at the same time he had other faculty

colleagues offer support to him. He suggested that while his department was essential to

his university experience, it contained both benefits and challenges.

It's not easy. I wouldn't even say, now, that I'm particularly successful in that

respect. My colleagues are perfectly nice, and I think were you to ask anybody in

our faculty they would say I fit in just fine. I do feel a little separated, for reasons

that are varied. One, just like my schedule, and my work habits, are a little

different, so we also, in general, have a faculty group that [doesn't] tend to be on

campus very much, so I don't see them very much. I am also, I know I'm

relatively younger as a faculty member, and most of the faculty are a little bit older, you know, a little more settled down and stuff like this. And so, on a social basis, I am kind of different on a lot of those things. And also, in terms of the service thing, and I've been told that explicitly by faculty that are kind of looking out for me, which I am taking on a lot. And, you know, it's potentially problematic.

Malachi indicated a mixed experience. Since he was younger than most of the White colleagues in the department, he admitted he had difficulty fitting in. It is difficult to say if this was based on a gap in intercultural competence or a generational age gap. On the other hand, by Malachi's colleagues guiding him through the service and community factors related to tenure track, it appears that they were working to help successfully guide him through the tenure process. That indicates that there was some level of intercultural competence there.

Based on the articulated experiences of other participants, the level of intercultural competence on campus may not be pronounced or may be nonexistent. Abraham described his experience at his current PWI as similar to his experiences at previous PWIs. He indicated that there was a consistent White faculty mode of operation in these academic settings.

At this institution... let me think, it's just so pervasive that I don't even know... 'cause White folks are professors that doesn't make them immune from off race critique just because they get a PhD. So the comments that they make, the way that they try to extend your time out in order to keep as a measure and a means of control of Black bodies and Black intellectual independence, the ways that they use other people of color who are unaware in order to put them in positions that

will reproduce the status quo. There are all kind of examples. It would just take, it would just be way too much, there's no particular incident, but it just all happens and it happens constantly…the climate is the same on all of them. You face institutional anti-Blackness and white supremacist practices, as well as active aggressive, interpersonal representations and events. It's the same everywhere you go, pretty much. Some are a little bit better, like there are more people of color in the city than it was in…. It's... in a bigger city it's a little bit more progressive. But the same type of anti-Blackness and white supremacy exist pretty much, detectable, very much in all of those institutions.

Abraham's words about what he has experienced at PWIs resonate indicate that he has not been the recipient of an interculturally competent university atmosphere. That is somewhat different from what Sharon expressed. Sharon had a different perspective on her daily life at the PWI where she works. She cited experiences that were part of a continuum between the university, college, and department. She talked about perceptions of non-tenured faculty compared to tenured faculty.

So, at this particular institution that I'm at now, they've mostly done away with tenure track positions, so they do hire a lot of lecturers and my associates here.... There was some tension between those faculty members that were hired tenure track and their perception of the lecturer, and one faculty member was upset with the university about not hiring more tenure track positions and focusing on that lecturer line. We have our college news and department meetings, so that's something that I know is on the college level, and the department meetings, our department is all lecturers, so we have a different understanding of what a lecturer does, which is everything that a tenure track person does, except from the

expectation to publish, and therefore no time release, nor to work on research

projects, because of that. So, we do teach, this is a teaching university, so we do

teach fifteen credits a semester, which is a pretty heavy load, and we do advise.

And we advise about 100 students in the fall and about half of that in the spring.

So, you know, coming in I didn't have... It wasn't laid out before in terms of the

heavy advisement load, and that actually was a new shift for our department, to

now advise all freshmen, which made it a bit heavier, as opposed to advising

undecided students, but within my department it's very welcoming, we tend to

work together really well. I actually teach, but I have three credits for course

release for admin work. I am course coordinator for my course. I work with all

new lecturers and adjuncts who teach the research methods course.

At first glance Sharon's words seem to refer to a battle between the well-

established tenured faculty and the new non-tenure track faculty. After further review it is

apparent that it is the experienced mostly White faculty working against the new mostly

faculty of color and specifically Black faculty in Sharon's case. So on one hand there is

support within the department and on the other hand there is tension with the senior

tenured faculty and administration throughout the university. Sharon could be

experiencing intercultural competence by some department or university members and

the lack of intercultural competence by other members of the department or university.

Sharon's peers in the department may have a greater personal connection to her than

people who work in other areas of the university who do not know Sharon as well. That

could be the reason for the probable higher degree of intercultural competence at the

department level.

Another participant described what is essentially an indication of the intercultural

competence in her department. When Vivian discussed her experience of working at her current PWI, she elaborated on the importance of working together with a diverse group of colleagues in her department.

> At my current position, in my department I think one thing that sets my department apart from other places I've been at is that we are extremely diverse in comparison to other Ed Leadership programs, or even other departments in general on campus. And when I say diverse, we're diverse in terms of age, sex, religion, race, all of the above, the whole gamut. And I think that makes for a very interesting mix of faculty, because we are kind of like a little mixing pot, and we have unique nuances to our job. And we have... It's just made a world of difference having other different perspectives at the table, and not feel[ing] like I need to compete with anyone there.

The high level of diversity clearly made Vivian's day-to-day campus environment more pleasant. Since the diversity consisted of more than racial variety and encompassed areas such as age and religion, it seemed to carry a very positive effect on Vivian as an African American faculty member. This was a clear indication that intercultural competence exists overtly at least at the department level at her university.

Some participants reported having some positive experiences within their specific department but being unaware of the intercultural competent experiences elsewhere at the university. In one case, a participant had a mixture of experience at his PWI. Nehemiah talked about his experience in the department, college, and university this way.

> It was a very positive culture within the College of Education. People, as far as the university and my limited associations, because it's one of those where even though we try not to be in silos, we are in silos as far as within our college, and

then even from the college, we go into the departments. But as far as the culture,

[it's a] very collegial group of individuals that I work with in my department and

it seems to be the same across the College of Education, and throughout the

university as well.

Nehemiah did acknowledge that although his experience in the department was

positive, he was not sure if his department represented the overall culture of the entire

university.

The culture? Well I don't know because... that's why I was saying that even

though we try not to be in a silo, I'm in a silo; it's just that I don't venture out

outside of the College of Ed. So I don't... I'm sure... from based on what I can tell

the culture is very inclusive, but I wouldn't be able to tell you a specific example

because I don't get outside of my building, so to speak.

The situation described by Nehemiah was not unusual in this study. The idea of

not being particularly familiar with what was happening at the university level and

sometimes at the college or school level seemed to be a trend among the participants.

Nehemiah was able to identify what amounted to an atmosphere of interculturally

competent faculty members in his department but couldn't speak beyond that.

Another participant reiterated Nehemiah's view on life outside of his department

at the university. When asked about the culture and climate outside of her department at

University of Huron, Karen, an associate professor there, responded in this way.

Well, I don't... It's terrible because I don't really... I definitely do live in a bubble

within my department. I don't really interact with the rest of the campus that

much. I don't know if it's because I teach solely graduate programs. Also,

because I teach in K-12 leadership, we have satellite programs all over ...so I

don't really interact with the rest of the campus that much. Also, I did... when I

started, I had a group of three or four other Black faculty across campus that I

regularly hung out with, had brunch with, did things with socially and none of

those women are here anymore. Four of them, four, no, they're not here. They've

either got recruited to other institutions or didn't make tenure. So, I think that

might be part  of the reason why maybe I don't necessarily interact with the rest

of the campus, because there aren't... There are Black faculty, there is a pretty

strong Black faculty... relatively strong Black faculty association at the events and

different things. But my department, it's not perfect by any means. It's not void of

politics, but I feel like my department is kind of my safety bubble from the rest of

the campus. I don't really engage with the rest of the campus that much, I mostly

engage with my department and with my college.

Karen in verbalizing her situation at the PWI where she works did not appear to

be satisfied with her current status at the university but she did take some solace in the

fact that she had a protected safe space somewhere on the campus. Karen's words

indicate that the people in her department are interculturally Competent enough to make

her feel safe on campus. Karen also talked about how she felt safe in her department

because some of her colleagues outside of her department had difficulties as faculty

members. Karen recognized that her department was not a perfect space for her but it did

provide a safety zone. Karen's perception of having a safe zone on campus within her

department clearly served as a form of protection for her that space. It did not however,

address any issues that she may have faced in other areas of the university. Not all

participants in the study felt the way Karen did. Tracy, an assistant professor at

University of Northeast described her experience differently. Tracy seemed somewhat

exasperated by her predicament at the PWI where she works. Here is what she said when summarizing her experience of returning to teach at the same university where she received her doctorate.

> Probably two things is, I graduated from there in 2005 with my teaching certification, 2015, exactly ten years later, I returned back as a professor in that department. Two faculty members that taught me were still there, and when I had my one multicultural education course, same thing, nothing changed. Nothing about social justice, equity, anything, the same exact thing. I was the only Black person, and going through my classes and my program. I now have an African-American female who is my graduate research assistant; she is the only African-American female in her cohort, so nothing has changed.

Tracy went on to elaborate about her current situation as an assistant professor at this particular PWI. She seem particularly bothered by the fact that her department consists mostly of White professors preparing White future teachers to teach Black students in the K-12 school system. She phrased it this way.

> Very White, I'm one of... in …, when we think about diversity and talk about diversity, … is basically Black and White, right? So we're talking about Somalian, we're talking about Latinos, different races. We really don't have that, like how you have maybe in California, or how you have maybe if you're going to the New York public school system, we don't have that. It's basically Black and White. I'm one of two... So when I talk about social justice and equity work in this region where I'm at, it's basically I'm only really referring to the Black kids. White teachers teaching Black kids… So, I am one of only two Black professors at the university. There are a hundred and... last time there was a

hundred and.... It's a smaller liberal arts university, so the last time it was like a

136, I believe, full-time faculty members.

Tracy's frustration appeared to be aimed at the historical institutional practices

that permeated the entire university from college to department. She was referring to the

daily life in the department at her particular university. Her description of life on that

campus seems to indicate a lack of intercultural competence at the university, school, and

department levels based on the lack of diversity.

Study participants who had spent time at more than one PWI were in a position to

compare their experiences in intercultural competence between the universities. One such

participant is Toni who is an associate dean at University of Northern. She discussed her

experiences at two different PWIs. Here is how Toni described her dual experience.

It just feels a lot more political. I'm not necessarily sure why that is. But there are

a lot more political inner workings that I would say, probably because it's so big.

There are not that many faculty of color, particularly Black faculty. We probably

have about fourteen Black faculty in the entire college and it's a very large

college. So I think that's one of the things. When I first got here, there were a

bunch of school professors, senior professors, so it felt a little stagnant, not

the energy I think that I had at University of… At University of … most of the

faculty in my department were either associates or assistants. So, it's a really

young faculty.

In addition, Toni talked about how she was able to work and collaborate with her

colleagues at one university and then began to work in silos at her current university.

Here are her words.

Lots of great ideas. People published a lot, we wrote together, we worked together. So it was a little bit of a different type of culture. Whereas when I got here, there were, like I said, a bunch of full and associates. And so not very many people started writing together, or that same different type, the same type of camaraderie. People kind of worked in their silos, which was really interesting to me, because I would have thought that it would be different, right? This being a research university. But, yes, I was used to seeing people being on campus in their offices working. You don't necessarily see that here. Well, they tell me that our college is probably one of the more diverse colleges, which isn't saying a ton, right? Considering that we only have about fourteen Black faculty. So I would say that it's probably probable to the campus.

Toni's words indicate that there can clearly be a difference in experiences of African American faculty based on the intercultural competence level of the PWI whether the school or department. What Toni and the other participants in this study articulated were stories of their own unique daily experiences related to intercultural competence at PWIs all over the United States. This was also the case for Sadara, who reported being successful in her department but still feeling unfulfilled in her social life.

…So I think I knew what to do, but it was just a matter of "Okay, how do I make this work for me?" And I was doing really well at ... I got my first book going and I had a few publications, and I won an award for my third year there that was given to a most promising person, new faculty in a department. Oh things started working out well, but like I said, being single, I really wanted to be in a place where I could get married and have a family and all of that. Most people, doc[toral] students are not getting any younger, and you've already lived and

worked a little bit, at least I had, so I was like, "Okay, I got this and I don't have tenure yet. This is my fourth year. So in my third year, then honestly I just started saying, I need to look and so I can do both, 'cause now is the time where women, that we can have it all.

While Sadara acknowledged the importance of being accepted and successful in her department, it was not the contributing factor to her remaining at the institution. Her experience suggests that even when PWIs and specific departments at the university are accommodating to African American faculty, in the end it may not be enough to retain them if there are low numbers of African American faculty colleagues at the university.

In the next section I address research question number two regarding the intercultural competence of the peers of African American faculty at PWIs by reviewing the impact of participants' use of various support and resources available to them at their PWI or sponsored through other affiliated groups and associations.

**African American faculty views of the intercultural competence of their peers?**

Participants in this study were asked several questions regarding their experiences at PWIs. Their responses to questions have been framed to represent an interpretation of their views on the intercultural competence of their peers. The interview protocol was designed not to specifically ask questions about intercultural competence so that participants' answers regarding their experiences could emerge organically without being led to the answers through leading questions about intercultural competence. Since the participants were not asked specific questions about intercultural competence nor was the term defined for participants, it is possible that there could be some confusion between intercultural competence and racism. I now briefly discuss the differences between racism and intercultural competence.

**Racism or Intercultural Competence**

Racism has been defined as an entire system that allows a particular group to operate at an advantage over other ethnic groups (Tatum, 1992). More recently racism has been defined as a system where race is used to determine the value of a group or individual and as a result some groups or individuals are placed at an advantage over others (Jee-Lyn García & Sharif, 2015). On the other hand, intercultural competence is defined as a level of knowledge and understanding about a particular culture or ethnic group combined with an attitude consisting of empathy and a desire to show respect through action designed to eliminate any inequities or miscommunications (Barrett et al., 2014). I have also previously used a definition of intercultural competence in this document as a level of knowledge about other cultures that exceeds awareness and is achieved through a process of continuous learning through experience, observation, listening, and training (Elosúa, 2015). The terms *racism* and *intercultural competence* in this study are actually mutually exclusive. When there is a high level of intercultural competence, there is likely a low level of racism. In other words, a person who is truly interculturally competent is unlikely to be a racist and a person who is a racist is unlikely to be interculturally competent. In this study where participants describe the existence of racism, it is also an indication that there is a need for intercultural competence.

One way that I believe participants in this study may have viewed the intercultural competence of their peers is through the support and resources they received or had access to as a faculty member. These areas gave participants access to knowledge about processes, procedures, and practices at the department, school, and university levels of their PWIs. The support and resources, whether through formal training or mentoring programs and allocation of funding sources for professional development, could be

perceived by African American faculty as assisting them in becoming acclimated to the campus environment. The support and resources might also be viewed through the eyes of African American faculty as an indication that White faculty members have enough intercultural competence to see that the Black faculty member is struggling or needs assistance and then acts upon that knowledge to assist that person, as suggested by Barrett et al. (2014). This could happen during faculty meetings, department meetings, university-wide meetings, social gatherings, or casual conversations. Recognizing that a problem exists between a Black faculty member and some area of the PWI, and then taking action to correct that issue is a sign of a person who is interculturally competent (Barrett et al., 2014).

There may also be situations when a White colleague does not notice that there is an issue between an African American faculty member and the White world; however, if that person gains knowledge about the situation and offers assistance once he or she is made aware of the possible cultural issues and then strives to resolve the issue, that person is moving toward becoming interculturally competent (Elosúa, 2015). For example, if the White faculty members are always going skiing, golfing, or swimming, and the Black faculty members notify them that they do not participate in these events, the White colleagues could change the activities or create a path for the African American faculty members to join once they know about it. When White faculty members know they are alienating or isolating African American faculty through an action, conversation, or activity, they are showing racism and they are also showing that they do not have intercultural competence.

## Support and Resources

The participants talked about the resources that they had access to or desired while working at a PWI. The two main areas of support and resources were colleagues serving as a translator or interpreter, and faculty development programs. Both of these areas included some type of mentoring and networking. These resources were not always available on the campus and sometimes required the African American faculty member to seek assistance from associations and colleagues outside of the university.

### Colleagues as Translators

The African American faculty working on PWI campuses in my study did not always know how to speak the language of the institution. They often found themselves trying to survive in the White culture that was inherent to the academic environment of the university. In some cases their colleagues served as mentors, part of an information network, and outright translators to the academic culture and climate at the PWI. Muriel said she had to have help from White faculty throughout the tenure process because there was only one other Black person in the department and that person did not have a wealth of knowledge on how to navigate the tenure system or the academic climate at the university.

> I couldn't make it... if that was my only outlet. I'm the only... I think it's me and one other person that are the only tenure track or tenured people in the whole education school. So, no, I do not just rely on that. I'm the only one in my department, so when I say these are my colleagues and my friends, all those sorts of things, those people are all not Black.

Muriel also described how a White faculty member had taken specific steps to help her and others prepare for the tenure process.

The senior of higher ed reached out to all of the junior faculty who were also

higher ed, like "Let's sit down for a meeting. You guys are all going to go up for

your mid-tenure review next year, so let's just talk through what the process is

like, the types of things you need to be thinking about now and then. Also let's go

ahead and have an in-depth discussion about the kinds of things that you need to

be thinking about three years from now for tenure, when it comes to the star

reviewers and your letters and what you need to be doing now to prepare

yourselves and to positively do well with tenure in the future." That's incredibly

helpful, particularly from someone who will be reviewing us for tenure, and he's

able to have the kind of conversations behind closed doors with people,

obviously the real world.

Muriel's description of her interactions with her White peer is an indication of a

colleague with intercultural competence who was willing and able to essentially translate

for Muriel to help her through the tenure process. This is a case where it is obvious that

she perceived her colleague to have a high level of intercultural competence.

During the interview process of this study, participants were asked if they had

received any assistance at their PWI from their White peers, and their responses can be an

indicator of their perception of their peers' intercultural competence. In reflecting on her

experiences working with a White faculty member who helped her at a PWI, Keisha

stated that she had two White mentors who had worked to help her have a successful

experience at the university. She also noted that the interactions could sometimes be

humorous.

Yeah. So, I have a mentor. She does…She's been my mentor since I got there.

She's been a good listener, and someone I can confide in. So, I do have a

White…I have two White mentors, actually… but, I will say, my department

chair is one of the leading experts on, like, white racism. So, he

knew…sometimes he wasn't able to advise me. He was like, "You know I'm not

Black. So, you need to talk to so-and-so." At least he was honest enough to say

that to me.

By using humor and knowing his limitations in relating because he was not

African American, Keisha's colleague showed her some level of intercultural

competence. He recognized where he could help and he gave recommendations for

additional resources to help her be more successful on campus.

Just because a White colleague helps an African American faculty member, it

may not necessarily mean it is a sign that intercultural competence is abiding at a high

level at the institution. Abraham acknowledged that although he received some assistance

from White faculty in navigating the system at the two PWIs where he had worked, it did

not change his view of how negative his overall experience had been in these academic

settings. He summed it up this way when referring to White faculty who had not been

helpful in interpreting the academic landscape to him as a faculty member.

Ways that they've done it is questioning research without merit, having double

standards, and being micro-aggressive, hiding information about resources that

should be shared or directed to all of us. When someone calls the office about

doing work somewhere or contracting, they'll hide that for themselves or

something like that. So there's all kind of ways that it happens, man. Changing

the narrative every time you submit your materials for review, whether the third-

year review or whether review for promotion and tenure, shifting the narrative.

Well, one year is all about teaching; then you come out with strong teaching and

next year's all about research. And stuff like that, man, just changing the
narrative, shifting and all that kind of stuff.

Abraham's expression of his experience at PWIs indicates that he viewed the
majority of his White colleagues as not being interculturally competent and only a few
peers as having some level of intercultural competence. The language and connected
actions of White faculty he mentioned were personal to him but were not uncommon
among the participants in this study. However, many of the study participants had at least
one White faculty member who helped them navigate the faculty journey at a PWI. In
some cases this was accomplished through the use of some type of faculty development
program on the campus. In the next section I discuss study participants' experiences with
faculty development and mentoring programs. This does not include the Jackson Scholars
Program, which is addressed in other key areas of this study.

**Faculty Development and Mentoring Programs**

For most of the participants in this study who had access to some type of faculty
development program in addition to their Jackson Scholars Program experience, it helped
them to learn more about the requirements of being a faculty member and served as a
valuable resource. Through these types of programs, participants for the most part were
able to increase their knowledge about the tenure process and learn to balance, teaching,
research and publication, and service requirements. When the participants did not have
access to development and mentoring programs, they appeared to have more of a struggle
learning how to be a faculty member. One of the participants was adamant about making
sure that programs of this type were in place even after she left the institution. Vivian
suggested that there should be more of these types of programs available for faculty of
color. This is the way she described her experience with her previous institution.

On top of that, when I finally did accept my new position here, I made it a point during my exit survey to state things they need to do to better increase opportunities to the pertaining faculty of color. It's a chilly climate at my former institution; they definitely need more mentorship programs in place, they need to have critical conversations with chairs and school directors to talk about how to better support faculty of color.

Vivian's revelation about her previous academic institution indicates she viewed her colleagues at that university as lacking the intercultural competence required to support African American faculty and other faculty of color on that campus. She seemed to be acknowledging the importance of having White peers who had empathy for African American faculty members and who were willing to provide the necessary support for success.

Providing assistance through a faculty development program was not perceived by all participants as helping them be successful. Tracy had a different viewpoint about faculty development programs. She viewed the faculty development program at her institution as a way to diminish the value of African American faculty even though the program was designed to increase African American retention at the university.

I think one of the solutions that the president and that the HR person kind of came up with was really looking at diversifying the faculty. It was to create kind of like this post-doc program where you can kind of get like a taste in the life of faculty life at the university before you decide whether you want to apply for a full-time, tenure position. Post-doc so you'll get paid less money, that way they don't have the pressures of publishing and everything; they can get immersed in the culture and get those times. What! But why are you thinking of that as a way to diversify

the teaching pipeline. If you're so happy that you came up with this idea, but you're going to target basically Black faculty, or faculty of color to go through that pipeline. So anybody that's White, they're good enough to come in to a regular full-time faculty position. I have a problem with that. That's not creative to me. And when you say that, this is how I feel. So that's another example. And I told them. They were like, "We didn't mean that; we weren't thinking about it in that way. We were just thinking about it in giving extra support and help. And letting them kind of feel out and see if this is what they really want to do." And I was like, "That's part of the problem. You keep looking at us from a deficit view."

Tracy's concern clearly exemplifies how people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures can perceive a program differently. Her situation could have been a well-meaning program by interculturally competent peers who wanted to help her become successful on campus or it could have been an action by non-interculturally competent White peers designed to show that Black faculty members need more help than White faculty members do to be successful at a university. It shows the importance of intercultural competence and having a diverse faculty when developing and implementing university policies and procedures. The actions taken by university faculty and administrations have a tremendous impact on the experience of African American faculty at PWIs. In the next section I turn my attention to the change process of intercultural competence by drawing from the data collected during the study.

**African American faculty at PWIs manage the change process of intercultural competence**

To review the African American change process of intercultural competence, I first examined the participants' challenges including working in the university climate, dealing with the behavior of White colleagues, and striving to acquire job skills. Then I reviewed the survival strategies for the change process of the participants in the following areas: using colleagues, pursuing health, changing PWIs, and making adjustments. In the last section I examined the influence of the off-campus community on African American faculty including the outside culture and the influence of the off-campus culture, and I looked at the role of the Jackson Scholars Program.

African American faculty participants showed ways to adapt or adjust to the White culture and climate at their respective PWIs the way a foreigner or newcomer does when he or she travels to another country. These study participants in some cases used the change process to self-identify and expand who they are and that represented change for them.

Managing the impact and change process of intercultural competence consists of recognizing differences in culture, communication, and climate and then making adjustments that facilitate a more effective way to successfully deal with the differences. For example, if an African American faculty member at a PWI notices that the way White faculty and Black faculty interact on campus is completely different, the African American may find it necessary to make some type of change to be able to navigate the university system because of a deficiency in intercultural competence. That could mean changing the way he or she normally operates or communicates to be able to get along with others or to peacefully coexist with his or her White colleagues. Below I discuss the

challenges faced by African American faculty at PWIs.

## Challenges

Three critical challenges emerged as being obstacles to being successful African American faculty at a PWI. These challenges led participants to seek remedies by using the survival strategies that they developed as part of the change process of intercultural competence. One challenge was learning and fitting into the climate, at the department level, school or college level, and the overall university level. Another challenge was enduring and surviving the way White people behaved on campus toward the African American faculty. A third challenge was figuring out and working to acquire the specific job skills needed as a faculty member. There were many examples articulated by the participants related to these challenges. Below I describe some of these experiences and I offer some words directly from the individuals who went through these circumstances.

### Working in the University Climate

Learning and existing in the university climate were important to the participants. The climate on campus tended to have an impact on how well they fit into the academic setting and whether they felt isolated at the university. For a majority of the participants, the university climate did not include a significant number of faculty of color and even fewer African Americans. The participants found this shortage an added burden since they were already learning how the university operated on a day-to-day basis. Learning the climate of the university was a difficult task on its own.

Toni recalled her experience in becoming familiar with the campus culture. She compared her status working at a previous PWI to her status working at her current PWI. She stated that in the end, she learned the climate and was able to fit in accordingly.

I think I was okay in sort of fitting in. It took me just personally, it took me a

while to feel comfortable, but that's just me. Just because when I was at University of … I had made a name for myself, people knew me. They knew I was a person who would fight for what was right, so to speak, and yeah, and so I didn't really know people here and know the climate. I mean, it took me probably a year. I think people... because I came in with the tenure and rank that helped me fit in a little bit. Because these people had looked at my stuff and voted on me for tenure even though it was an expedited process. And so in that case, I felt like, "Yeah, I can stand against any scholar that's here." So I wasn't necessarily... I didn't necessarily feel out of place in that aspect.

Although this study primarily focuses on the intercultural competence of others at PWIs, it is also important to note the importance of African American faculty themselves learning the value of being interculturally competent. In Toni's case, she was able to acquire knowledge about the university climate and culture and then take action by making adjustments in how she operated on campus. So Toni discovered the impact of intercultural competence and also developed a change process.

Karen also discovered a path to managing change on the PWI campus where she worked. Her route was somewhat different from Toni's journey. Karen had difficulty fitting in at first but eventually found a way to be successful on campus.

How I'm able to fit in with other faculty, and challenges that I face? … Think back. When I was hired, I think I was one of the youngest faculty members in my department. And even though I've always felt respected in terms of my work, being a young faculty member and being a young Black single female, not just in my institution, but just living in …was definitely challenging. I've lived in many different places and started over, but I think that that was the hardest restart that

I've ever done in my entire life, because I just didn't have... I didn't know

anybody when I moved to…. I didn't really have a support system. …Like I said

before, I think the core women that I befriended, if I needed a ride to a doctor's

appointment or had some type of emergency, those would be the people that I

would call. And I definitely do have some people in my college who right away

took me under their wing. Another faculty member, and she's in the specialized

department. I don't know... I don't even remember how we got connected. But

she at the time was the director for the…and they do research and professional

development for teachers in the area school district. She helped me get connected

to the area school district and she asked me if I would be interested in facilitating

PD [professional development]. They said, the school district had asked her to

facilitate a PD, and so she asked me if I would be interested and doing that with

her…and so, she helped me get connected to the area school district, and 'til this

day she's still always been someone who has looked out for me, and really

showed genuine care. And then my first year at the university, my department

head brought all of us assistant professors together and talked about mentoring,

and said that we needed to identify someone that we would want to be our formal

mentor. The person who I asked to be my formal mentor, I had observed her for a

while, she was the associate department head at the time, and she seemed to be a

person that was really good at dealing with   conflict…Because she was the

associate department head, she was in charge of handling a lot of... all the

promotion and tenure, paperwork, etc. She knew what was required to put

forward a quality tenure dossier. Also, I just really admired her research, even

though her research is primarily on LGBTQ youth and identity and policy issues.

And even though our research is in different areas, we both study equity and justice, and I just like how she approached her career and navigated her career. So I asked her to be my faculty mentor and she always gave me feedback on what I needed to do, and written feedback in terms of what I needed to do, and what boxes I needed to check off. And then she ended up being on the committee. Which is great, because she's my mentor and she really knew me, knew my work. And so she knew how to advocate for me.

Although Karen's experience was strongly influenced by someone who eventually became her mentor, Karen used her mentor's actions as a model for managing the change process in her own life on campus. She began to adapt the way she operated on campus pursuant to the words and deeds of her mentor. In the next section I discuss how the behavior of White colleagues impacted the participants of this study.

**White Behavior**

A majority of the participants spoke about some level of disrespectful, demeaning, or inappropriate behavior by a White faculty member, administrator, staff member, or student at their university. These encounters ranged from micro-aggressions, such as commenting on work attire and questioning the participant's experience, credibility, or research, to more egregious acts like treating the participant like a student and talking to students about the participant's lack of experience and skills. In addition, some participants reported that at times when a student had a disagreement with a grade or assignment requirement, they frequently felt free to go straight to the department chair or upper administration without first talking to the participant.

Keisha talked about how a White female faculty colleague with whom she was co-teaching, degraded her while students were nearby.

You know, I go in and I asked her about the question my students had because they might have been the same that her students had because we share a class together. So, she looks at my computer and I point to it because it's about the discrepancy in our online platform in terms of due dates. And then she looks at me and then she pokes me on the shoulder and she tells me, "You need to pay attention."

It did not end there for Keisha. She left the classroom and went to the bathroom to calm down and call a mentor about how she should handle the situation. After deciding she would confront the colleague about the issue, Keisha met with her later in the day. When Keisha spoke to the colleague about the earlier conversation, the colleague repeated that statement that Keisha needed to pay attention. Keisha then grabbed her belongings and left the room.

The situation Keisha faced with her White colleague shows why it was important for her peers to have intercultural competence. It would have helped her coworker to interact with her, treat her with respect, and at the same time show empathy toward Keisha. The incident caused Keisha to confront her colleague in a way she had not previously done. That represented the change process she implemented.

Sadara recalled being called "Sweetie" by one of her White students. She looked at it as a sign of disrespect because she noticed that the White male faculty members were always called by their title of either professor or doctor. Sadara felt that faculty of color at her institution were treated with less respect and were not regarded as highly as their White counterparts at her university.

The way Black faculty are treated by White students at PWIs can be particularly challenging when it comes to how these students behave in class. Vivian recalled an

occasion when she had a bad interaction with a student that resulted in her actually being concerned for her safety on campus. Here is how she described it.

There was a time a white student of mine challenged me out-right in the classroom, got up, and stormed out. And at that point I also began to fear for my own safety, because again, you know with school shootings, just sitting in the school challenging your viewpoints, you don't know what's coming on during the next class lesson. So I was starting to get worried for my safety, because again, I was being challenged when I was trying to introduce different concepts and terms, especially when you're teaching classes around diversity and marginalization, people may not like the ugly truth that you have to discuss. And that, oftentimes, presented its own challenges. So I found for me, I didn't have the levels of support.

There was an obvious lack of intercultural competence by the White student in Vivian's class but beyond that, there may be an environment maintained by interculturally incompetent faculty and staff who allowed or tolerated the student's action. Those types of actions could have permeated throughout the department or university. Vivian was not alone among the participants interviewed in terms of either feeling unsafe at times while working at a PWI or needing a safe and protected space on the university grounds. There was a tendency from the participants to seek out places on campus where they felt comfortable.

Several of the participants felt the need to make sure they were addressed by their titles because of incidents of disrespect by White staff on campus. In these instances they were considered as students or staff rather than faculty. A few of these faculty members eventually ordered name badges or office nameplates that included their names and titles.

One participant remembered the secretary first ordering the nameplate with only her name on it and telling her that the titles were not included. The participant had to insist on having the title placed on the nameplate before it finally was ordered for her. Here is what Tracy said about her experience related to her nameplate.

> In some aspects, I feel like everyone knows who I am. But here's a story. So, I do look really young, I mean I look like a college student. And despite the fact that I see them from faculty meetings, it's still like, "Oh, how long have you been here? Oh, you're a professor here?" And like, it's this assumption that I'm a teacher, a student, a graduate student, probably. But even I get that from students. And so, we have nametags, right? …And so I was asked... Because I always wear my nametag, as soon as I hit campus, my nametag is on. So, I was asked why do I always wear my nametag? And I wear my nametag because I want people to know and see that I am Dr…, professor in the Education Department. I said, "Y'all may not need to do that, but I need to do that." Right? Because there's all these other different associates, even when I get into the university cafe or something. It shouldn't be like that, but it's another different level of respect, as well. And it's the fact that, "Wow!" Like, "What?" Like, "Oh, I just thought that you were a student here." Right, because we don't really see those examples, we don't see it, and they don't see it on a university campus at …, so to me, it stands for a way... a lot, it stands for a lot…And so I wear it, and I wear it all the time, as soon as I step foot on campus. So I was asked that. Then my badge had got messed up, and I had to get a new one. And I said, "I want Dr…." Or whatever. When it came in, it said..., and I told the lady, the President's secretary, I was like, "I requested that it said Dr…. When you asked me how I want it printed,

that's what I put." She was like, "Well, I mean everyone said the first name and our last name." And no one had Dr, I said, "I understand that." I was like, "But I'm a Black faculty member at this university, and it's very... " I'm not like, "Oh, I'm a doctor." Or whatever. But at this university, I was like, "You don't understand the different dynamics and what that brings. And so, I'm not wearing this nametag, you can keep it. And please order me one that says Dr.… There's a reason. "I don't care that the other faculty members... I mean, they just have whatever, whatever their name is, Amy whatever. It's fine, because they're already in people's, in students' minds that they are a doctor, that they are a professor. That's not how it functions with me. But that's another type of... I mean, it's just a nametag, but it means so much more. Like, nothing for us is just.

Through Tracy's experiences at her PWI, she received first-hand knowledge of how White faculty and staff at the university can behave toward African American faculty. For her it was more than a nametag issue; it was about respect for her as an African American faculty member of equal status with her White peers.

Tracy also had another experience serving as the faculty advisor for the Black Students' Association at her PWI, and she talked about how every action that the group took was monitored and micro-managed by White university administrators. The participant also stated that the White student groups on campus did not receive the same kind of scrutiny.

So it's like, "Oh what are the Black kids doing? We have to be careful. They may start protesting. They may start..." You know what I mean? And so there's been some problems and we had a meeting with the dean and I just told the dean, "Quite honestly, I understand." There's things that we need to have in order and

have it straight, but I was like, all of this intention and all of this nitpicking about every literal thing because whatever request wasn't in two weeks before for the room. And a white organization, they don't... They'll just say, "Okay, we'll put it in." But now they gotta get an email. I gotta get CC'd on the email. I gotta go to the President's Council for something simple like this? I was like, "This is because it's the Black student union and they need to see that." And so, I don't know how I would not be the advisor for the Black student union. I just don't know how to let that go because part of that is what gives me life to even still be on that university campus.

Tracy was very energized when talking about her interactions with White administrators and the need for her to continue involving herself in advocating for the African American students on campus. She indicated that it was an important role for her to fill because a White faculty member who did not have the perspective she had, previously held the advisor position. Tracy's experience shows the importance of intercultural competence at a PWI. She established a change process that involves a more active role at the university in advocating for Black students. Tracy was just one of the participants who was working to help others through her service work while navigating the climate at the university. In addition, she was seeking to learn how to do her job to the best of her ability. As she gained that knowledge, it also became part of her change process.

Malachi recalled his experience in working through the service requirement at the PWI while striving to meet the other requirements at the university

> …But, I would say the harder things have to do with, how do I put this, the harder
> things do have to do a little bit with a culture that is not as strategically oriented

towards things that I tend to care about. Whether or not that's like student services and things like that, or social justice, or things like that, and because of that, I've done some work to try to participate in some of those things, but it is a lot, and that's one of the big things that is becoming challenging. Which is it's just a lot to do as a faculty member. You're not supposed to, technically, take on a whole bunch of, in terms of service. You know, your job is research first, then teaching, and all of that. Service is kind of at the bottom. But when you come to a university, and there's just a lot to do, it's kind of hard not to be involved, especially when you have certain types of backgrounds…and also, in terms of the service thing, and I've been told that explicitly by faculty that are kind of looking out for me that I am taking on a lot. And, you know, it's potentially problematic….So, I talk about how faculty members are sometimes concerned about me taking on too much service. One of the things I haven't really found out the right way to communicate yet is that every single service thing that I'm doing has been passed to me from a faculty member, so you can make this not happen. It doesn't have to be me organizing this particular event. Something just fell into my lap because you guys said you couldn't do it, so.

Malachi elaborated further about how the service requirements that other faculty suggested actually made doing his job as an assistant professor more difficult.

There's only so much time in a day, and if I spend three and a half hours in a morning meeting trying to put together final details for a town hall on race, that's three and a half hours I don't spend on prepping for class. If I'm not prepping for class then, then I have to do it some other time. And so I spend the afternoon prepping for a class and also reading papers, and then I have like 17 student

meetings. That's an exaggeration, but I have a lot of student meetings with students that need help because they're passed to me, because they need help with these things. Then I go home and realize I have not thought about a single thing that is actually what I do. But these things are what everyone else is hoping I do.

Nehemiah was in a role where service was a more critical part of his job because he was not on the tenure track. In his situation, recruiting students for the program he was a part of was an essential part of his job. While teaching was important to him in terms of his job responsibilities, researching and publishing were not emphasized as much. Nehemiah was the only study participant to describe his service requirement this way.

Because I'm in the clinical track, I wasn't so much... I mean I wasn't so concerned with a true research agenda, like a tenure track person would come into position having to have. So my research is still developing because research is not a major part of my job. The major part of my job is the recruiting of students into our programs and building the partnerships with local school systems, and because I've been in the area now for 20 years, I know quite a few of the administrators and [the] superintendent. So that was definitely a selling point from my end as far as knowing and having that network across the state of … to be able to tell me and then automatically have some type of relationship already built-in with the local school system, which was a huge part of the position, was that partnership development.

Tracy, Malachi, and Nehemiah's descriptions of the situations they faced as African American faculty members at PWIs indicate the importance of not only addressing the challenges they encountered but also managing essential changes to their process of operation on campus in order to survive and thrive when White colleagues

either purposely or unintentionally made their jobs more difficult. Below I review participants' descriptions of learning how to be a faculty member by acquiring specific job skills.

**Acquiring Specific Job Skills**

Many of the participants talked about how important and challenging it is to learn how to be a faculty member at their institution. They were interested in doing a good job and being accepted as equals with their White colleagues. The journey to learning the job can be positive and negative according to one participant. Abraham spoke about the way he learned how to be successful as a Black faculty member using a network of Black scholars to navigate the PWI terrain and at the same time he realized there was a different standard for becoming a successful faculty member that was beneath the surface and controlled by White faculty.

> That's why the Barbara Jackson Scholar program was so great, man…I think there's also hidden curriculums of Black agency and agency of scholars of color. And I think Barbara Jackson Scholars introduced me to that because it put me into context with people who were experiencing the same struggle at various institutions and who have been along the same journey. And so that's the hidden Black curriculum that we don't talk about and we don't make realized enough. But yeah, there are hidden White curriculums. One of them, for example, is around language and discourses of fit and compatibility that White racists and bigots use against people of color in order to try to keep them out or remove them. There's another hidden curriculum that deals with the shifting expectations of people of color. So when it's a White woman, for example, and she really hasn't published much or hasn't published independently, and she might have one or two

good articles but they may be with a dissertation chair. And all of what I'm telling you actually happened.

Abraham's description of a double standard for White and Black faculty at his PWI reinforces the narrative that intercultural competence has an impact at an university and gave Abraham the incentive to work harder to acquire the skills necessary to become a quality faculty member as part of his change process.

Acquiring the skills necessary to be a faculty member can take a combination of actions. Toni described her path of seeking to learn how to become a faculty member this way.

> I don't know, necessarily, how I learned. I will say that while I was doing my PhD program, and getting my PhD, I was a principal, but my last year of my program, I left the principalship. And I left the principalship just because I wanted to really devote myself to figuring out what it meant to be a faculty member, so I could go to conferences, different things like that, that I don't feel like I could've done had I remained as a principal. So I think that actually did serve me well, in that sense.

Toni went on to say that she was still learning to be a faculty member and that she found the political aspects of the job more challenging as they related to the changing requirements for obtaining promotion and tenure. As Toni pursued learning about being a faculty member, she was developing her change process for intercultural competence. The more she learned, the more adjustments she would make based on the newly acquired knowledge. This was quite different from Nehemiah's experience in learning how to be a faculty member.

No hidden curriculum, actually it's a part of our program within our department,

there's a graduate certificate for the professoriate, and so just talking with my

major professor and knowing that this was eventually the route that I wanted to

take was very open and transparent.

Nehemiah's experience seems to indicate that intercultural competence is active

on that campus. That may be one of the reasons he viewed the process of becoming a

faculty member as being aligned with a program that was available to each person in the

program regardless of their background.

Abraham, Nehemiah, and Toni had different experiences when it came to

acquiring the job skills for the position; however, all of these individuals realized what it

took to help them acquire the skills necessary to perform their job. There were also

actions they used as part of the change process for intercultural competence that each of

the participants embraced to survive as a faculty member. In the next section I discuss the

survival strategies used by the participants to be successful at their PWI.

**Survival Strategies for Managing the Change Process of Intercultural Competence**

For many of the participants, learning how to be successful at the academy took a

lot of effort. Some participants viewed their experiences on campus as an act of survival.

It meant more to them than just trying to fit in. It was about living to fight another day

and it was about working to keep control of their destiny on campus. The action taken to

survive is part of the change process for intercultural competence that participants used to

adjust, adapt, or be successful on campus.

The theoretical framework used in this study, the multilevel process change model

of intercultural competence, indicates that the change process includes elements such as

managing the surrounding environment, new relationships, identity change, and culture

shock. Each of the participants used some type of change process for intercultural

competence as a coping strategy that was derived from these elements.

The strategies covered three essential categories. The first is the way participants

used their colleagues for mentoring and networking. The second was the participants'

ability to use prior experience at a PWI to survive at their current PWI. And third,

participants made adjustments to manage the change process for intercultural

competence. Then I review the role of the Jackson Scholars Program in assisting the

participants.

**Using Colleagues**

One of the survival strategies acknowledged by every participant related to using

their colleagues to help them successfully navigate their PWI campus. They reported

using their colleagues for reflecting, networking, and as mentors even if their colleagues

were located on other campuses.  The participants indicated that they used the expertise

of both Black and White colleagues in their desire to learn about the job. In addition,

some participants received assistance from individuals from other ethnic groups such as

Latinx, Asian, and Native American.

Vivian talked about how difficult it was for her to fit in on campus how she

worked to improve it. It effectively served as part of her change process because it

represented modifications she made to survive as an African American faculty member.

> I can't say I fit in at all. Again, I will tell you, instead of fit in, I would tell you
>
> that maybe even consider, how did you survive? As a bridge to that question,
>
> because for me and my first institution, I was definitely on survival mode. I
>
> needed to go in there and do a good job and also position myself to move out
>
> of that space and to a different institution that better matched my own

concept that I wanted to reside in. So for me, I had built a network of other

professors and we would meet up for lunch once a month and we would just

meet up, not even necessarily to write, we did do some writing together, but just

to encourage each other. Everyone had their own issues that they were going

through, whether it was micro-aggressions or dealing with the impostor

syndrome, or whatever.

Vivian took steps to build a network of experienced faculty members around her

to help her navigate the difficulties she encountered on campus. The network was part of

her change process for intercultural competence. She used this process to help her survive

at the PWI.

Hezekiah also used university colleagues as part of a network to learn the tenure

process and to have a more inclusive experience on campus. Here is how Hezekiah

described the way he capitalized on having accessible colleagues.

I already had this kind of mini-network before I even stepped into the position, of

brothers, right? We have what we call the Brofessors Suite. There's still three of

us here. So that was great, which has been a huge help in terms of navigating the

University of … which is something I do not take lightly because I have

colleagues of mine, friends of mine, who are at other places who have no support.

The other awesome thing about the department I'm in is that we're actually a

department that's... we are racially diverse. There are more faculty members of

color than there are White faculty members.…

Hezekiah enjoyed a unique situation where he had a number of colleagues who

looked like him and a clear network of people he was comfortable with in the department.

While this made him more at ease on campus, it was not an indication of there

necessarily being more White peers with a high level of intercultural competence on campus. It represented a safer space for him to survive in at the PWI. Another way to survive articulated by the participants was leaving the oppressive PWI and working for a more tolerable PWI. There were a significant number of participants who talked about how their experiences at a previous PWI had prepared them for working at their current PWI.

**Changing PWIs**

Nearly all participants who had either previously worked at a PWI or had been an undergraduate student or graduate student at a PWI were able to use those experiences to help them when they started working at their current PWI. Most of the participants had developed a high tolerance threshold for dealing with university climate issues and difficult interactions with White faculty, administration, staff, and students. In addition, participants overwhelmingly were able to seek out safe spaces on their campuses and insulate themselves somewhat from racially and culturally charged situations at the university. Malachi explained why he did not have as much difficulty working at a PWI based on his previous experience as a graduate student at a PWI.

> Yeah, and I guess related to that, part of why that shift didn't happen, probably as starkly for me, is because I came from a predominantly White institution. So, I went to … University, where like I said, myself and my colleague …were the first Black people in six years and so, the kind of schmoozing that I learned how to do, I did it all there and I just continue it here. So, there are a lot of ways in which I think that I am quite different than I would be at an institution that is not predominantly White. But on the other hand, that didn't happen because I moved here. That shift happened because I went to grad school, which was also

predominantly White.

Malachi was able to use his prior experience at PWIs to buffer his current experience at a PWI. The knowledge, skills, and experience he obtained as a student and as an African American faculty member working around White faculty members was invaluable to him as he lived out his academic life on campus. Things that might have been more incredulous to other African American faculty members were not considered that serious to Malachi because he had been through it before. The protective coating of prior experience served as a form of insulation from adversity. That also functioned as part of the change process for Malachi. His description of his prior PWI experience captured the essence of the responses of most of the participants with previous exposure to a PWI.

Toni offered a unique background and set of experiences related to PWIs; she had been at three PWIs. She suggested that each university had a different climate and she was able to compare each one to determine how to make the best choices for survival.

> University of … was a little bit more diverse, but then when I went to University
> of … it was not as diverse. I think at the time, in my department, when I was
> hired, there was one other faculty of color in my whole department. And we had
> about, I would say, about 25 or 30 faculty in our department. There was only one
> other person of color. She was a Black female. That was the only one. When I got
> there, she had had trouble getting tenure. She got it, but that was just something
> that going in, I knew, just 'cause I knew some people who worked there. They did
> have a reputation of not being able to keep any faculty of color. So yeah, it was...
> going from … to there, it was a big difference. There weren't that many Black
> students on campus either.

In Toni's situation, even though she did not obtain a true blueprint on how to survive at her PWI, her experience there in watching others on these campuses helped her to use that acquired knowledge to survive at her current university. This allowed her to determine what was working and what was not working on these campuses and to make changes as necessary to survive and excel.

When Hezekiah elaborated on his experience at a number of PWIs, he offered an interesting perspective. He had a high tolerance threshold because he had experienced hostile activities at other PWIs.

> So really, my experience where I got my PhD was probably, ooh, one of the toughest couple years of my entire life in terms of the micro-aggressions, this blatant racism I got from faculty members, peers of mine, people in the community, etc. So by the time I got here... and part of it too is, I will admit, is coming back home. So I know people in…. I know people  at the university. I know a lot of people who went through here as students, whether it was undergrad or advanced degrees. And so that helps also because it's home. It gets negated in the sense where I can go home initially and not have to worry about my family, our supports systems in a different state across the country. So I would say everything I experienced was because I went to three other PWIs...

Hezekiah seemed to feel empowered by the knowledge he acquired being exposed to other PWIs before working at his current one. It provided him with an opportunity to expand the strategies available to him during the change process for intercultural competence at his academic institution.

At times nearly all participants reported having to make some type of adjustments in how they operated in order to survive or to promote success at their PWIs. Those

adjustments amounted to critical actions toward the change process for intercultural competence.

**Making Adjustments to Manage the Change Process**

In order to navigate the PWI terrain successfully, a number of participants reported regularly making changes in the way they were operating on campus. In some cases they had to change who they were on campus and redefine themselves. In other cases the participants had to make constant changes in the way they balanced their health, their work life, and their lives away from the university.

One of the participants spoke about how she had to make changes because a previous strategy had not led to success at the PWI. Keisha talked about how initially as an assistant professor trying to earn promotion and tenure, she was not being her true self and did not always give her real opinion during discussions at the university because she did not want to risk losing her job or failing to make tenure. In her view, she was not being respected or treated fairly by colleagues when she withheld her views, so she needed to establish and maintain her identity on campus.

> I tried to adapt to this environment. Not saying that I'm unprofessional now but I was just going to be myself. I know what that is for me. But in this respect, I kind of realized that you know, when it comes to racism and sexism or whatever you want to call it. Gender racism. That it's really about that person and I cannot, no matter what I do, no matter what I look like, I can't... I can't change who they are. They are going to have to change themselves, and that person says they understood racism and they talked the language and they talked the equity talk and they talk but they don't walk the walk. So... I... it's okay because I just have to control myself and how I respond to it and that's like, the biggest lesson I've

learned from being here.

Keisha's experiences indicate she initially tried to exist by blending in and conforming to the way White faculty members operated but she still experienced a level of disrespect and alienation. She eventually managed her change process for intercultural competence by deciding to be her true self rather than conforming to the White world on campus. Most of the other participants who talked about making changes at their universities expressed similar ideas about how they were operating at their current PWI. Keisha also mentioned that she experienced gender racism at the PWI. Two other study participants mentioned that they experienced gender racism. The focus of this study relates to intercultural competence, which does not take into account intersectionality in categories such as gender racism or ageism and racism together. Intercultural competence does include the impact of racism alone.

One of the study focused on forging his destiny and having others do the same thing at their PWIs based on prior experience. Abraham was adamant that African American faculty members have to define themselves at PWIs.

> Alright, so I think the main thing is, and I got this from a mentor …the main thing for me is to define oneself and one's work as being centered in community spaces outside of the institution. This institution cannot be allowed to define us, who we are and what we do. It's a part of who we are. It's a part of what we do but our commitment or my commitment is to my community and to emancipation and liberation, as much as the academy can help with that, that's good. And if it can't help with that, then that's fine too. A lot of times people get wrapped up into allowing this place to define who they are…it allows these institutions to measure and to attenuate, or to define the relationship that they'll have with their

communities, and it's gotta be a partnership to the university and this organization

and that, man, we don't have to do that. We can go right into our communities

and roll our sleeves up and do whatever it is that we need to do. And if we can,

we can give institutions resources for that. And so that's where I'm at.

Abraham's words speak to the importance of African American faculty moving

from the path outlined for them on campus to choosing their own path at the university.

This action results in implementing their own way to survive and manage the change

process for intercultural competence. There was one participant who did not experience

the need to make changes in the way he interacted or operated on campus because in his

view all faculty members were treated the same way and had to encounter the same

challenges to gain tenure. Nehemiah did not have to make adjustments as a faculty

member at the PWI where he worked.

I don't feel like I've had to make any changes to adapt, just because our program

and our college is all about diversity and ensuring that we're meeting the needs of

our students. So there wasn't anything coming in as a Black faculty member that I

would've faced that a White faculty member wasn't gonna face.

Nehemiah's experience was unique because he did not have to make changes and

did not have the same challenges that other participants cited. This was quite likely

because he received his doctoral degree from the same university where he was hired to

be a faculty member. He knew many of the professors from his experience as a student

and he was familiar with the practices, policies, and procedures at the university and

specifically in the department where he worked. His experience is quite different in terms

of the need for intercultural competence at the PWI where he works. Some of the

participants spoke of the importance of establishing a balance in the time they spent

working for the university on campus or away from campus and time they dedicated to their families and personal lives.

**Pursuing Health**

Establishing and maintaining health was important to the female participants. However, none of the male participants mentioned health as being important in any way in working as a faculty member at a PWI. The female participants mentioned health as a tool that made it possible for them to be able to face their challenges at their PWIs at full strength without being hindered by illness or some type of impairment. Some of the participants reported needing to make changes to become or remain healthy mentally, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and socially while serving as full-time faculty members at a PWI. Sadara, in talking about her interaction with her Jackson Scholars mentor, said this.

> Some of the scholars, they had a chance to write with their mentors, but that wasn't something I got, but what she did talk about and help me with was like mental and emotional health, staying healthy. You know, taking care of yourself. You know, she was really good about that.…

Sadara used the advice of her mentor to change how she dealt with the stress of being a faculty member. She worked to create a greater work life balance and to keep herself from overworking. Sadara was not the only participant to articulate the importance of staying healthy as a way to survive on the job. Keisha mentioned that she had a health issue as a result of her job. She knew she needed better health in order to remain in her position as a faculty member.

> Some of the coping strategies that I have used, meditation…I had some blood pressure problems around the time…you know, from the stuff happening. Very

high, and so, I started realizing I probably need to calm down….

Keisha made changes to her diet and began to exercise more frequently. That became part of her change process for intercultural competence and facilitated a more health conscious lifestyle. Several of the participants took specific actions to regain their health in their current positions after realizing that they were starting to have health issues. Vivian talked about how her White colleagues listened more to her White students' viewpoint of what was happening in her classes than her. This negatively impacted her health and eventually caused her to leave the institution. She addressed her experience this way.

> They're not as young as me, so they're not gonna face the same issues I had in the classroom. So sometimes they would think, "Is he lying, or is she really that bad?" or whatever. I'm like, "But you have no idea what it's like to walk in my skin and be in the space that we are constantly challenged in every day." So, again for a host of different reasons, some of those that I'd mentioned right now, especially when it began to impact my health, I was like, "It's time to move on. No job is this serious…and then I also try to take my fitness a lot more seriously. I've made it a point to join a boot camp gym and start going there to workout. Because again, as you know, exercise is a great form of stress relief, and being in academic positions, we're always sitting down right in front of our computer 24/7. And that also leads to our own demise in more ways than one. So I was trying to make it a point to live a more active lifestyle. So, these are some of my coping mechanisms that I had in place, and they helped me at least maintain some form of sanity while I was there.

Vivian also mentioned a spiritual component of maintaining her health. She talked

about being a woman of faith and she believed that she would recover from any trial or tribulation she encountered at a PWI through the grace and protection of God. Vivian's strategy to exercise more to relieve stress, embrace her faith, and implement health-oriented countermeasures to the stressful activities occurring on campus served as a coping strategy and a impetus for the change process used to improve her experience on campus. Several other participants also referred to their faith influencing them and giving them the strength to move forward and continue working at their PWI.

**Off-Campus Community**

According to several of the participants, the experiences encountered away from the campus in the community and in the surrounding areas can have a extraordinary impact on them in addition to the on-campus experiences. Participants described their encounters off campus as a critical element of their experience at the university because they had the ability to make life on campus a better experience for them or an almost unbearable replication of the most difficult challenges faced on campus. If a PWI was located in a geographical area near a large metropolitan urban area, the participants reported that they could get more in touch with their Blackness while getting a reprieve from the way of the White world they faced on campus. This could mean finding a place to get culturally diverse food, getting their hair done, fellowshipping in the church, and having conversations on topics they were not comfortable having at the university.

These types of venues away from campus provide an opportunity for individuals to decide what cultural and racial traditions they will maintain, modify, or eliminate when they return to campus as part of the change process for intercultural competence. For example, while an African American male faculty member is in his local Black barber shop, he can let his guard down and talk about politics, church, women, sports, and

situations he cannot talk about with White colleagues. He may not feel free to talk about these topics at work because of a perception that it will affect him negatively. However, he may also decide to make a change and start addressing some of these issues on the job in order to represent his true identity. That could be part of the change process for intercultural competence that inspires a person to promote his or her own culture in another culture.

On the other hand, some people prefer to separate their work life and their personal life. In some cases when participants were unable to find a place to escape from the White culture at the PWI or at least de-escalate the tension, stress, and anxiety, they felt stuck in a world uncomfortable and unfamiliar to them. The participants talked about how this off-campus environment made life not only miserable for them but also for their significant others such as spouses and children. So when an African American faculty member feels isolated and out of place at his PWI and then gets off work and finds the same situation impacting family members at the local store, restaurant, or some other location, it may extend the anxiety and pain that he or she experiences. Below I review the impact and influence of the outside culture on the change process for intercultural competence.

**Outside Culture**

An approach taken by one of the participants regarding the culture away from the university was examining how it is compared to the culture on campus and how it affected other stakeholders such as family. Keisha articulated one example of outside culture being different from the university culture when she talked about needing a Black space as a tool to be able to remain in the White space.

You definitely have to give them an opportunity to know the spaces in

which…well, just to know, or see, the spaces that they will…they identify with. It was very hard for me to learn all that. Like, where I can go get my hair done, where my kids can go get their hair done. Just the hair in general is a really big part of the experience that we didn't enjoy here. I had to take an hour to commute to get to a place to get my hair done, so I just learned how to do it myself. You know, it's like…those things that are my family, I wish they were part of the process, but we all…we forgot about our Blackness because it was about the money, and I knew I required research. There were things here that were about African Americans and helping the Black community in general, but the neighborhood here, they pretty much have gentrified it. No we couldn't find it, because we went looking for it. And I kind of wanted a Black neighborhood. You know, we knew we were getting in that space but we didn't know how much we needed that space, when it's all said and done, and so, we just didn't really have it. It was so difficult to put together. So, that was one of the things from my experience at…like, invite Black family members and make sure your family understands what they're getting into because they are a part of the process.

Keisha's view on incorporating the entire family into the process of deciding whether to apply for or accept a position at a PWI was part of her change process for intercultural competence. She was the only participant to elaborate on it with such a strong emphasis. For Keisha, living in a space where it was predominantly White on campus and in the surrounding community meant it was difficult to escape being an outsider in the entire area. The need for intercultural competence is even more compelling in terms of Keisha and her family being able to fit into the surrounding environment.

Muriel acknowledged the importance of her family but in a different way.

My family is a high priority. I have a number of siblings in the … area, and my

parents wound up, right after I took the job, selling our house in … and

actually moving to the area as well. So that was very nice, and then as well, I'd

say equally as important, I wanted to work in an environment that balanced my

research and my teaching responsibilities… I did not have to learn as much,

because so many members of my family are, or were, professors, and so I took

that knowledge with me into my PhD program, and made sure that I was soaking

up any knowledge I could that could help me with this transition. So I would say

that I'm probably rare in that I didn't have as much of that hidden curriculum to

try to learn because of my family.

Hezekiah mentioned that being near family made his experience at the PWI easier

to deal with overall. The PWI where his worked was in his hometown. By growing up

there and having a support system in place consisting of family members and friends

nearby, he did not have a need or sense of urgency to seek additional assistance in other

areas.

The importance of family support articulated by Keisha, Muriel, and Hezekiah

emphasizes the variety of ways that African American faculty can manage the change

process of intercultural competence using off-campus influences to improve their on-

campus experience at a PWI. Another way this is accomplished is by having a safe and

familiar space away from the campus that would allow the participants to be themselves.

Having a Black space or a significant number of African Americans who live in

the community surrounding the campus is not necessarily a guarantee for a pleasant and

satisfying life according to a few of the participants. Here is how Karen described her

view of the college town where her current PWI is located.

It's relatively active and where people go to do things, but for a Black woman it

is by no means, if you're not from there, its by no means easy living there. Now,

the town itself actually, I think is almost 20-something, 30% African-American. It

has a significant African-American population, and the area school districts are

over 50% minority, but the Black community is segregated, and the Black

community is mostly a working class and low-income. There aren't really a lot of

opportunities in terms of jobs advancements, 'cause the two major employers in

the town are the university and the school district. There are a couple of factories,

but... so when you're being a Black faculty member and a Black female faculty

member, it's a difficult space to navigate.

Karen's recognition of the circumstances in the city and the school district

surrounding the university regarding the educational level and the socioeconomic status

of the African American population seemed to give her the motivation to continue

fighting for social justice in her community and at the university. The motivation serves

as an impetus for continuous improvement and part of Karen's change process. Karen's

perception of the large Black population of mostly lower-class people without power in

the city seems to contribute to her challenges at the university.

Another point that Karen made about her experience off campus relates to the

university being located in a remote area. That resulted in difficulty finding a direct flight

into the city and therefore it was expensive for family members to come visit. So Karen

made adjustments by paying the high cost of family members to visit her, going to visit

them, or not seeing them at all. Karen implemented actions as part of her change process

for intercultural competence to improve her experience in the PWI environment. Karen's testimony shows that an environment that is not conducive to a healthy lifestyle for participants because of the difficulty in having family members visit shows the importance of developing the intercultural competence of all stakeholders in the higher education community.

On campus, White faculty need intercultural competence to understand African American faculty culturally so that they can provide a better atmosphere for African Americans. Off campus, community members, whether at the grocery store or in the mall, can improve the experiences of not only African American faculty members but also other African Americans in the area. This could involve selling more ethnic foods or providing services such as barbershops or beauty salons. If Karen also possessed some level of intercultural competence, she would be able to more successfully navigate through the predominantly White community.

Other participants also elaborated on the magnitude that their experience as an African American faculty member at a PWI had on them or their family. Abraham spoke about the significance of family as it related to his position.

> I've learned how to navigate the space because... I'll give you an example. So academic positions are all encompassing. You find yourself not having clear boundaries. You got a family, you have kids or whatever, and then at 10:30 at night, you're sitting up responding to emails or writing a paper. So you gotta draw clear boundaries. I got that from my mentors too. So you have to learn how to navigate the space in ways that are not encroaching upon your personal time, your personal space and definitely, more than anything, upon your epistemological orientations and your commitments, your extra-institutional commitments that

you have.

Abraham recognized that he needed to set boundaries that allow him to spend more time with his family. To the participants, family represented an important aspect of their lives and had a direct impact on how a participant persevered in the climate of PWIs and the community surrounding the institution. This served as a coping strategy and a personal goal for the participants. They may be able to better cope with a low level or lack of intercultural competence by their peers by using their access to family. Working to maximize family is part of the change process for intercultural competence that the participants used. Vivian's current PWI was located in a small town in the southeastern region of the United States, and she took steps as part of the change process to get closer to her family. At my current institution? Well, I'm from … and I wanted to get closer to home. Especially as a younger professional, I think that family, especially when you

> have a young family is important. So we wanted to get a home closer to the
>
> family to support this transition we're in. Also I was very strategic about picking
>
> an institutional type based on the kind of lifestyle I wanted to live. I was formally
>
> at an R1 institution and I was doing well at that job; however, the demands on my
>
> time and the lack of, I guess, support there, was what prompted me to go back on
>
> the job market and look for a different position that better aligns with my personal
>
> and professional aspirations.

Vivian's comments about her rationale for being close to her family call to attention the importance of family and the extent to which she was willing to make adjustments in her life to create a better situation for herself. In this study, details like those described by Karen, Abraham, and Vivian played into the participants' perception

of the area. The way that the participants perceived the cities or towns surrounding the university seemed to make a difference in how much influence it had on the participant.

**Off-Campus Influence**

Two participants suggested that the election of Donald Trump in 2016 as President of the United States made life off campus more difficult. These two participants were the only ones to bring up the subject during the interviews. They believed that people who supported him were more emboldened to come forward and treat African Americans unfairly because the political climate had changed since President Obama's term had ended. For these participants, it was necessary to change how they interacted with White people off campus because they seemed to be more emboldened to make racist comments and provocative comments. In talking about the influence of the current political landscape and how it energized her, Tracy explained it like this:

> I mean, Trump is in office right now. So, some of his culture in our society every day, yeah, is reflecting of what we see at the university. I also think because … is really kind of Black on white, Black on white, like white people have, the Black people have not, that I do see it. I see that there's a lack of diversity, and no matter what fields you are in as a Black professional in ... and so whenever we talk about the lack of Black faculty members, and really how that's really a problem. If you go to other cities, there may be more diversity in those fields but there's still a lack of diversity in higher ed. I feel like my space is in the communities, in the hood. I actually feel like that's where I get rejuvenated at in the work that I do, constantly reminded of "This is why I fight."

Tracy used the new political environment to inspire her to make adjustments in how she interacted with White people on and off campus. Their boldness in making

statements caused Tracy to become more assertive in interactions and this represented

part of her change process. Muriel referred to the current Presidential administration but

did not specifically mention the current president by name. She described the impact of

the presidential election this way.

> The longer I'm here, the more invested I am in the institution and its growth, its
>
> improvement. So a concrete example would be that we have had, as many
>
> institutions have since the recent administration shift, we've had a number of
>
> incidents with neo-Nazis posting posters, and those sorts of things on campus.

Muriel also pointed out that she became more involved in discussions with

university administrators, faculty, and students regarding current issues occurring on or

off campus and the research topics being generated in the doctoral program.

> That was a thing that I wound up talking to some people about, and them being
>
> responsive, and saying this is the thing that we were focused on the students, and
>
> we didn't make sure that faculty were also aware of some things. So my hope is
>
> that those types of things are going to be addressed in a better communication
>
> chain. So as an example, as I've spent more time here, I can say to students and
>
> faculty that they are doing a study at a very interesting time in our country's
>
> livelihood. Because I would expect... I think some of these issues might be
>
> similar, but I would suspect that we are facing exacerbated issues because of the
>
> larger context.

That larger context that Muriel mentioned seems to refer to the cultural influence

and impact that President Trump has had. One of the other study participants who was

doing well in using her job skills on campus and being comfortable in her position

commented on the impact of the culture outside of the PWI. Sadara enjoyed her job at her

previous PWI but when she left campus to enjoy life during her personal time, she felt

unfulfilled. The area off campus was boring and did not have a lot of events or places that

captivated her interests.

> It was kind of a desert for me. And really I just wanted some different
>
> exposure. I was doing fine there and really enjoyed the position, but it was just
>
> kind of dry on the social side and I was single and wanted to just see some
>
> different... just have a different exposure.

Having a surrounding city that was comfortable and inclusive had such a strong

impact on Sadara that she decided to move to another academic institution in another

state. Sadara moved from a PWI in the southwest region to a PWI in the northeast. She

did not offer any information to suggest that the geographical location made a difference

in her experience on campus though. She did note that she did research on the climate of

the PWI she was traveling to so she was more educated and knowledgeable about how

the PWI operated. Moving to another city was part of the change process for intercultural

competence that Sadara implemented because she made an adjustment to her situation at

the PWI where she worked at that time and thought about what she really wanted in an

institution. Then she took action to change her circumstances. The city where Sadara was

living before she relocated was a small city with very few African Americans. The city

she relocated to was bigger and had more Black people. Although she did not specifically

mention this information in her statement that follows, she did talk about how the move

would change what was missing in her life: "So when the position came up in … I

thought that would be a great time to do both, kill two birds with one stone, to have a

social life as well as an academic life. So I just packed up and I started over here."

Since Sadara moved from a PWI in a state with a low African American

population to a state with a significantly higher African American population, it is quite

likely that she had more of an opportunity to meet people more aligned with her social

expectations. By being around more Black people, she could be exposed to a more

culturally receptive environment.

Not all participants relocated to another institution that was more inclusive of

African American faculty. Two of the participants commuted from long distances to their

PWIs. They found it more beneficial to commute frequently from a diverse city far away

from the PWI rather than to move to a city or town closer to the university that was not

meeting their cultural needs. These commutes involved additional travel of up to an hour

each way in traffic and on the interstates. Although commuting from the university was

somewhat difficult, it did not appear to be a huge challenge for them.

Sharon talked about being gradually phased into her position at the university by

starting to work there in a non-tenured role before she received her doctoral degree.

Sharon also talked about her experience commuting to the campus.

> My role as a lecturer is different from the very dwindling role of tenure tack
>
> professors here, and I came into this position knowing that it was temporary,
>
> knowing that I did want to go into tenure track. But I was doing this to finish off
>
> my degree. So I finished my degree last summer and was referred last fall. I did
>
> do a soft entry into the market, but right now I'm location-dependent so I could
>
> only apply to places and spaces close to me. I do commute to work. I commute
>
> about 25 miles each way. My husband works 25 miles in the other direction. So,
>
> we're very much location-dependent for the time being.

The geographical location where Sharon and her family lived and worked off

campus had an influence on how often she was on campus and how long she remained

there throughout the day. Since her husband worked in an area in the opposite direction of their home and double the distance from the university, they needed to adjust their time to fulfill job responsibilities and family obligations.

## Role of the Jackson Scholars Program

The Jackson Scholars Program was a critical component and common thread for each of the participants. In the section below I show how their connection to this program was significant to them.

### Jackson Scholars Program Connection

UCEA is a consortium of higher education institutions that includes a community of scholars who are committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders and professors. According to the organization's website, the vision is predicated on initiating and leading educational reform through research and preparation programs. UCEA and partner affiliates collaborate with schools and educational agencies to influence local, state, and national educational policies. Through UCEA's system of values that focus on promoting learning and social development for all children and contributions of educational leaders to the success of all children among other things, it strives to facilitate a community of learners.

The Jackson Scholars Program is a two-year program that provides formal networking, mentoring, and professional development for graduate students of color who plan to become professors in educational leadership. The program is also referred to as the Jackson Scholars Network. This program was the vision of Dr. Barbara L. Jackson and was implemented in 2003. The program has provided a pipeline of graduate students and university faculty members of color into the field of educational leadership by providing a system of support that includes mentoring, professional development, and

networking opportunities. Although the Jackson Scholars Program concentrates on offering support to all people of color, the participants in this study were recruited only from the pool of African American graduates who are now full-time faculty members at a PWI because that was the focus of the study.

**The Jackson Scholars Network**

When it came to mentoring and networking, most of the participants reported that they had a positive experience with their mentors at their current university and at other universities. They frequently reported having good access to their mentors and receiving critical advice from them through the Jackson Scholars Network. Here is what Keisha said about the networking and mentoring through the network.

> Well, I think, for me, the Jackson Scholars Program... they identified other folks, other scholars, who were kind of in the same cohort. Like, they are too going to be junior faculty members. And, I got a connection there. My mentor has been very helpful in being, like, my go-to person if I need a recommendation. He writes very sound letters. So, that kind of access is important…. That obviously helped me with getting into a TWI, or PWI, whatever you want to call it. I like the programming, meaning, when I go to the conferences, I do enjoy the fact that there is something special that speaks to the need of color. I do like the ceremony. I've always thought that made me feel like I was a part of something special, and then, I like…I think that all of those things kind of help prepare you to face the things that'll come about being at a predominantly White institution. So, yeah!

Keisha clearly reaped a strong professional benefit in being a part of the Jackson Scholars Network. She received professional development, mentoring, resources, letters

of recommendation, and a stream of colleagues that she has maintained relationships with since she left the program. This served as a tool for coping at a PWI and as a component for the change process for intercultural competence.

Sharon explained that although the Jackson Scholars Program did not specifically prepare her to work at a PWI, it was helpful in preparing her to work in the academy overall by providing a network to discuss expectations at a university and how to be productive in teaching, publishing, and service at the university.

> I don't think it was really just geared towards being a faculty member at a PWI, but definitely being a faculty member period. So, it was a lot of opportunities to talk with faculty members at different stages in their career, from those on the market, to those early career, to those associate and full professor. It was that opportunity to interact with those individuals that was really helpful and to get tips from them, and to know that it was okay if you weren't employed right out of school, that the market is very harsh, because I met a couple of Jackson... one in particular... one Jackson Scholars mentor, when I first became a Jackson Scholar, was a floating scholar (meaning he didn't have an institution) but he talked from a place of still being productive as a floating scholar, still producing work, still researching and writing, and still applying for positions. So, knowing that the spectrum of where you fall, when it comes to being a tenure track faculty member, is very wide-reaching, and to be okay with your timeline. So that was really helpful. The understanding to be okay with your timeline, and for me, my trajectory into tenure track is slightly different because I worked while in my doctoral program, which limited some of the things I had hoped to do in my doctoral program, and then being in this position, it's a position where I'm getting

the experience as a faculty member but not the, I guess, nourishment as a tenure track faculty member when it comes to research and service, to an extent, because we're not overly required to provide service, although I do in a lot of capacities. I had to do my researching and my writing on my own; my teaching alone makes it a bit hard to get things down in a manner I'd like to get it done, but I am working towards that.

Sharon's experience as a Jackson Scholar could have been somewhat helpful in helping her build and maintain a viable change process at her institution. On the other hand, Malachi offered a completely different view of his experience as a Jackson Scholar.

And so we were provided a mentor. I managed about two months after that initial meeting at UCEA to have a phone call with the mentor who, and of course this is a two-way road, so this is partly also a function of maybe I didn't have enough questions or something like that, but it was a very short phone call. I didn't get the impression that my mentor was openly interested in what I was doing, and because he wasn't interested in what I was doing research-wise, did not seem to be that overly interested in talking to me more. That said, it might have just been me. I happen to know there was a graduate student in a cohort above me who happened to have the same mentor, and she, you know, got a lot out of that relationship because apparently it worked out. But with me, it didn't actually have that much, I didn't actually get that much from Jackson Scholars, and I was also very skeptical about the whole thing because I kept trying to ask very basic questions, and it felt like every in-person thing was not about how to survive these PWI environments. Especially because myself and my colleagues were at very, very white institutions.

I pressed Malachi a little more on why he felt that the Jackson Scholars Program was not as effective in preparing him for working at a PWI and here is how he explained it.

> So, I think this answer might be best addressed by me explaining what happened
> in the Jackson Scholars Program or what my experience was, in that I was, my
> application was submitted by my faculty advisor when I was at … and I got in,
> which I was very thankful for. I went into the initial Jackson Scholars thing,
> and it was a two-hour meeting at UCEA where the primary content of that
> meeting was not about how to be a faculty member at all. I mean, the entire
> meeting, I remember because I was taking notes, was just about all of the reasons
> why we should be giving money to the Jackson Scholars Program. Which I found
> very annoying. Then, actually, I sent an email to the, I think it's the graduate
> coordinator at the time, and I said like, "Hey, I'm not like against giving money to
> what that money's going towards, and that person didn't have an answer for me."
> Then actually, like a year later, I asked the same questions about the next
> graduate coordinator when they were sending out emails about us getting
> together. And in those emails there were also a lot of things about why we should
> donate money to Jackson Scholars. And again, I was like, again, I want to see
> more color and stuff like that, but I'm not going to support it if you don't tell me
> what the money's going towards. Especially given that my understanding was that
> the travel funds and stuff were provided by our institutions, so again, I was just
> not understanding what was going on there…. We were the first Black people
> they brought into the department in like six years. And we had questions about

things like this, and there was just not an opportunity to discuss it, so I don't feel

like Jackson Scholars gave me that opportunity.

Malachi's experience throughout the program as a Jackson Scholar was not a

positive experience even though he had access to a network that included other scholars

who could help him be successful as a faculty member at a PWI. Malachi did

acknowledge that although his mentor did not help him very much, a colleague in the

Jackson Scholars Program had a good experience with the same mentor who was also

assigned to her in the program.

Keisha, Sharon, and Malachi offered perspectives on their experiences of working

with a mentor and building a network with a desired outcome of being able to survive

faculty life at a PWI. Their participation in the Jackson Scholars Program, while not

specifically designed to prepare them to work at a PWI, did provide them with

knowledge and key survival skills necessary to be successful at any university. The

participants did not learn how to be interculturally competent through the Jackson

Scholars Program and the program was not designed to help their White peers become

interculturally competent.

**Jackson Scholars Program Impact on Intercultural Competence**

Although the Jackson Scholars Program did not specifically prepare the

participants to be interculturally competent or to recognize the intercultural competence

of their peers at PWIs as part of the training, it did offer the participants some important

opportunities to be successful at any academic institution of higher learning. Participants

reported that the Jackson Scholars Program helped them to network with other scholars

and experienced professors who were currently working at a PWI or had previous

experience working at a PWI. In addition, the program connected the participants with

mentors who were called upon by the participants when they had a negative situation with their White peers on campus. Participants said they had called on their mentors during emergency circumstances such as being insulted or disrespected by a White colleague or a White student. Some of the mentors through the Jackson Scholars Program have been used to help facilitate the publishing process and to co-author articles with participants. Other mentors have guided participants through the tenure track process by providing information and recommendations about effective ways to implement and maintain service commitments, teaching responsibilities, and publication requirements. The participants acknowledged that not all of their mentors in the Jackson Scholars Program were Black. Some were White and some were from other ethnicities. The type of assistance provided by Jackson Scholars Program mentors helped the participants navigate the systemic processes and procedures at PWIs.

UCEA regularly holds workshops and conventions that Jackson Scholars Program participants have access to during their two-year program. There is also access to the graduate student summit, which implements additional opportunities for growing professionally as a future college professor. UCEA has sponsored professional development sessions in such topic areas as the role of department chairs, learning and teaching in educational leadership, culturally sustaining approaches to educational leadership development and mentoring, candidacy to the professoriate, negotiating a contract, building networks of support, and tips for those considering the professoriate. These and other workshops that do not necessarily focus on intercultural competence may still provide the Jackson Scholars with the opportunity to be successful at PWIs. Karen elaborated on her experience being part of the workshops and conferences sponsored by UCEA through the Jackson Scholars Program.

I don't know what the official title is, but the director of Graduate Student

Development for UCEA when I was a graduate student…was in charge of the

Jackson Scholars Program, but also she was the Division A vice president. She

started the Division A Early Career Scholars mentoring workshops and she still

does it. Now, I'm actually, myself and two other faculty members, are co-chairing

it with her. But when she started the early career seminar program, she would

always ask if there were any graduate students who wanted to help her join the

workshop, get this task. I would just pass out paper and help her get packets. And

because she asked if I wanted to volunteer to help out, I actually got to sit in on

the mentoring sessions. The mentoring sessions, that particular mentoring

workshop is meant for people who are either in their early career as pre-tenure,

they are pre-tenure faculty, people who are post-doc, or at least people who are in

their last year in their PhD program applying for a job. At that time I was not at

that point. But, by volunteering and helping her out at the workshop, I got to

actually participate and listen and hear the panelists. She even allowed me and

another friend, who also was a graduate student and volunteer, let us share our

CVs and get feedback on our CVs. So being a volunteer in that workshop, I got to

listen and hear and learn about what was required to be successful in the tenure

track. So I think those little things, all those little things are grooming me and

priming me.

Karen's description of her participation in the conference gives an indication of

the type of professional development that the Jackson Scholars receive. Other study

participants also commented on their experiences at workshops. The knowledge and

support that they acquired through the Jackson Scholars Network likely put them on a path to move up the ranks at the university where they were employed

## The Role of Rank

The twelve participants in this study included seven assistant professors, one clinical assistant professor, three associate professors, and one lecturer. The clinical assistant professor and the lecturer were non-tenure track positions. One of the associate professors was also an associate dean. In this section I examine the impact of the rank of assistant professors and associate professors and any changes they incurred after promotions at PWIs.

**Impact of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor Rank**

The participants did not specifically discuss the impact of tenure and promotion but some of their experiences allow me to draw some inferences regarding the impact. The assistant professor participants talked more about the tenure process than the associate professor participants. This was perhaps because the associate professors have already obtained tenure. As an assistant professor at Southeast State University, Sadara talked about the pressure of working to obtain tenure. Here is how she described it.

> Sometimes we don't see ourselves the way other people see us 'cause you're always being judged. So really just thinking, "Okay, when I do this, what does it look like to this person?" I know what so-and-so can get away with, but I don't wanna chance it because as a person of color, you may not be able to get away with the same kind of thing… and not that I've been in trouble and all that. I haven't but that's just the way of saying...you just have to really dot your I's and cross your T's because you don't want to draw attention to yourself and you don't wanna get yourself in a position to where you may not get tenure or you just may

not be looked favorably upon.

Sadara's description of the high level of scrutiny she faces in striving to obtain tenure at a PWI implies that it is a difficult journey because White faculty who control the tenure process lack the intercultural competence necessary to lower anxiety levels of Black faculty who feel that they are being watched at every phase of the tenure process. Sadara's view of tenure is similar to Muriel's. Muriel had a strong focus on gaining tenure at the PWI where she was working.

> Yeah, so, I will be coming up on my mid-tenure review. I don't know how much you know about the process, but basically, if you go up for tenure in six years, most institutions will have a mid-point review around three or four years into a tenure-track to check in, review what you've been doing, say "You need to focus on this, this is going well da da da."

Muriel also recognized that she might not be aware of all events going on once she became tenured or received a promotion.

> I recognize that I am very early in this game and so I'm not privy to all the conversations that could... I think that there is more dirt that goes on than I am aware of and I think that's because the point that I'm at, there's certain conversations I'm not in or that I'm protected from because my first priority is supposed to be focusing on my research. And so I definitely believe that things are probably not as rosy as I think they are, and it's not because I think they're that rosy... but I've talked to a couple of people who have definitely said that a switch flips when they get tenured, because then they're in different conversations and they're able to see that some people that they thought were cool, were not, and it's just that they had never gotten a chance to see that side of them before

because those were conversations we weren't allowed to be in because they weren't tenured. I have no idea what else is sort of out there, but I do... I don't know, I think I'm generally prepared. I never know because the current socio-political context changes more every day. So who knows, right?

By her statement it appears that Muriel perceives that she will have access to more knowledge regarding the tenure process as she rises through the ranks in academia. The experiences summarized here show that participants were able to build a base of knowledge and then use that knowledge to improve their circumstances. That required some level of intercultural competence to navigate the space and to pursue successful promotion.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the findings of my research based on how the participants in this study described their experiences in intercultural competence on the campus at their PWIs. In many instances I used the participants' own words to present a more accurate representation of the stories they told during the interviews. In addition, I connected the three research questions of this study to the four outlined critical areas related to intercultural competence including daily life, support and resources, challenges and survival strategies for the change process of intercultural competence, and off campus community. Then I described the role of the Jackson Scholars Program in my study. I also examined the impact of rank on the participants of this study.

**Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications**

**Introduction**

In this final chapter I present a summary of the study and important conclusions drawn from the data. Then I discuss the findings of the study. In addition, I discuss the implications for future action and I make recommendations for addressing the shortcomings of the findings. Lastly I address future research in the field. Before discussing the findings, I provide a summary of the study.

**Summary of the Study**

In this section I revisit the essential aspects of this study and I summarize it. This summary includes a brief review of the problem statement, purpose of the study, and the research questions of the study.

**Problem Statement**

This study uses the lens of intercultural competence to examine the underrepresentation of African American faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education, which has not been previously studied as it relates to the impact intercultural competence has on the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs. Intercultural competence has been examined in the areas of students studying abroad, employees working overseas, government, military, and religion. Therefore I examine this topic to inform academia and the general public of the importance in not only accepting different cultures on campuses but also in fostering strong positive relationships and communication between people from a variety of backgrounds and, in particular, African American faculty.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore and identify effective ways to improve the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs by investigating the connection of intercultural competence to the African American faculty experience. The experiences examined included ways African American faculty are treated by their White peers; the ways they respond to situations they are unfamiliar with on campus; the strategies they use to become familiar with processes, practices, and procedures on campus; and the way they navigate the change process as a part of intercultural competence. The study was guided by the three research questions listed below.

**Research Questions**

1.   What are the experiences of African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education and how do these experiences relate to the intercultural competence on campus?

2.   How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education view the intercultural competence of their peers?

3.   How do African American educational leadership full-time faculty, at PWIs in post-secondary education manage the impact and change process of intercultural competence?

<div align="center">

**Summary of Major Findings**

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This study yielded four major findings. The level of intercultural competence at PWIs influences African American faculty experience. African American faculty face challenges due to their White peers' lack of intercultural competence at PWIs. African American faculty working at PWIs use survival strategies to manage the change process of intercultural competence, and the Jackson Scholars Program can provide a path to

improved African American faculty experiences at PWIs. The findings of this study build on previous research and reduce the gaps in the literature.

<div align="center">**Connection to the Literature**</div>

In this section I discuss the connection of my findings to the current research literature. First I review the influence of intercultural competence on the African American faculty on PWIs. Then I discuss the challenges faced by African American faculty at PWIs. Next I elaborate on the strategies and changes African American faculty implement to cope with their challenges at PWIs. After that, I look at how faculty mentoring programs like the Jackson Scholars Program are viewed in the literature.

**Intercultural Competence at PWIs Influences African American Faculty Experiences**

In this study, African American faculty explained how they were at times subjected to a culture and climate at the PWI that made their journey and experience as a faculty member more difficult during their daily lives on campus. The way African American faculty perceived their treatment by colleagues was coincided with their peers' ability to be interculturally competent by showing that they realized cultural differences, communicated effectively, and took action to eliminate any difficulties. According to Deardorff (2009) these types of actions are examples of intercultural competence. African American faculty have difficulty fitting in at a PWI. Stanley (2006) indicated that African American faculty experiences include exposure to marginalization, alienation, and invisibility as challenges. The African American faculty in this study incurred these experiences at their PWIs. A climate and culture on these campuses that includes White faculty with a high level of intercultural competence could provide an opportunity for greater support of Black faculty.

In this study African American faculty experiences at PWIs most often occurred at the department level. Although this is not a universal finding, for the participants the department functioned as the foundation of positive and negative African American faculty experiences. The department served as a refuge against the unfamiliar terrain of the entire university. Most of the participants were more familiar with the practices of the departments where they were working as a result of spending most of their time on campus there. Most of the participants became aware of the departmental culture and norms and thus became comfortable in that area. The camaraderie they established with colleagues in their department was valuable in helping them to fit in as a faculty member.

However, not all experiences at the department level were positive. When  the participants perceived the climate in the department to be chilly and unwelcoming, it served as an avenue for alienating them from the rest of the department and the university. In this situation, their White colleagues in the department likely exposed the participants to the lack of intercultural competence. In this study, within the department and throughout the university, the routines, policies, procedures, practices, and actions of the administration, faculty, and staff were instrumental to how African American faculty perceived their experiences on campus. These experiences were viewed as detrimental to African American faculty on campus when there was a lack of respect, opportunity, and collaboration. When intercultural competence is engaged at a high level, there may be fewer negative experiences.

**African American Faculty Face Challenges Due to Their White Peers' Lack of Intercultural Competence at PWIs.**

Participants in this study were more likely to be successful and have a more pleasant experience on campus when the White faculty were perceived to be

interculturally competent. In this study, intercultural competence is a level of knowledge about other cultures that exceeds awareness and is achieved through a process of continuous learning through experience, observation, listening, and training (Elosúa, 2015). Intercultural competence in this study also refers to the ability to realize cultural differences, communicate effectively, and take action to eliminate any difficulties (Deardorff, 2009). African American faculty participating in this study faced a number of challenges and a lack of intercultural competence from their White Peers at their particular PWIs. They needed intercultural competence from their White peers in a number of areas including serving as translators of traditionally White policies, practices, and procedures; implementing support and resources; and using faculty development and mentoring programs.

There were additional challenges African American faculty consistently faced at PWIs such as being few in number, working in an unfamiliar university climate, being exposed to bad behavior and mistreatment from White colleagues, and working to acquire specific job skills to be successful on the job. Alexander and Moore (2008) talked about the challenges that African Americans face at PWIs, including a low number of Black colleagues and the emotional duress generated by being numerically small. In addition, they pointed out that African American faculty face discrimination and isolation. Although I agree that these challenges exist, I argue based on my findings that the challenges to African American faculty occurred because of a lack of intercultural competence of the dominant group, White faculty members. The participants in this study faced challenges such as an unwelcoming climate, inappropriate behavior by White colleagues, difficulty in acquiring specific skills, and difficulty in remaining healthy due to the stress of the job. When a person possesses intercultural competence, that person

will be able to understand the cultural challenges faced by others, show empathy for the person, and then take action to rectify the situation (Barrett et al., 2014). I believe some of the White colleagues of African American faculty in my study had a lack of intercultural competence and therefore created and maintained a challenging climate and culture for the African American faculty.

Another challenge for African American faculty drawn from this study relates to the excessive demand for them to participate in service on PWIs. Study participants articulated a strong sense of obligation to be involved in service working with minority students and issues they were passionate about. When there are only a small number of faculty of color and students of color, as was the case in this study, or issues of social justice are present, the faculty of color are often compelled to focus more on service rather than teaching, research, or publication (Baez, 2000). Since the participants knew there were a limited number of African American faculty members at their PWIs and they did not have confidence that their White colleagues would complete the service need. The participants reported feeling they needed to serve in areas such as working with undergraduate and graduate students of color, holding meetings and forums regarding social justice, and representing the department or university at community events. This heavy service burden made it more difficult to obtain promotion and tenure because the service took away time from their teaching, research, and publication duties, which are necessary for advancement. When African American faculty spend an overabundance of time on service requirements in higher education, they draw from the time they need for research, publication and teaching at the university (Levin et al., 2013).

**African American Faculty Working at PWIs Use Survival Strategies to Manage the Change Process of Intercultural Competence.**

To cope with the challenges and to navigate the space at PWIs, African American educational leadership faculty develop survival strategies to manage the change process of intercultural competence. These survival strategies consisted of using colleagues and the Jackson Scholars Program, using the skills acquired by working at or attending more than one PWI, and making adjustments to the way they operated. African American faculty made changes by pursuing a healthy lifestyle, beginning to self-identify, and connecting with the community and culture off campus. The participants also drew heavily from their family members for emotional support and assistance in decision-making. In addition, they used their church upbringing and faith to help them get through difficult times.

One area related to survival strategies was the decision to self-identify. This means that the participants at some point embraced being Black and did not continue to pretend to act like a White colleague on campus to avoid standing out or being overly scrutinized. Participants had spent some time holding back who they really were by doing things the way their White colleagues did pursuant to how they viewed what they considered the norm on campus. In the end, some wanted to self-identify or be themselves regardless of how they were perceived by the White peers on campus. Allison (2008) asserted that on one hand African American faculty at PWIs do not change their identities significantly but do temper the way they respond and communicate on campus in order to be perceived by others as competent and credible. African American faculty have been known to hide their true identity when working at PWIs (Beachum, 2015). The participants in this study who decided to self-identify did so without minimizing the

changes they made. They decided to speak, dress, and conduct themselves as African Americans while on campus. One participant talked about initially not wanting to wear an ethnic headscarf because White peers could perceive it as too radical. However, after it appeared that White peers already had a negative perception, she wore the headscarf. Participants initially tried to communicate on campus by speaking calmly. When participants felt they were not being heard or taken seriously by their White colleagues, they reverted to louder and more forceful language even though that could lead their White colleagues to perceive them as an angry or out-of-control Black person. By being able to consistently self-identify, African American faculty will spend less time trying to duplicate or comply with the actions of their White peers and more time being themselves. This could give their White colleagues greater opportunities to learn about African American culture, and that learning when combined with actions and activities to improve the experiences of African American faculty on campus could lead to more intercultural competence.

Another survival strategy that research indicates is important to African American faculty at PWIs is their ability to be resilient. Harley (2008) argued that Black women in particular are able to cope with the challenges they face at a PWI because of their resiliency. She noted that even when facing racial battle fatigue, Black women faculty persevere on campus. Although one participant in this study did mention that African Americans are resilient, the majority of participants did not articulate it as a major coping mechanism for survival at PWIs.

The data in this study show that the participants who had prior experience in attending or working at a PWI had a higher tolerance for facing challenges at their current PWI. The participants had been undergraduate students or graduate students or

had worked at a PWI that was more egregious in their view than their current PWI. They also researched the climate and culture of their new PWIs before seeking employment there. The experience at a previous PWI served as a protective factor for participants. This could mean that they increased their endurance to pain or became numb to difficult situations experienced at their current PWI because they had been exposed to so many painful situations through the harshness of the Black experience at their previous PWI.

The implications of developing a type of immunity to the difficulties suffered at PWIs pursuant to the actions or conduct of their White peers could be significant. First by building up such strong resistance to the oppressive climate and culture for African Americans at PWIs, it could encourage even more outrageous behavior by White faculty. In addition, it might prevent or diminish the improvement of White faculty acquiring knowledge and implementing actions that would lead them to becoming interculturally competent. Furthermore, although the participants who had prior PWI experience would be more likely to be successful at PWIs, those African American faculty members who do not have prior experience at a PWI might be exposed to a more severely hostile environment because their White peers may have seen other Black faculty endure extreme situations. Since there is minimal research available regarding the impact of prior PWI experience of African American faculty and the connection to their current PWI experience, these findings offer an opportunity to contribute new information to the field.

**The Jackson Scholars Program can Improve African American Faculty Experiences at PWIs**

In this study, African American faculty participants were graduates of a two-year faculty-mentoring program, the Jackson Scholars Program, where they received some

preparation for becoming faculty members but not specifically at PWIs. Some of the resources that the African American faculty received included accessing a network of other scholars and mentors to help with research and publication, teaching, and satisfying service requirements. The program provides training and professional development workshops that give participants additional tools for their jobs as faculty.

In this study, the importance of being in a faculty mentoring program was found to be critical to the success of African American faculty who were working at PWIs. Participants used the resources of faculty members on and off campus and they participated in the Jackson Scholars Program. The importance of mentoring is supported by previous research on the topic. Mentoring is very beneficial to faculty members of color and should be consistently pursued through university administration (Stanley, 2006). In addition, mentoring has been advocated for underrepresented minority faculty to help level the playing field and give individuals from underrepresented minority groups a better chance for success in becoming and remaining faculty members in higher education (Zambrana et al., 2015). Mentoring programs for faculty of color should be actively promoted to improve the success of faculty of color according to Turner et al. (2008). Mentoring programs should also be monitored and evaluated periodically for effectiveness (Tillman, 2001). This further supports the findings in my study emphasizing the importance of mentoring programs.

## Surprises

Two surprising findings emerged. The first relates to the importance to African American faculty of the environment away from campus. The second references the influence of family members on the way they endured their experiences at their PWIs.

**Off- Campus Occurrences Matter to African American Faculty at PWIs**

In setting out to examine the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs, I viewed those experiences as essentially only connected to their interactions on campus and perhaps with colleagues away from campus. However, the findings show that events and occurrences in the cities, towns, communities, and neighborhoods surrounding the university along with other activities and events that happened locally, in the state, or nationally can impact the African American faculty experience at a PWI. The political landscape created by the election in 2016 was perceived by some participants as a way to embolden people in the community outside of the PWIs to feel comfortable in creating and maintaining a chilly non-inclusive environment for African Americans in the community. Given the significance of African American faculty in meeting service requirements within the community, it may be more difficult to fit in at their respective PWIs and their communities (Baez, 2000).

Another factor that influenced the outside environment is the importance of African American faculty having a Black space available in the community. They found it essential to be able to talk to other African Americans away from campus. In addition, African American faculty should be able to fellowship in neighborhoods with other Black people and have access to specific services and products designed for African Americans in the community or city where they live or shop away from their PWI campus.

**African American Faculty Families Matter Significantly**

I began this study with a belief that the family members of African American faculty could have some influence on their experiences on the campuses of PWIs. I did not know that the family experiences would have the level of impact on African American faculty that emerged from the data. Family members of the participants

influenced whether they accepted or remained on a particular job. In addition, family members served as advisers, motivators, and defenders for the participants. The experiences of family members in the communities surrounding the campus also were important to the participants and influenced whether they decided to be at a particular PWI. Family members can have experiences on their own away from campus in White communities, schools, churches, social venues, recreational outlets, and workspaces that impact African American faculty on campus. In addition, families provide moral and emotional support, encouragement, and collaborative decision-making partners with African American faculty as they navigate their journey through their PWIs (Frazier, 2011; Stanley, 2006).

## Implications for Actions

Based on the findings this study generates some possible further steps for action and recommendations for additional research. Three key implications for action have emerged from the data collected and analyzed in this study. The first implication is improvement of African American faculty experiences at PWIs in post secondary education. The second implication is the reduction of African American faculty challenges at PWIs in post-secondary education. The third implication is an increase in the survival strategies that African American faculty use at PWIs in post-secondary education. Below I review the implications for action and I make recommendations to improve the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs in post secondary education.

### Improvement of African American Faculty Experiences

Participants described their experiences as African American faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education. They frequently faced a hostile culture and a chilly climate as

they strove to perform their duties as assistant professors and associate professors at PWIs. Participants had some difficulty consistently finding White colleagues whom they could trust to collaborate with in research and publication. In addition, participants faced micro-aggressions and a lack of intercultural competence from their White colleagues. The participants also experienced racism and situations where the university appeared to promote social justice and equity but fell short of bringing these goals to fruition. Although participants had some experiences with White faculty mentoring them or offering assistance in helping them function at their PWIs, they more frequently faced circumstances of isolation and lack of support. Participants also indicated that they had most of their experiences at the department level and they were often unfamiliar or uncomfortable at the college and university level. All of these situations support the implication for action to improve African American faculty experiences at PWIs in post-secondary education.

**Reduction of African American Faculty Challenges**

This study examined the challenges faced by the participants. As described by the participants, these challenges obstructed their pathway to being successful as African American faculty at PWIs. The first challenge included fitting in at the department, college, and university levels. Participants explained that sometimes they felt their colleagues' differences in age, experience, gender, and race made it difficult for them to fit in on campus. The second challenge was being exposed to unacceptable behavior by their White colleagues. The participants described instances of being humiliated or disrespected by White peers and students. They also described feeling unsupported by administration officials. Some of the participants also noted that the lack of support made them concerned for their safety on campus. The third challenge was the difficulty in

acquiring the specific job skills required to be a professor. This particular challenge required participants to become proficient in teaching, research and publication, and service. Then they had to learn how to balance their time working in each of these areas appropriately. Participants had to seek assistance through professional development and mentors. They were not always able to communicate effectively with the White faculty. An increase in the intercultural competence level of the White faculty at PWIs could reduce the challenges African American faculty face. By reducing the number of challenges, their overall experience and probability of being successful there would be enhanced.

**Increasing Survival Strategies**

Participants were able to implement and use strategies to help them survive at their PWIs. One strategy was using their colleagues to help them navigate the policies, procedures, and practices at the university. Another strategy was drawing on their experiences as a student or faculty member at a previous PWI to apply tactics for surviving at their current PWI. Participants also used a strategy of making adjustments and changes to survive on campus. Some of the changes they made included working with mentors and seeking professional development. In addition, they received advice and recommendations through the Jackson Scholars Program. Participants also developed and implemented strategies designed to improve their health and reduce the stress they faced on the job. Furthermore, the participants used off-campus influences such as family, churches, and community safe spaces. These strategies helped them build up their capacity to survive. An increase in the number of strategies available to African American faculty may lead to greater retention and recruitment at PWIs.

**Recommendations and Suggested Strategies**

**Recommendation 1**

The first recommendation is to improve intercultural competence at the university, college, school, department, and individual levels in higher education.

The findings in this study suggest that there is no strong presence of intercultural competence among White faculty at PWIs. Building intercultural competence allows all stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and administration to develop a high level of cultural awareness about other cultures and races through interactions and communications. Then that knowledge can be employed to facilitate better relationships between individuals or groups with different backgrounds and reduce or eliminate discrimination, racism, misunderstanding, and inequities at PWIs.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 1**

There should be a university-wide focus on educating the students, staff, faculty, and administration about the definition and importance of intercultural competence at all PWIs. The diversity division of the university or a similar office should conduct an initial survey to determine the culture, climate, and level of intercultural competence on campus. Mandatory professional development workshops should be created and implemented on a rotating basis for all university employees. After the initial training sessions, subsequent climate surveys should be administered to determine if the level of intercultural competence has increased.

**Recommendation 2**

Recommendation 2 involves developing and maintaining university policies, procedures, and practices to address intercultural competence and consistently reviewing, evaluating, and improving the policies. The participants in this study were not aware of

extensive policies procedures or practices at their PWIs that were designed to promote intercultural competence. Though some of the participants spoke of their university having a goal of social justice, they reported that the institutions only had policies related to diversity and being inclusive or tolerant of others based on gender, ethnicity, and lifestyle. These actions do not address the importance of intercultural competence on campus.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 2**

African American faculty, faculty of color in the academy, and advocates for social justice and equity could work with the university governing boards and administrations to develop more inclusive policies, procedures, and practices. Appoint more diverse representatives on the board. Participate in faculty, department, and college meetings by including diversity and intercultural competence themes to the meeting agendas. Develop forums and workshops on campus using a diverse group of stakeholders with the goal of increasing diversity and intercultural competence on campus.

**Recommendation 3**

Recommendation 3 suggests that UCEA consistently explore, review, evaluate, and improve the Jackson Scholars program and network to incorporate intercultural competence and determine effectiveness in preparing African American educational leadership faculty to work at PWIs in post-secondary education. According to the findings of this study, the Jackson Scholars Program serves as a significant instrument in helping faculty of color become faculty members at higher education institutions. However, the program does not specifically focus on preparing African American faculty

to work at PWIs. In addition, the program may benefit from promoting ways to measure continuous improvement.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 3**

The UCEA in cooperation with the administrators of the Jackson Scholars Program could regularly administer and conduct interviews and surveys of individuals participating in the program, mentors, and representatives of the participating PWIs to promote continuous improvement of the program. In addition, the annual conferences should include training and discussion regarding the importance of intercultural competence in higher education.

**Recommendation 4**

Recommendation 4 involves expanding the Jackson Scholars program and network to recruit and support African American students at the bachelor's degree level. The findings and the research from this study indicate that the Jackson Scholars Program is effective in helping to prepare individuals of color to become faculty members in the academy. However the pool of candidates for the program has room to grow. There are pipeline issues that prevent African Americans from becoming faculty. If they are recruited earlier while they are still in high school through an organized effort, it could lead to more participants and greater retention and recruitment of African American faculty.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 4**

UCEA could partner with four-year universities, community colleges, and high schools to identify and recruit potential African American faculty members and provide support to facilitate transition to faculty positions in higher education. Jackson Scholars Program representatives could regularly hold recruiting information sessions at colleges

and high schools or online through webinars to educate potential African American faculty about the programs and processes available for becoming a faculty member. Furthermore scholarships and summer programs could be offered as an incentive for getting long-term commitments from possible applicants to the program.

**Recommendation 5**

Recommendation 5 involves Establishing, maintaining, and improving university partnerships and activities with diverse communities, neighborhoods, and cities surrounding the universities. Since the findings of this study indicate that there is a connection between the communities that surround PWIs and the university, forming partnerships and facilitating good communications could greatly influence the experiences of university and the partners. Participants in this study were involved in various aspects of the community. In addition, they were influenced by both positive and negative events that occurred off campus. Establishing and maintaining partnerships with diverse groups could improve the intercultural competence of all partners at the university and in the community.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 5**

University officials could regularly meet with leaders of diverse organizations in the community. In addition, Black faculty members could be given support and incentives including release time and extra pay through the university to regularly build a cohesive and collaborative environment in communities near the campus. The university could offer meeting spaces on campus for local schools, civic groups, churches, non-profit agencies, and businesses. The university could offer enrolled students opportunities for project-based learning to support the needs of the community. University professors could have the option of holding classes in the community and creating student-learning

goals that are mutually beneficial to the community and the university and offer increased learning about intercultural competence concepts.

**Recommendation 6**

University administrators and faculties could build on the previous research and best practices regarding intercultural competence and the impact on African American educational leadership faculty and other faculty of color at PWIs in post-secondary education. The findings from this study were based on the experiences of African American educational leadership faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education. There has been significant research on the plight of African American faculty at PWIs. Some of the findings from the previous research are consistent with the findings in this study. There has also been previous research on intercultural competence in Education. It has been mostly focused on students studying abroad.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 6**

Universities could make it a priority to have scholars, students, or a department designated to review current literature and best practices at PWIs nationwide to determine current trends and best practices for improving the level of intercultural competence on campus. The new information could be presented in classes or at faculty, department, or college meetings. Intercultural competence surveys or interviews should be administered and discussed and incorporated into faculty and staff evaluations. Every PWI could have a diversity department or a diversity committee that strongly focuses on intercultural competence and helping people from different cultures learn about each other.

**Recommendation 7**

Recommendation 7 involves reducing the gaps in the literature on intercultural competence and the impact on African American educational leadership faculty and other

faculty of color at PWIs in post-secondary education. This study focused on the experiences of African American faculty, their perceptions of the intercultural competence of their White peers, and the change process the participants used during the intercultural competence process. This study did not examine the intercultural competence of the participants. Furthermore, the study did not address the intercultural competence of university students, staff, and administration. Additional research in these areas could reduce the gap in the literature.

**Suggested Strategy for Recommendation 7**

As universities, administrators, faculty members, students, and other stakeholders begin to pursue research and develop effective strategies or best practices to improve the impact of intercultural competence on African American faculty and other faculty of color, the newly acquired knowledge should be published and incorporated into faculty development and mentoring programs to improve experiences on campus.

**Future Research**

There were some shortcomings in this study that could serve as the basis for additional study. For example, this study did not address the intercultural competence of the participants. The study did not compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the perceptions of intercultural competence by African American female and male faculty members. This study also did not examine connections between intersectionality and intercultural competence among faculty. Other faculty of color such as Latinx, Asian, or Native American were not included in this study. Future researchers could examine the impact of intercultural competence on those groups at PWIs. Finally researchers could also review the interculturally competent experiences of African American faculty who have worked at PWIs for more than 15 years.

**Conclusion**

In this study I identified four key findings that exemplify the experiences of African American educational leadership faculty at PWIs in post-secondary education. First I noted that the level of intercultural competence at PWIs influences African American faculty experience. Then I elaborated on the challenges African American faculty face due to the lack of intercultural competence from their White Peers. Next I explained how African American faculty use survival strategies to manage the change process of intercultural competence at PWIs. After that I discussed how the Jackson Scholars Program helped prepare African American faculty participants to work at PWIs. As a result of these findings, three key implications emerged. The first implication indicates that actions developed and implemented based on the findings must improve experiences for African American faculty at PWIs. Second, African American faculty challenges must be reduced at PWIs. Third, the survival strategies used by African American faculty at PWIs must be increased.

In addition to these three implications, I made seven recommendations to improve the experiences of African American educational leadership faculty experiences at PWIs in post-secondary education. First, intercultural competence could be a university-wide focus. Second, policies on intercultural competence could be developed and implemented at the university level. The third recommendation is to evaluate the Jackson Scholars Program. The fourth recommendation is to expand the Jackson Scholars Program. The fifth recommendation is to establish partnerships between the university and the community. The sixth recommendation is to build on current research and best practices on intercultural competence. The seventh recommendation is to reduce the gaps in the literature related to intercultural competence. Future research should focus on African

American faculty in numerous areas including differences in the experience of female and male faculty, and the experiences of more experienced faculty. In addition, further study on the intercultural competence of African American faculty and other faculty of color should be investigated. Given the importance of mentoring, networking, and professional development to the success of African American faculty and other faculty of color, access to the UCEA can provide future investigators with an opportunity to examine the Jackson Scholars Program role in promoting intercultural competence at PWIs and other higher education institutions.

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**Appendix A**

**Email Request for Jackson Scholar Participation in the Study**

My name is Hervey A. Taylor III, and I am a graduate student pursuing a doctoral degree in educational and organizational leadership at the University of the Pacific, Benerd School of Education, Sacramento, California Campus. For my dissertation, I am completing a study regarding the underrepresentation of African American faculty at predominantly White institutions (PWIs).

As part of my study I am interviewing African American faculty members who participated in the Jackson Scholars program through the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) who are currently working at a PWI. You have been identified as a former participant in the Jackson Scholars program. That program provided training, mentoring, and resources to prepare you for your experience as a full-time faculty member. This study will examine those experiences at PWIs.

This is an invitation to participate in this study as an interviewee. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes. I am very hopeful that you will be willing to participate in this study and share your experiences as an African American faculty member. Your expertise will be a valuable addition to the study.

Interviews will be completed by telephone. I will use pseudonyms for all participants and academic institutions to protect confidentiality.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact me at at h_taylor2@u.pacific.edu or you may call me at (916) 896-4380. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project, please call the Research and Graduate Studies Institutional Review Board Office, University of the Pacific, at (209) 946-3903.

Sincerely,

Hervey A. Taylor III

Doctoral Student, University of the Pacific, Sacramento, CA campus

# Appendix B

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

African American Faculty: A Study of Their Experiences related to Intercultural Competence at Predominantly White Institutions

You are invited to participate in a research study, which will involve interviews of African American faculty members who currently are employed at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). My name is Hervey A. Taylor III and I am a doctoral student at the University of the Pacific, Benerd School of Education, Sacramento, CA campus. Faculty members for this study were selected because they are 1) Jackson Scholars through the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), 2) full-time faculty at a PWI, and 3) Black/African American. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you meet these criteria. As a Jackson Scholar, you received training, mentoring and resources designed to help your experience as a faculty member. This study examines those experiences.

The purpose of this study is to explore and identify effective ways to improve the experiences of African American faculty at PWIs by investigating the connection of Intercultural Competence to the African American faculty experience. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed. The interview will be completed by telephone. The interview session will be recorded to accurately capture your responses by using a tape recorder or a voice memo app. Notes will also be taken during the interview to document key details. The interview recordings will be transcribed using a professional transcription service. Your participation in this study will last approximately 45 minutes.

There are some possible risks involved for participants. The possible risks include psychological risks such as anxiety, depression, guilt, and loss of self-esteem that could be produced by recalling previous experiences. There are also some sociological risks such as embarrassment, loss of respect, and loss of opportunity for advancement if colleagues or supervisors gain knowledge of the interview through a breach of confidentiality. There are some benefits to this research, particularly that this study will focus on exploring the experiences of African American faculty and the results can be utilized to improve their overall experience at PWIs. In addition, participation in this study will help to build on previous research about underrepresented African American faculty and may provide a new perspective that incorporates Intercultural Competence.

If you have any questions about the research at any time, please contact me at h_taylor2@u.pacific.edu or (916) 896-4380. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Sharla Berry at sberry1@pacific.edu or (916) 340-6155. If you have any questions about

your rights as a participant in a research project please call the IRB Administrator, Research & Graduate Studies Office, University of the Pacific (209) 946 -7716.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Measures to insure your confidentiality include utilizing password protected devices and using pseudonyms in place of your name and academic institution. The data obtained will be maintained in a safe, locked location and will be destroyed three years after the study is completed.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time with out penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

You will be offered a copy of this signed form to keep.

Interviewee Signature _____

Signature Date _____

Institutional Review Board FWA0000103
APPROVED
Expiration: 01/31/19
IRB#: 18-65
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

**Appendix C**

Interview Protocol – Hervey A. Taylor III

Interview Protocol Project: African American faculty at predominantly White institutions

Time of Interview:

Date:

Location:

Interviewer: Hervey A. Taylor III

Interviewee:

Job Title of Interviewee:

**Brief Introduction and Description of the Project:** Hello, my name is Hervey Taylor III and I am a doctoral student in the Benerd School of Education, at the University of the Pacific, Sacramento campus. I am completing a study on the experiences of African American faculty employed at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in higher education. The purpose of the study is to explore successes and challenges experienced by African American faculty and to make recommendations for effective ways to increase the recruitment and retention of African American faculty at PWIs.

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a participant and to be interviewed for this study. Please be aware that your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and all of your responses are strictly confidential. In addition, I will take precautions to protect your anonymity through the entire research process of this study. Any information you provide during this interview will be removed and destroyed pursuant to University of the Pacific Institutional Review Board requirements.

Do you have a clear understanding of everything I have said so far? Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this study? Thank you!

To make sure that I capture all critical components of our interview today, I would like to record this session. Do I have your permission to record this conversation?  Thank you!

We will now begin the interview. Dr. _____.

**Questions:**

1.  Can you tell me about yourself? How long have you worked in higher education?

2.  What higher education institutions have you worked at as a faculty member? What led you to seek employment at your current institution?

3.  What was it like for you when you first started working in higher education at a predominantly White institution? How would you describe the culture and climate on campus?

4.  How did you learn to be a faculty member? What is the hidden curriculum of being a faculty member?

5.  Tell me about your experiences working at a predominantly White institution. What are some of the challenges you have faced there? How were you able to fit in with other faculty?

6. How did the Jackson Scholars Program prepare you to be a faculty member at a PWI?

7. What are some of the techniques or coping strategies you use to overcome obstacles at your institution? What changes did you make to cope and adapt to life as a Black faculty member working at a predominantly White institution?

8. What type of interactions have you had with other faculty at your academic institution?

9. What is your view of how you are perceived by your peers at your academic institution?

10. Can you give some specific examples of how non-Black faculty have mentored, influenced, or assisted you in improving your job performance at the campus?

11. Can you give some specific examples of how other faculty have impeded your progress or served as obstacles to you being successful in your job on campus?

12. Is there anything you would like to add regarding your experience working at a predominantly White institution?

I really appreciate your participation in this interview. Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, you may contact me at h_taylor2@u.pacific.edu or (916) 896-4380.

# Appendix D

**UNIVERSITY OF THE**
**PACIFIC**

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS | INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

TO:        Hervey Taylor, III
                Benerd Sacramento
                Benerd School of Education

CC:        Sharla Berry, Faculty Advisor

FROM:    Valerie Andeola, IRB Administrator

DATE:     January 24, 2018

RE:        IRB Approval Protocol Taylor, III, #18-65

Your proposal entitled *"African American Faculty: A Study of Their Experiences Related to Intercultural Competence at Predominantly White Institutions,"* submitted to the University of the Pacific IRB has been approved. Your project received an Expedited review.

You are authorized to work with *12 individuals (18 years of age or older)* as human subjects, based on your approved protocol. This approval is effective through **January 31, 2019**.

NOTE: Enclosed is your IRB approved consent document with the official stamp of IRB approval. **You are required to copy and distribute only this stamped consent form.** Consent forms without this seal of approval are not permitted and use of any other consent may result in noncompliance of research.

It is your responsibility according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations to submit an annual **Active Protocol Status/Continuation Form**. This form is required to request a continuation or when submitting your required closure report. Please be aware that procedural changes or amendments must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval. Changes may NOT be made without IRB approval except to eliminate apparent immediate hazards. Changes made without prior IRB review and approval may result in noncompliance of research. Complete **Protocol Revision Form** and submit to IRB@pacific.edu.

Best wishes for continued success in your studies. Feel free to contact our office if
you have any questions.

Sincerely,
IRB Administrator

**Valerie Andeola | IRB & IACUC Administrator**
University of the Pacific | Office of Research & Sponsored Programs

3601 Pacific Avenue | Stockton, CA 95211 | 209.946.7716
www.pacific.edu/HumanSubjects

**Access our IRB Newsletter!**

Appendix E

**Coding Scheme**

Note: This coding scheme represents some pre-established themes based on the research questions and the theoretical framework along with themes that emerged pursuant to the interviews with study participants.

| Category | Code | Subcode | Participant Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survival Strategies for managing the change Process in intercultural competence | Work/life balance | Strategy for Success | Too much time working on faculty work |
|  |  |  | Taking time off as necessary |
|  |  |  | Protecting family time |
|  | Health/stress issues |  | High blood pressure, anxiety |
|  | Prior PWI experience |  | Exercise/ massages |
|  |  |  | Took knowledge to PhD program |
|  | Spiritual |  | Time to adjust to faculty life |
|  |  |  | Lonely place |
|  | Leaving the institution |  | Reaching out to mentors at other institutions |
|  |  |  | Spirituality and prayer |
|  |  |  | Belief and faith |
|  | Self-identity |  | Growing up and maturing |
|  |  |  | Recognizing that inequities are part of life |
|  | Insulation from issues |  | Being myself from the interview to the job |
|  |  |  | Very loud Black woman for better or worse |

| | | | Forgiving herself |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Making adjustments | | Use White assistance because cannot survive if using only Black assistance |
| | | | Blacks helping Blacks |
| | Colleagues | | Leaving current position for another PWI research 1 institution |
| | | | Talking to coach/mentor |
| | | | Confronting White faculty |
| | | | Must be myself if unable to adapt to the environment |
| | | | Put on Superman cape to confront White woman faculty member |
| | | | Be more deliberate about finding Blackness on campus |
| | | | More vocal about own growth |
| | | | Be myself |
| | | | Strategy for working together as Black faculty |
| | | | Save energy and don't fight all of the time |
| Daily life on campus | Climate and culture | University | Social and academic life |
| | | | Currency is publication and networking |
| | | College | People doing their own thing |

| | Experience | Department | Isolation happens on campus |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Some trust and limited cases of not getting along with faculty |
| | Differences | Not always a struggle | People have the ability to help but do not |
| | | | Faculty is not proactive in helping |
| | Impact | | Environment to balance research and teaching |
| | | | Lack of communication on key issues of race |
| | | | Institution focused on students instead of faculty or staff |
| | | | First-year issues |
| | | | Learned about academia from herself |
| | | | Changes by university are bureaucratic and slow. |
| | | | Says it is about diversity but the department not really about diversity |
| | | | Amazing department in the college |
| | | | Viewed as mildly aggressive, smart, and no nonsense |
| | | | Doing well on the tenure track |
| | | | Students of color same as faculty low numbers |
| | | | Co-teaching with an older White woman faculty member |
| | | | Learning to be faculty is difficult |

| | | | Need a system in place for social justice |
| | | | Advocate later but not immediate |
| | | | Interpersonal relationships – hostile |
| | | | perceptions or sympathetic |
| Challenges | White language and behavior | Not knowing | Easier said than done |
| | | | Not finding colleagues to collaborate with |
| | | Counter SPACES | You are always being judged |
| | | | Ignoring what others think |
| | Culture and climate | Perceptions | Working harder as a Black person |
| | | | Negative perceptions by Whites based on |
| | | Marginalization | opportunity hires or Affirmative Action views |
| | Job skills | | Climate issues not being address appropriately |
| | | Micro-aggressions | Number of neo-Nazi incidents on campus |
| | Level of disrespect | | Physical safety issues |
| | | | Questioned by others about reality |
| | | | Not treated like a colleague |
| | | | Compelled to wear certain clothes |
| | | | Black woman stereotype |
| | | | Difficult to find community and tap into it |
| | | | Hard to find space with Black women |
| | | | Sometimes far away from family |
| | | | White faculty not saying anything about |

| | | Name references | wrongs happening on campus |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Breakthrough against White supremacy |
| | | | Being called sweetie by a White student |
| | | | Lower scores on course evaluations |
| | | | Hate crime on campus |
| | | | Folder called "Hell" |
| | | | Communication |
| | | | Micro-aggressions |
| | | | Whiteness, ageism, unconscious and implicit bias |
| | | | Told to pay attention by White colleague |
| Support and resources | Interpreter/ Translator | Navigation | Colleagues in the department spoke the same language |
| | | Protective factors | Parents were professors or worked at a university |
| | Networking | | No great thought partner on campus |
| | Jackson Scholars Network | | Networking |
| | | | Mentor was too busy |

| | Mentoring | | Exposure to scholars |
| | | | Not using resources for needs |
| | | | Family support |
| | | | Jackson Scholars Program did not help everyone |
| | | | Those new to the game do not know the process |
| | | | Mother has background in Education |
| | | | Learned from other faculty |
| | | | Mentor helpful with recommendation letters, programming in conferences |
| | | | White mentors helping along the way |
| | | | Differences between White and Black mentors |
| Off -campus community | Impact Outside Influence | | Wanted to get married |
| | | | People in personal life helped |
| | | | Sobbing and resting when incidents happen |
| | | | Pressure outside the university for critical capacity |
| | | | Whiteness outside of the campus |
| | | | Classroom, grocery store, and everywhere Whiteness |
| | | | Carried issues from school to their home |
| | | | Family challenges |

| | | | Commuting off campus for hair and schooling |
| | | | Lack of Black spaces off campus |
| | | | Forgot about Blackness |
| | | | Black space needed |
| | | | Family must be part of the faculty process |
| | | | because of off-campus issues |
| | | | |
| | | | |