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Implementing Organizational Change in a Multidimensional Community College District: A Case Study

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Abstract

Implementing organizational change within complex organizations involves responding to external forces that impact business operations. Leaders guide their organizations through planned change processes by implementing strategic initiatives that affect the entire organization, impact business operations, and influence organizational values (Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Tushman & Nadler, 2012). Community colleges implement change initiatives on behalf of historically, nondominant students to address systemic issues through developing more inclusive higher education practices (Harris & Wood, 2016; Tate IV, 2008). The following study investigated a matrix-structured community college district located in the Pacific Northwest that implemented change across multiple dimensions to improve student success outcomes for systemically minoritized populations. The purpose of the study was to investigate perceptions held by leaders and staff associated with change management implementation within a multidimensional higher education organization with a focus on Black male student outcomes. Through a qualitative, case study approach, the study analyzed data collected within six focus group interviews with 12 participants. Analysis of RQ1 established four major themes including high turnover/attrition, effectiveness of change, effectiveness of communication, and cross-functional teams; and RQ2 established three major themes including heightened awareness of opportunity gaps, shared vision, and cross-functional teams. Findings produced primary recommendations (integrate Achieving the Dream (ATD) into the formal structure of the district, clarifying decision-making and processes, improve transparency and communication, and thoughtful collaboration) and recommendations for future research (1) contributes to emerging literature on multidimensional higher education institutions; (2) improving educational

experiences for Black male community college students; and (3) understanding organizational change processes on community college campuses.

Keywords: Multidimensional, Community College District, Organizational Change, Achieving the Dream

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Dedication

The team dedicates this dissertation to all college administrators, faculty and staff who continue to create paths of access for historically minoritized, nondominant students with intersecting identities who must navigate multiple oppressive barriers in addition to the systemic complexities of the American higher education system in hopes of better lives.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Improved college access does not equate to successful completion of a college degree (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Community college administrators have come to this realization, prompting these institutions to begin focusing less on the recruitment and admissions process and more on their students' experiences (Baar, 2020). By improving the student experience, the hope is retention and graduation rates will improve, increasing the number of students who successfully complete a college degree.

Many institutions have gone as far as collecting feedback from their students to identify the ways in which changes can be implemented to improve their overall experience; however, what administrators at these institutions have failed to acknowledge is how the structure of their organization may affect their change initiatives. According to Daft (2016), the way organizations are structured can be characterized on a spectrum where one end represents stability through efficiency and top-down control and the other end represents flexibility by emphasizing learning and change. Where an organization falls on this spectrum can impact their ability to effectively manage change initiatives intended to address new complexities in their external and internal environments (Bernstein & Nohria, 2016; Daft, 2016; Schein, 2010). Because of the unique way higher education institutions are structured, implementing and managing organizational change to improve the student experience is more complex and challenging than when a conventional for-profit corporation undergoes a transformation to increase sales and revenue (Buller, 2015; Kang et al., 2020; Kezar, 2011, 2018).

Higher education institutions must implement change to respond to the shifting social, cultural, economic, and political environmental forces that impact their ability to function successfully and support student achievement (Buller, 2015; Daft, 2016; Kezar, 2018; Schein,

2010); however, Kezar (2005, 2011, 2014, 2018) argued the organizational structure of many higher education institutions contributes to a lack of capacity to effectively address the modern-day challenges that threaten the health and success of their overall enterprise. The structural configuration of higher education institutions that encourage stability cause change to occur more slowly than other organizations because values and systems become deeply ossified in the culture and climate, limiting the flexibility required to meet the evolving needs of students (Clark, 2003; Edman & Brazil, 2007; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). The tension between stability and flexibility in relation to organizational change in higher education becomes further complicated when institutions operate multiple campuses, multidimensionally (Simsek & Louis, 1994). According to Pinherio and Berg (2017), the decentralized structure of a multidimensional university or college operating multidimensionally makes institutionalizing improvements for students, faculty, and staff extremely challenging. This scenario is problematic for systemically nondominant student populations (e.g., Black men) who benefit from organizational change initiatives that seek to alter the traditional higher education structures presenting barriers to access and achievement (Cunningham et al., 2013; Lynn, 2006).

At a community college district located in the Pacific Northwest, a major change initiative called Achieving the Dream (ATD) has begun implementation to improve the overall college experience and increase completion rates for Black male students. Feedback from students has been gathered and taken into consideration on the successful implementation of the program; however, what has not yet been taken into consideration is the way in which the district's organizational structure might affect implementation of this initiative and if it is conducive to the type of change ATD is seeking to achieve. Daft (2016) asserted managers should periodically evaluate organizational structure to determine whether it is suitable for

changing needs. The literature review identified change as a process (Abbott, 1990, 1992; Mohr, 1982; Poole et al., 2000; Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). This process is one that can be influenced "by diverse units and actors both inside and outside the organization" (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004, p. 383). Community college leaders involved in implementing transformational social changes alter organizational structures that connect educational opportunities. Knowing this, the structure of the district under study has been taken into consideration to identify what, if any, impact the structure has on change initiatives implemented in the organization.

Problem Statement

A significant challenge for community colleges is implementing organizational change initiatives to improve student success outcomes for Black male students (Eskrine-Meusa, 2017; Gipson et al., 2018; Lewis & Middleton, 2003; Palacios & Alvarez, 2016; Rawlston-Wilson et al., 2014). Knapp et al. (2011) provided evidence at the national level that there is a significant disparity of Black men attaining a degree, certificate, or credential from a community college compared to other racial, ethnic, and gender groups. According to leadership from the community college district, their Black male student population has lower rates of student success outcomes (e.g., retention, persistence, and completion) than their peers from other racial and gender groups. Scholarly literature has suggested an underlying reason for these disparities in student success outcomes by race and gender, like those observed at the district, is institutional systems and structures designed to hinder access and achievement for students of color (Bromley & Meyer, 2017; Bush & Bush, 2016; Ladsen-Billings, 2006; Lynn, 2006; Strayhorn, 2009; Swanson et al., 2003). The effects of these institutional barriers affect the ability of Black men to successfully navigate, persist, and achieve in the community college district, contributing to lower student success outcomes compared to other students (Palmer & Young, 2009; Welton et

al., 2018). To improve student success outcomes for Black men, the community college district must create an environment that effectively addresses and supports their needs.

To build an institution where Black men can thrive and succeed, the community college's district must transform traditional organizational structures that underpin oppressive structural and cultural configurations (Ash et al., 2020; Gooden et al., 2018; Kotter, 2008; Lewin, 1947; Rafaelli, 2017; Slocum, 2006; Squire et al., 2018). Organizational change in a multidimensional community college district can be difficult because higher education institutions overall are slow to change and adapt to internal and external complexities (Buller, 2015; Daft, 2016; Kezar, 2018; Simsek & Louis, 1994). Exacerbating the intrinsic challenges of implementing organizational change in the higher education context is when institutions operate in a multidimensional way (Groenwald, 2017; Pinheiro & Berg, 2017; Timberlake, 2004).

Multidimensional community colleges elevate the complexity of organizational change because decision making, collaboration, coordination, leadership, and relationships become difficult to manage, which can easily stymie change initiatives (Mills & Plumb, 2012; Pinheiro & Berg, 2017). Moreover, the bureaucratic and organizational structures intended to cultivate stability that characterize multidimensional community colleges limit the flexibility necessary to adopt new ideas and innovations that can improve student success outcomes for Black males (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2018). Operationalizing change in a large, collocated bureaucracy, such as a multidimensional community college district, can obstruct the transformative change needed for Black male students to thrive because the values, assumptions, interests, and systems of the various campuses are misaligned—resulting in resistance, confusion, and mistrust (Daft, 2016; Kezar, 2011; Pinheiro & Berg, 2017; Swanson et al., 2015).

This study sought to describe the experience of organizational change in a multidimensionally structured community college district to surface knowledge on how to successfully reform structural and cultural configurations to improve student success outcomes for Black men and other systematically nondominant populations. To accomplish this goal, the research team documented the experiences of leaders and staff who participated in organizational change initiatives and programs intended to benefit students of color.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to provide insight into organizational change implementation at a multidimensional community college district from the perspectives of leaders and staff. The researchers analyzed how the organizational structure impacted the capacity of higher education institutions to address strategic objectives through organizational change efforts. ATD was used as a case study example of how the multidimensional context affects organizational change implementation related to the advancement of student success outcomes for systemically nondominant populations. The study focused on exploration to understand (a) how the multidimensional context impacts the overall changes in the community college district related to ATD implementation; (b) the organizational change practices that foster capacity for improving student success outcomes; (c) the structural-, cultural-, and individual-level dimensions of the district that hinder positive transformation from developing; and (d) the implications of these changes for student success outcomes for Black male students.

Research Questions

The community college district considers ATD to be a holistic change enterprise intended to impact every feature and function of the institution. The researchers conceptualized the community college district as a bounded system where change occurs in a specific context and

time. Through a qualitative case study methodology, the researchers sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs?

2. What individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps?

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to existing literature on how multidimensional higher education institutions can implement and sustain organizational change to improve student outcomes for Black men. Specifically, this research enriches the discussion of how personnel at postsecondary institutions can use organizational change as a tool in to support student success. Implementing organizational change through large-scale national initiatives such as ATD often involve multiple influential forces (e.g., institutional leadership, organizational structure, culture, and budgetary and technological constraints) that can lead to student competition. The value of understanding this study is helping institutions build capacity for organizational change initiatives that can reform traditional higher education structures that marginalize and oppress students of color. Such a lack of knowledge on how a multidimensional context can affect organizational change efforts will only perpetuate Black male students suffering under the historical legacies of racism that reside in community colleges (Kezar, 2018; Ladsen-Billings, 2006; Simsek & Louis, 1994). As community colleges continue to experience increased demand for their programs, institutional structures, systems, services, and resources must be redesigned to address inequities among historically marginalized groups, including Black men (Cohen et al., 2014; Gipson et al., 2018; Lewis & Middleton, 2003; Lynn, 2006; Palacios & Alvarez, 2016).

By bridging gaps in understanding how organizational change manifests in a multidimensional community college, 2-year postsecondary institutions can improve capacity and readiness for change as they attempt to address systemic barriers to higher education achievement for students of color (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2018). As community colleges continue to expand campuses and branches, successfully implementing organizational change initiatives continues to be elusive and requires new theories and approaches unique to community college settings (Groenwald, 2018; Lane & Johnson, 2013; Mills & Plump, 2012; Pinheiro & Berg, 2017; Veit, 2005). This study provided insights on how community colleges with multidimensional organizational structures can evolve to address modern threats to their mission and vision and support student needs overall.

Theoretical Models and Conceptual Framework

Although research on the relationship between race, gender, and student outcomes among systemically nondominant community college students remain limited (Gardenhire-Crooks et al., 2010; Harris & Wood, 2016; Mason, 1998; Sutherland, 2011; Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012), the research team required a framework that identified the major factors influencing Black male behavior in the community college context. Astin's (1993) input-environment-out (I-E-O) model is a popular framework to explain how student characteristics and the higher education environment influence student outcomes (e.g., retention, persistence, and completion). *Inputs* are prior educational experiences, academic talents, and background characteristics that students bring with them to the educational setting (Astin, 1993). *Environments* are structural and cultural in the higher education context and affect students' experiences, such as faculty engagement and student support services. *Outputs* represent the knowledge, skills, values, and interest students demonstrate after they graduate (Astin & Astin, 2015; Bitzer, 2003; Patton, 2016).

Although simplistic in its conceptualization, Astin's I-E-O model defines the central concern of student impact research as assessing the relationship of the higher education environment on student outcomes, growth, and development (Bitzen, 2003). Still, limitations of the I-E-O model for usage in this study included its focus on the 4-year higher education experience and an assumption that students have the agency for involvement in the environment if opportunities for meaningful learning and development are made available by the institution (Astin, 1999; Astin & Astin, 2015; Patton et al., 2016). The goal of this research was to assess community partners' environmental impact on Black male student success outcomes, which required a theoretical and conceptual framework that promoted an understanding of how the community college campus environment and Black male student outputs are related. Harris and Wood (2016a) provided a theoretical model informed by Astin's (1993) I-E-O model; however, this model specifically addressed the Black male experience in community colleges.

Socio-Ecological Outcomes Model

The socio-ecological outcomes (SEO) model, developed by Harris and Wood (2016a), explained community college student success through the postsecondary educational experiences of Black men, Black masculinity, and identity development research. The SEO model's saliency to this research study entailed the ability to contextualize the student experience for Black men and identify the organizational structures and cultural elements of a community context that directly impacted student success outcomes. The Community College Survey of Men (CCSM) "a comprehensive needs assessment instrument that has been completed by nearly 4,000 male community college students across 27 colleges" (Harris & Wood, 2013a, p. 37) utilized the SEO model and the survey's findings have been empirically validated, suggesting constructs in the framework are valid and reliable. Analogous to Astin's (1993) I-E-O model, the Harris and

Wood's (2013a) SEO model is comprised of three overarching variables that influence the experiences of students of color attending community colleges: (a) inputs—life experiences and societal factors that occur prior to matriculation, (b) socioecological domains—the environments spheres of activity that shape interaction and experiences of student in a community college, and (c) outcomes—observable and tangible ways students have changed as a result of inputs and socioecological domains (Harris & Wood, 2013a; Harris & Wood, 2013b). The SEO model demonstrates how constructs embedded in each variable domain influence student success outcomes through different interactive relationships that demonstrate how each component of the community college context affects the experiences of students of color. Harris and Wood's (2016) SEO model provide a conceptual framework to help community college administrators who conduct organizational change understand how to align the organizational factors for improving systemically nondominant male student success outcomes and provides an assessment tool that can inform professional development of leaders and staff to build the capacities of practitioners tasked with serving systemically nondominant male students.

Congruence Model of Organizational Design

Nadler (2006) described the congruence model of change as a diagnostic tool for managers who need to understand the patterns of behavior and performance in their organization to manage change effectively. Tushman and Nadler (1986) argued the essence of the congruence model can be described as the correlation between increased congruency among internal components and increased organizational effectiveness. The congruence model can be used to analyze an organization as a system and understand how its basic components must seamlessly fit and function effectively together—organizational fit—to support performance and success. The concept of organizational fit explains how various organizational components interact in and

across organizational structure effectively. Nadler (2006) stated, "the tighter the fit, the greater the effectiveness" (p. 259). As such, the congruence model ensures that strategy fits in organizational realities related to resources and environmental constraints and, in addition, that strategy fits in formal structures, systems, and processes to ensure that fit exists among all internal organizational components (Nadler, 2006; Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Tushman & Nadler, 2012). The congruence model provides a framework for understanding how community colleges can design an organizational structure where it's various components (i.e., structures, systems, policies, procedures) work collectively to achieve their mission of creating an environment where all students can thrive (Cohen et al., 2014; Lynn, 2006; Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Tushman & Nadler, 2012).

Critical Race Theory

For over 25 years, critical race theory (CRT) has dominated as the preferred racial analysis in educational research (Cabrera, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leonardo, 2006). Intersectionality is an integral part of CRT in educational research, although higher education researchers have continued to struggle with overwhelming the theoretical model with multiple social identities without properly examining evidence of intersecting structures of oppression (Cabrera, 2019; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Harris & Patton, 2018). Scholars seeking to understand how racism impacts organizational culture and structure in higher educational institutions should engage with CRT literature through a liberatory lens capable of theorizing racial oppression. The African Diaspora represents many diverse African ethnic groups of people who have been subjected to universal degradation despite the existence of an African connection and consciousness used for understanding Black schooling experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1992). As a framework, CRT can be helpful for assisting multidimensional

organizational leadership with understanding racial oppression from a historical perspective in postsecondary educational systems (Yi et al., 2020).

Summary of Methodology

A qualitative case study research design was used in this study to investigate how the multidimensional community college context impacts community partners' capacities to implement change for improving student success outcomes for Black men. Participants in this study included leaders and staff who engage in ATD implementation. Data collection involved focus group interviews using a semi-structured protocol to collaboratively construct knowledge about organizational change in the district. Data analysis was conducted using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to explore how leaders and staff experience organizational change in a multidimensional context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Larkin & Thompson, 2012). Measures of quality included focusing on credibility through awareness of bias, researcher positionality based on the researchers' unique experiences and backgrounds, and potential transferability of the study. Delimitations, weaknesses, and limitations related to the study are identified in the following section.

Delimitations and Limitations

This section will discuss the Delimitations, Limitations, as well as provide a robust definition of terms commonly referenced throughout this research study.

Delimitations

The population for this study included those directly involved with ATD implementation, although other senior or executive leadership positions in the college were not consulted. The study focused on one community college's organizational change efforts and experiences and did

not apply to another community college's efforts or experiences. The study took place during the pandemic which had an impact on the way that data was able to be collected.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is the overwhelming presence of Whiteness; this study involves a predominately White research team investigating issues relating to Black men with predominantly White identifying participants working in a predominately White institution (PWI). Because the research is being viewed through a predominately White lens, there is a potential for the lack of cultural relevance which can result in the misidentification of the issues, challenges, and barriers affecting Black men in the district. According to Harper (2012), research through a White lens tends to use a narrow definition of discrimination that views racism as encompassing overt acts which minimizes the impact of institutional racism. Gusa (2010) contends that this denial of institutional racism is the result of White colorblindness that "ignores the continual reality of racial hostility and discrimination" occurring in predominately White institutions (p. 465). Colorblindness can prevent the research team from attacking the problems in the district at a surface level without digging deeper to discover the real systemic, structural, and cultural features of the district the present barriers to success for Black men. Additionally, most participants identified as female which presents another consideration regarding limitations of the study. The lack of multiple perspectives within these focus groups presented potential for biases which could have resulted in fewer topics being explored or discussed. Participant demographics (majority White and female-identifying) present multiple barriers to cultural relevancy in the study that impact the findings, implications, and recommendations.

The recommendations made by this predominantly White research team are limited in that they may maintain certain levels of bias. Additionally, the recommendations made may be

more beneficial to the PWI rather than the Black men they are aimed at helping. As mentioned

by Bell (1980, 2000) White people rarely invest in Black people and the efforts that do take place

to address racial inequities almost always benefit White people more. According to Bell (1980,

2000) if the actions taken to remedy racial inequity have benefit to White people, then they will

be undertaken but if the action benefits Black people more than the action is usually not taken.

Our recommendations present no evidence that they would be more beneficial towards Black

men and the lack of Black men interviewed as part of our focus groups means that their input

was not taken into consideration when determining what the problems may be as they related to

change implementation.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used operationally in this study:

Change process is how changes occur in an organization (Daft, 2016).

Multidimensional, according to Strikwerda and Stoelhorst (2009), describes

organizations that are multidimensional are organized around multiple dimensions. These

dimensions could be region, product, and account. At the same time, these organizations have

different managers who are accountable for the performance in each one of these dimensions.

The multidimensional organization shifts more toward a decentralized organizational structure.

Opportunity gap (equity gap) refers to disparities in educational outcomes and student

success metrics across race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, physical or mental

abilities, and other demographic traits and intersectionalities.

Organizational change is the adoption of a new idea or behavior by an organization

(Daft, 2016).

Organizational structure is the designated form for reporting relationships and (a) includes the number of levels in the hierarchy and the span of control managers and supervisors; (b) identifies the grouping together of individuals into departments and of departments into the total organization; and (c) comprises the design of systems to ensure effective communication, coordination, and integration of efforts across departments (Daft, 2016).

Resistance to change is the reluctance to adapt to change when presented. Employees can be overt or covert about their unwillingness to adapt to organizational changes, ranging from expressing their resistance publicly to unknowingly resisting change through language or general actions (Kotter, 2008).

Summary

This chapter outlined key motivation, concepts, frameworks, terminologies, and methodologies that defined the design and implementation of the study. The problem this study aimed to explore was organizational change at a multidimensional community college district in the Pacific Northwest. The purpose of this research was to provide insight into organizational change implementation at a multidimensional community college district from the perspectives of leaders and staff. Specifically, this study sought to understand: (a) how does the organizational structure of a multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs?; and (b) what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps? The study used the SEO model, congruence model, and CRT to guide the analysis of how organizational change in the district can impact student experience and improve student success outcomes for Black male students.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the challenges that multidimensional community colleges have with organization structure and implementing effective and sustainable change that impacts the student experience. This demonstrates the need to understand these challenges to better address the potential benefits experienced by change agents and recipients.

Chapter 2 presents a review of current research and literature on organizational change, community colleges, the Black experience, and ATD in these systems. Frameworks used include the SEO, the congruence model, and CRT.

Chapter 3 outlines and describes the methodology used in this case study, including participants, research design, and procedures. Specific information is detailed about the collection and analysis of data for the study. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion on measure of quality, researcher positionality, transferability, and control for bias.

Chapter 4 discusses the results of the study, first by going over a summary of the research design, discussing the data collection instrument and method as well as the analysis. In addition, chapter 4 gives an overview of the main themes that emerged from the study.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the research findings as well as discusses the strengths and limitations of the study. Implications of the study are discussed and finally, recommendations are given.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter, a review of literature is provided to situate the context of the study and examine the research questions. The investigation of literature intended to establish the parameters of organizational change implementation in a multidimensional community college district for the purposes of improving academic outcomes for Black men. Because of the complex nature of the phenomenon of interest and research setting, a variety of topics were explored in the literature review to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research. To conceptualize the issue of change in a multidimensional district, a robust discussion of critical race theory (CRT), the socio-ecological outcomes (SEO) model, and the congruence model of organizational design is provided. Multidimensional organizations were explored to situate the context of the study and establish how the specific environmental prosperities of the district may influence change.

Because the research study used Achieving the Dream (ATD) as a case example, literature about the program also warranted a review to gain insight into the complications the district may have experienced when attempting to implement solutions. As the central phenomenon of the study, organizational change was examined to establish how internal and external complexities influenced change implementation in the district. Finally, because this research study examined the various dimensions of the district, scholarly literature on both organization structure and culture provided context about how the district's design, climate, and environment affected organizational change efforts.

Challenges and difficulties occur when multidimensional community college districts implement organizational change initiatives designed to improve academic outcomes among Black men (ATD, 2022). Literature has suggested organizational change is an observable

phenomenon that impacts structure, culture, performance, and effectiveness (Daft, 2016; Schein, 2017). This acknowledgement supports the idea that community colleges are permeable environments where organizational change initiatives occur and influence their ability to constructively address student success outcomes (Cohen et al., 2014). To conceptualize how organizational change influences the community college context, the research team studied literature demonstrating the importance of the interaction between the organization and environment and how change is used as a mechanism for implementing innovations. Scholars have disagreed on what change means in a community college district setting; however, literature on social service institutions depicted internal and external environmental factors as having a significant impact on the various dimensions of the institution (Austin & Claassen, 2008).

Literature on implementing organizational change in a multidimensional community college district remains rare, yet limited literature has focused on analyzing the observable factors in the context of community college setting districts impacted by change initiatives (Levin, 1998; Van Wagoner, 2004; Malm, 2008). The researchers sought to present a range of evidence on organizational change, community colleges, and multidimensional organizations to expand the understanding of how organizational change can be used in a multidimensional higher education space to improve academic outcomes for Black men.

The researchers engaged in a robust literature review strategy. The initial search terms used to investigate the phenomena of interest included (a) organizational change, (b) community colleges, and (c) Black men in higher education. A synthesis and summary of the literature was presented to the community partner for review; upon consultation with leadership from the district, feedback and recommendations helped the research team narrow the scope of the literature review. Based on feedback, new key words employed by the research team to search

for relevant literature included (a) organizational change in higher education, (b) multidimensional organizations and change, (c) organizational structure and design, (d) organizational culture, and (e) ATD. Databases that were used to find literature included Google Scholar, Seattle University library, and various academic journals related to organizational change, higher education, and organizational development. In addition to the literature review, readings from the Seattle University Educational and Organizational Learning and Leadership doctoral program were used to supplement the researchers' understanding of the phenomenon of interest. This process helped the research team develop a robust understanding of the research and helped answer the research questions.

Background

Trends in Black Male Academic Outcomes

Low postsecondary graduation rates among Black men continues to be a nationally recognized priority (McGlynn, 2015). Community colleges serve as important entry points to higher education for Black men, with over 72% of those enrolled in universities and colleges starting at 2-year institutions (Baber et al., 2015; Wood et al.; 2015). Of the 7.7 million students enrolled in public 2-year postsecondary institutions or community colleges in 2020, 21% identified as African American/Black men (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020; National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2021). The 6-year completion rate for full-time, 1st year Black men at 2-year postsecondary institutions in 2020 is 25%, compared to 30% for Black women (NCES, n.d.-a). According to Clark and Smith (2018), the Black male 2-year postsecondary graduation rates are the "lowest among both sexes and all racial groups in U.S higher education" (p. 10). National level data provided by NCES (n.d.-b) demonstrated this fact, indicating completion rates for full-time, 1st year students by race and gender for Asian students

(men 40%; women 49%); Hispanic/Latino/a student's (men, 30%; women, 37%); and White students (men 38%; women, 39%). Wood et al. (2015) argued these rates highlight disparities in key educational outcomes between Black men and other race and gender groups that contribute to profound differences in life opportunities, warranting research and investigation into the causal factors behind these pernicious trends.

Although data showed disparities in completion rates at the national level between Black men and their peers, the same trends were observed at the state level. At community colleges in Washington, Black men had the lowest graduation rates compared to their peers of other racial groups for both sexes—only around 1 in 5 students graduated in 150% of normal time in 2018(Kwaye, Kibort-Crocker, & Pasion, 2020). Leadership at the studied community college district observed that completion rates at their institution were like Kwaye et al., study: Black men experienced consistently lower rates of completion than their peers from other racial and gender groups (Community College District, 2021). The research team was unable to acquire data from the district to independently verify these trends for logistical reasons; however, district presidents, deans, and the director of research confirmed these disparities were persistent despite various interventions. Eliminating these disparities in completion rates for Black men was a priority for the district and viewed as critical for achieving their mission of supporting all students and providing access to higher education for all students.

Community Colleges

Community colleges were established in the early 20th century to help meet increased demand for higher education and to relieve 4-year institutions from lower division (i.e., freshman and sophomore) education programming so they could focus on research and graduate studies (Crookston & Hooks, 2012; Pope, 2006). Over time, federal legislation positioned community

colleges as institutions providing affordable higher education, promoting upward social mobility, and serving local communities throughout the country (Cohen et al., 2014; Thelin, 2011). In the 21st century, the ethos of community colleges is defined by "low-cost education opportunities, open access admissions, comprehensive educational programming, and a mission driven dedication to meeting the needs (e.g., economic, social, cultural) of the local communities they serve" (Wood et al., 2015, p. 77). For these reasons, community colleges are an important source of higher education for students who have traditionally been unserved, helping to promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in the United States' education system (Bowers et al., 2019; Brooms et al., 2018). Historical data indicate the proportion of Black men attending community colleges exceeds their share of the national population, demonstrating that 2-year institutions are an important access point for higher education for various communities around the country (Cohen et al., 2014; Wood & Williams, 2014).

Although the purpose of community colleges is to encourage access and opportunities for traditionally underserved populations, the efficacy of strategies to support achievement was questionable given the low completion rates of Black men (Brock & Slater, 2021). To advance completion rates, community colleges have employed a number of different student service strategies, including 1st-year seminars, college skills courses, learning communities, and orientation (Hatch, 2017; Plutha, 2017); however, interventions aimed at increasing educational outcomes of Black students on community college campuses have continued to have mixed results. Research has indicated initiatives and programming designed to improve to academic outcomes for Black men fail to adequately help them graduate once they achieve access to college (Barra, 2013; Brooks, 2013; Evans et al., 2020; McKinney et al., 2019). Strategies designed to improve academic outcomes have often neglected to adequately address the

systemic, structural, and cultural factors that contribute to dropping out (Bell et al., 2009; Ghazzawi & Jagannathan, 2011; Jayakumar et al., 2013; McDonogh, 1997; Means et al., 2019; Perna, 2006; Pyne & Means, 2013; Tierney & Hagedorn, 2002; Welton & Williams, 2014). To improve completion rates for Black men, the studied district acknowledged they need to do more than implement the student service programming that has traditionally been employed. For this reason, the district adopted ATD as a strategy for a whole college transformation designed to alter the systems, structure, and culture to make the district a place where Black men can thrive (Robertson & Mason, 2008; Brooks, 2013).

Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream (ATD) is a national initiative started in 2004 by the Lumina Foundation. The mission of ATD (2022) is to lead and support community colleges in achieving sustainable institutional transformation and improved outcomes for all students through sharing knowledge, innovative solutions, and effective practices and policies. With a network of over 300 participating institutions in 45 states, community colleges in the ATD network achieve and sustain transformational change intended to improve student experiences and outcomes. ATD helps college stakeholders identify emerging needs and develop specific ways to address them by improving practices across the full spectrum of institutional capacities to achieve whole-college reform.

Types of services and programs provided by ATD to colleges include: (a) coaching, (b) data analysis and technology support, (c) equity services, (d) students support services, (e) campus culture interventions, (f) K–12 partnerships, and (g) teaching and learning through capacity building programs (ATD, 2022). Each college in the network has a unique partnership with ATD; however, the network requires each college to strategically organize and employ

different types of interventions to address specific needs and challenges. Nationally, ATD has been used as a vehicle for assisting community colleges seeking to implement organizational change for the purposes of improving access and outcomes and opportunities for systematically marginalized populations (ATD, 2022). The district has used ATD for these same purposes and has leveraged resources and services to help them build institutional capacities to improve academic outcomes for students of color, including Black male completion rates.

ATD has been used by the district as a framework for accomplishing their institutional mission to create quality education opportunities for a diverse community of learners (Community College District, n.d.-. a). The community college district has been a member of the ATD network since 2012. Since joining, the district has been active in using ATD resources and services to transform the college, earning them exemplar status in the network and being awarded a leader college in 2014 and a college of distinction in 2018 (Community College District, n.d.-a). ATD in the district evolved with different structural iterations being implemented overtime as the district sought to calibrate the right format that would be most effective for organizational change. The first iteration of ATD was led by academic departments and/or functional units that wanted to address specific challenges or areas of interest (Community College District, n.d.-b); for example, the English and mathematics departments participated in an ATD initiative to redesign their precollege curricula to make it more accessible and improve student outcomes (Community College District, 2014). The focus of ATD subsequently broadened to center work on cross-cutting issues in the district, and work was structured around 10 design teams responsible for implementing interventions (Community College District, 2022a).

ATD was restructured in 2020 to five design teams focused on topical areas of institutional interest and who were responsible for developing and implementing interventions (Community College District, 2022b). The five design teams were: (a) induction and support for systematically nondominant students; (b) inclusive pedagogy for systematically nondominant students; (c) aspirational career exploration, planning, and advising for systematically nondominant students; (d) embedded learning support services for systematically nondominant students; and (e) community outreach recruitment and engagement in systemically nondominant communities. All staff and faculty in the district had the option to join a design team based upon their interest and availability. Design teams were responsible for identifying issues in the district, developing proposals for solutions, and then implementing those solutions as interventions to address their specific issue.

According to district leadership (Community College District, 2021), this platform provided an opportunity for practitioners to identify barriers to institutional effectiveness and derive solutions to address them. Design teams met weekly to perform work identifying challenges and developing a proposal which was presented to ATD leadership for approval. The types of information used by design teams to identify issues included observations, archival data, and well-known nationwide problems related to higher education and community colleges (Community College District, 2021). Once proposals were approved, the design team was tasked with ownership of the project, with leadership assuming responsibility of the team lead for the department, unit, or team where the work was focused (Community College District, 2022a). Design teams also met with ATD coaches twice a year who helped them work through blockages by identifying where these challenges existed and developing strategies to overcome them (Community College District, 2022a).

ATD leadership at the district included a core group and ATD leadership team. The core group was composed of individuals representing multiple hierarchical levels in the district, including chancellors, executives, presidents, vice presidents, deans, directors, and design group members. The function of the core group was to review proposals, provide feedback, make approvals, and offer decisions about action steps for implementation. The ATD leadership team is composed of a small group of leaders in the district who function as the coordinating body in recruiting design team members and planning strategy, and administering the program overall (Community College District, 2022a).

Theoretical Models and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical and conceptual framework sought to provide an understanding of the relationship between Black male student experience, the community college environment, and systemic barriers to student success in higher education. Historically, organizational change has taken a corporate focus that prioritized the implementation of transformative and continuous change efforts leaders used to create new business opportunities and improve performance (Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 2008). Multiple industries, including higher education, sought to apply these principles to their own organizational change initiatives to help explain and change the impact on various dimensions of the organization and provide insight into the transformation of individual behavior and action in the organization (Harris & Wood, 2016; Tushman & Nadler, 2012). Although literature remains limited on implementing organizational change in higher educational settings, the researchers sought to provide insight on the environmental factors impacting organizational activities related to change initiatives in community colleges (Astin, 1993; Daft, 2016).

CRT

The Black diaspora represents many diverse African ethnic groups who have been subjected to universal degradation in U.S. education systems despite the many efforts to understand and improve their schooling experiences (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Ladson-Billings (2006) argued the usefulness of developing culturally relevant literacy for Black students as a model of liberation because it can serve "as a political act . . . because it caused people to challenge their lack of political power and freedom" (p. 380). Ladson-Billings suggested education practitioners require culturally relevant preparation for professionals working in the education space to arm "them with accurate self- and historical knowledge, corrects inaccuracies, and provides them with opportunities to develop effective institutional strategies along with learning from and with communities different from their own" (p. 389). There should be consideration for the legal evolution of education access for Blacks in the United States as a means of understanding the need for culturally relevant educational practices and approaches.

Access to public education is a recent phenomenon in U.S. history codified in the *Brown v. Board* (1954) decision. In their seminal work, Tate, Ladson-Billings, and Grant (1993) argued issues of Black access to U.S. public educational services can be traced back to the "Three-fifths Compromise" of the U.S. Constitution (Art. I, Sec. 2) that reduced and objectified Black persons to "a mathematical quantity" (p. 257) for state representative purposes. Tate et al. suggested the quantification of Blacks resulted in their disenfranchisement in the social structure of the United States, exacerbating under education and inequality. Moreover, Tate et al. intimated although educational attainment could not alleviate the condition of limited career choices, school desegregation could increase opportunities in other social service areas. Finally, Tate et al. (1993) concluded the codification of Black educational attainment was statistically quantifiable, and the phenomenon was measurable in terms of equality as "defined and socially constructed

via the legal system" (p. 267). Consequently, Tate et al. and other critical race scholars (e.g., Crenshaw, Cabrera) have advocated for the physical integration of student populations from racial, economical, and cultural perspectives.

CRT is a framework for understanding racial oppression in postsecondary educational systems (Tate et al., 1993; Patton, 2016; Yi et al., 2020). Yi et al. (2020) advanced the premise of CRT is to serve as a framework for understanding legal matters that consider the impact of systemic racial oppression in social institutions and used CRT as a foundation for advancing diverse approaches to analyze racial oppression in educational systems by implementing "a more complex conceptualization of context that acknowledges how racism has long and complex histories" (p. 547). Patton (2016) advanced the scholarship on CRT by considering its role in a postsecondary context by providing an examination of racial oppression in terms of access and research in the higher education space. Patton further argued the use of a CRT lens in education research can expose postsecondary inequities that impact the student experiences in higher education, including community colleges. Contextualizing postsecondary education as a system of racial oppression, Patton (2016) suggested higher education institutions have been created to support "racist narratives and existing legislation to engage in oppression" (p. 319). Patton (2016) concluded by suggesting the use of CRT "as an epistemological lens for studying and transforming higher education as part of a larger social justice agenda" (p. 335).

For over 25 years, CRT has been the dominant for analyzing race and racism in education (Cabrera, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leonardo, 2006; Tate, 2008). Although the use of CRT has numerous applications, its relevance to this study supported the analysis of educational opportunities for Black men in the community college context. Tate IV (2008) examined the challenges of providing adequate educational access to Black men,

arguing it is a systemic issue that can be examined by creating more inclusive research design methods to investigate the root causes of intergenerational inequalities related to Black male educational attainment. Tate IV (2008) presented five assumptions to guide practitioners:

> (1) African American male achievement . . . is intergenerational, (2) teacher quality is positively related to student achievement, (3) understanding classroom practice is a vital aspect of determining quality teaching for African American males, (4) the goal of education should be to provide quality . . . across generations of African American males, and (5) the need to assess . . . quality in classrooms, in schools, in school districts, and across the nation will remain strong as long as African American males are required to attend. (p. 969)

SEO Model

Harris and Wood (2016) developed the SEO model to explain the community college dimensions that influence student success outcomes and postsecondary educational experiences for Black males. Harris and Wood's (2016) SEO model comprised seven key constructs: (a) under inputs—background and defining and societal factors; (b) under socioecological domains—noncognitive, academic, environmental domains, and campus ethos domains; and (c) under outcomes—student success. The SEO model depicts societal factors as inputs that account for the matriculation experiences of Black male community college students and describes socioecological domains as "spheres of activity" (Harris & Wood, 2016, p. 38), fluidly interacting and shaping student success outcomes. The SEO model describes outcomes as "meaningful and observable ways" (Harris & Wood, 2016, p. 42) shaped by the fluid interactions of inputs and domains. Harris and Wood (2016) offered the SEO model as a way for community college personnel seeking to improve student success outcomes for students of color to

conceptualize how the institution can structure itself to create a climate and culture that supports inclusion, equity, and diversity.

Congruence Model of Organization Design

The congruence model of strategy implementation describes an organization as a system with basic components that must fit together to achieve optimal performance and suggests implementing change successfully requires alignment between their structures, systems, cultures, tasks, and competencies (Nadler, 2006; Raffaelli, 2017; Tushman & Nadler, 2012). According to Tushman and Nadler (2012), organizational change comprises three distinct areas of the organizational system: input, strategy, and output. Input included the organization's environment, including all forces, conditions, and operators external to the organization: (a) resources, (b) tangible organizational assets, (c) history, and (d) activities that continue to influence the organization's daily operations. Strategy represented the decisions made about resources based on the environment's demands, opportunities, and constraints, representing how the organization conducts business. Output represented the organization's reason for existence, which is the production or good, services, or resources. Activities, behavior, and performance occur at various systemic levels, including the total system, units in the system, and individuals.

Nadler (2006) described the congruence model of change as a diagnostic tool for managers needing to understand the patterns of organizational behavior and performance to manage change efficiently and effectively. Nadler (2006) encouraged practitioners to understand the environment, resources, history, and strategy of an organization before observing and measuring performance against strategic outcomes and objectives. Nadler (2006) stated, "the operating organization—or the transformative actions that convert strategy, contextualize history, resources, and the environment into a performance pattern—is the foundation of the

congruence model" (p. 256). The concept of organizational fit explains how components interact in systems effectively. Nadler (2006) stated, "The tighter the fit, the greater the effectiveness" (p. 259). Nadler (2006) continued by describing "the essence of the congruence model" (p. 260) as a correlation between increased congruence among internal components and increased organizational effectiveness, otherwise known as organizational fit. The full congruence model ensures that strategy fits in organizational realities related to resources and environment and in formal structures, systems, and processes, and ensures that fit exists among all internal organizational components (Nadler, 2006). Although the congruence model has profound implications for predicting successful change, it does not explain in detail the impact strategy has on structure design.

Multidimensional Organizations

Ryttberg and Geschwind (2021) argued there has been an ongoing struggle in higher education whether to maintain a decentralized and centralized organizational structure. The community partners aimed to move toward a more decentralized structure and one that is multidimensionally focused solely on their students; however, the organization was designed historically to be a more centralized structure.

Multidimensional Organizations and Leadership Models

There has been an ongoing struggle in higher education to maintain a decentralized and centralized organizational structure (Ryttberg & Geschwind, 2021). Multidimensional organization design describes organizations that are organized around multiple dimensions (e.g., regions, products) characterized by decentralized managers who are accountable based on the performance of these dimensions (Galbraith, 2010; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Multidimensional organizations possess a decentralized organization structure based on decision-

making authority that operates from a top-down perspective (Daft, 2016) and separates resources from market opportunities, enabling divisional managers autonomous control to achieve their specific goals (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). In contrast, the multiple dimensions featured in M-form (multidivisional) organizational structures where the first M-form dimension results from leaders altering organizational structures to accommodate perceived external environmental threats; the second M-form dimension concentrates resources based on the highest divisional performance; and the third M-form dimension where organizational success is determined by the environment (Dohler, 2015). Dohler (2015) suggested access equates to success in public sector M-form organizations whose function is to create a system of clientelism at information exchange points (e.g., data sharing agreements) and along information access routes.

Daft (2016) characterized multidimensional organizations as matrix organizations with a multifaceted organizational structure in both product and function or geography and function, where the customer is the main profit center as opposed to any sole dimension (e.g., country or product; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Strikwerda and Stoelhorst (2009) described multidimensional organizations as collaborative efforts where everyone knows their roles, where they work toward a common goal, and where they share resources. The multidimensional organization design moves away from performance-based rewards to individual managers and relies on open performance data accessible to all dimensions (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). The multidimensional leadership model suggests community college managers highlight flexibility in an organizational design that values an individual's core beliefs, capabilities, and experiences (Eddy, 2010).

M-Form Organizations

Researchers have suggested modern organizations can trace their roots to the 20th century innovation known as divisionalization (Chandler, 1962; Williamson, 1982). Additionally, competition interacts with the organization's design to achieve general equilibrium (Beladi & Chakrabarti, 2019). As defined by the Bayesian incentive comparison theory, multidivisional-form (M-form) organizations are asymmetrically informed divisional profit centers with incomplete information (Baye et al., 1996; Chandler, 1992; Ichiishi & Sertel, 1998). Furthermore, Bayesian incentive compatibility has suggested the internal divisions of M-form organizations interact strategically and are intrinsically cooperative; however, the divisional nature of these structural relationships in M-form organization exacerbates tensions between divisions competing for resources (Beladi & Chakrabarti, 2019; Ichiishi & Sertel, 1998). There should be consideration for how multidimensionally structured organizations communicate across the organization and where leaders are tasked with informing staff based on where they are in this design style.

M-form organizations possess three dimensions: (a) structure/strategy relationship, (b) managerial/leadership dimension, and (c) external/relations dimension (Dohler, 2015). M-form organizations exert production by allowing for multiple actions to occur simultaneously. M-form organizations make these actions observable, especially concerning governmental and public-sector organizations such as community colleges (Dohler, 2015). Dohler (2015) argued that in the absence of existing organizational theories providing guidance on structure, organizational policies have inadequately explained internal behavior or have not defined conditions necessary for achieving output production goals. Dohler acknowledged these conditions only describe the internal procedures of the organization and are limited to addressing internal strategic relationships without fully considering whether the proper structure design is in use. Chandler's

(1962, as cited by Dohler, 2015) seminal work on the relationship between organizational strategy and structure viewed the concept of the multidivisional organization as part of an iterative evolutionary procession of organizational forms, most recently transforming "from a unitary form to a multidivisional form in the early twentieth century, thereby significantly improving their performance" (p. 85). Ichiishi and Sertel (1998) described M-form organizations as semiautonomous subunits, sharing few general services in which each division operates autonomously in a loose hierarchical structure characterized by internal competition. The self-contained nature of each division allows executive decision-makers (i.e.., board of directors) to shift resources to the largest profit generator rather than to low-performing divisions (Ichiishi & Sertel, 1998). Dohler's (2015) analysis of public-sector M-form organizations identified public-sector organization characteristics and M-form dimensions affecting organizational behavior by explaining the necessary internal conditions for creating policy output in government and public sector organizations.

Dohler (2015) presented several limitations of M-form public sector organizations, and stated, "Public organizations operate under different conditions than their private sector counterparts" (p. 87). Researchers have suggested government and public sector organizations deal with a variety of interest groups competing for influence on organizational tasks and structures, leading to conflicting agendas. M-form public sector organizations do not account for functionality, differences in competitive consequences, or the lack of having to respond constantly to the external environment (Dohler, 2015). The first M-form dimension results from leaders adjusting organizational structures to accommodate perceived external environmental threats. The second M-form dimension involves comparing divisional performance to concentrate resources in the highest profit division. The third M-form dimension is the

environment's ability to determine organizational success. Dohler argued public sector M-form organizations consider that access equates to success; thus, a public sector M-form organization's function is to create clientelism at points of information exchange (e.g., data sharing agreements) along access routes.

Additionally, Dohler (2015) described the impact autonomy has on policy output in M-form dimensions as information and production diffuses throughout the organization. M-form dimensions affect policy output in several ways: "(1) enables multiple functions, (2) aggravates cross-cutting strategies, (3) provoking operational sub goals, (4) prompting micromanagement of divisional operations, (5) simultaneous relations with different clienteles, (6) coordination problems, and (7) clientelism or capture" (Dohler, 2015, p. 96). Dohler concluded the M-form was never intended to become the structure of choice for government and public sector organizations, instead suggesting M-form impact can be observed in the structure/strategy and external/relations dimensions. The limitations of M-form design included (a) coordination problems, (b) restrictive policies, and (c) self-interested divisions; however, Dohler viewed divisionalization as structurally sound in terms of functioning, and noted variations become apparent once policies are applied outside of the internal environment. These limitations alter leadership capacity or prevent intervention. Dohler (2015) argued predictive behavior cannot be observed in the external/behavior dimension because "public-sector organizations are regularly not allowed to change their function, size, or even the majority of their internal operations without consent from political principals" (p. 96). Dohler (2015) also stated, "The internal structure of organizations regularly fails to be considered as a potential explanation for the behavior of political organizations, which is mainly accounted for by external conditions" (p. 98).

      The M-form (or multidivisional, multiunit) design dominated the 20th century as the most successful organizational form during that period. Organizations that implement M-form design are recognizable by possessing separate lines of business that manage activities, and by delegating decision-making responsibilities to units that control resources, create value, and respond to the needs of the organization (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). As a form of organization, M-form implements the "theory in use" approach to management where business units are kept separate and contained based on activities (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). This aspect of M-form comes into conflict with the shifting priorities of organizations seeking to remain competitive through innovation or by implementing system wide change (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). M-form designs have led to incorporating account management styles, instituting shared services units in the larger structure, and creating matrix organizations; all these innovations have led to inter-organizational dependency across lines of business controlled and located in other areas of the organization (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). In their seminal work on multidimensional organizations, Striwerda and Stoelhorst (2009) described flaws in the M-form that included "high employee costs, internal battles over resources, lack of standardization, lack of cooperation, and loss of market opportunities" (p. 11). When considering other organization designs to use other than M-form, Striwerda and Stoelhort (2009) highlighted "the lack of alternatives necessary to exploit synergies across business units" (p. 12).

Multidimensional Organizations

      During their research conducted on M-form organizations, Striwerda and Stoelhort (2009) discovered an organization form that held managers accountable for performance at various stages of production. In contrast to M-form, the multidimensional organization organizes resources and market opportunities separately. In contrast to the matrix organization, the

multidimensional organization avoids staff reporting to two managers (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Multidimensional organizations have evolved from the need to exploit tangible physical resources in an industrial economy to the need to exploit intangible, knowledge-based resources in a service-based economy (Striwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). By taking a group-based approach, multidimensional organizations create value by adapting organizational design to the natural inclination of how knowledge is diffused throughout the organization regardless of form or structure (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009).

By communicating information through production lines, multidimensional organizations improve upon the M-form design in which divisionalization reduces incentives for diversification in terms of productive activities (Beladi & Chakrabarti, 2019). In their nominal work, Beladi and Chakrabarti (2019) described divisionalization as a comparative advantage impacting internal competition during the facilitation of specialized production activities. Beladi and Chakrabarti (2019) argued as competition increases, a continuum emerges where each divisional unit in the organization is strategically integrated into the organization's internal environment by achieving a general equilibrium through competition. This finding reinforced the belief that multidivisional (i.e., M-form) organizations incentivize competition, divisionalization, and specialization to achieve equilibrium. As to whether structure or design impacts organizational strategic outcomes, the "divisionalization dampens diversification in production" (Beladi & Chakrabarit, 2019, p. 56).

Traditionally, the M-form organization referred to a business unit that reports directly to the top of the organizational hierarchy (e.g., CEO; Galbraith, 2010). These structures are still in place today but have increasingly disappeared for another organizational design: the multidimensional organization (Galbraith, 2010). According to Strikwerda and Stoelhorst (2009),

multidimensional organizations are organized around dimensions such as region, product, and account; at the same time, these organizations have different managers who are accountable for the performance in each one of these dimensions. Multidimensional organizations shift more toward a decentralized organizational structure. Daft (2016) described decentralized organizational structure as being characterized by decision-making authority pushed to lower levels of the organization, whereas the traditional M-form organization organizes activities in separate units and then delegates control over the resources to managers in these units for the purposes of creating economic value (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). As Daft (2016) argued, M-form organizations lean toward centralization to maintain a level of hierarchy and clarity about who makes decisions. Multidimensional organizations, in contrast, separate resources from market opportunities so unit managers depend on each other to achieve their goals (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). The multidimensional organization also differs because it is a matrix organization. A matrix organization, described by Daft (2016), is an organizational structure that is multifaceted in that both product and function (or geography and function) are emphasized at the same time. In the multidimensional organization, the customer is the main profit center rather than any of the sole different dimensions, such as a country or product line (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009).

Multidimensional Organization and Leadership

Because a multidimensional organization is based on the principle of teamwork and moving the organization toward a common goal, the multidimensional organization needs a different type of manager than those typically found in M-form or other organizational structures, where a manager in an M-form organization may be more externally motivated by promotions and financial incentives (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Multidimensional

organization managers tend to be more internally motivated in that they are motivated to make a personal contribution toward the common goal (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009).

A Community College District as a Multidimensional Organization

The case study institution is a community college district organized with multiple dimensions centered on region, product, and account. These dimensions have different managers (e.g., dean, professor, and student financial services manager) who are accountable for their performance and for how change initiatives (e.g., ATD) are rolled out in those dimensions. The district offered leaders flexibility in the organizational design; when participating in ATD, leaders from all sectors of the organization are brought together to make decisions about the initiatives that will be carried forward and implemented in the organization. In a multidimensional organization, there is a distinct culture based on "team play" (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). In this culture, everyone knows their roles and how the game is played. This can be seen in the example of ATD meetings and in ATD design and core groups. Employees (e.g., faculty, staff, and leadership) all work toward a common goal, and resources are shared with this objective in mind. In the context of a community college district in the Pacific Northwest, the community college district has attempted to initiate organizational change through implementing ATD, by addressing opportunity gaps for Black male students.

Organizational Change

Existing literature associated with theories of organization change remains divided between styles or types of change and the location of the change phenomenon in the organization's environment. Several assumptions have persisted on the impact of change theories on implementing student achievement initiatives in community college districts.

Assumptions on Organizational Change

Organizational change involves three key assumptions: (a) organizations are systems with multiple interacting components, (b) change includes a process and an outcome, and (c) no formula exists for successfully managing change (Raffaelli, 2017). Organizational change involves diagnosing why change is needed, determining how change should be implemented, and evaluating the impact change has on the organization, including an explanation of who will be affected and how success will be measured (Kotter, 2008; Raffaelli, 2017). Change is needed when leaders determine organizational practices require improvement or alteration for future situations. Change in an organization may be needed because of performance gaps that exist between expectations and actual performance and/or opportunity gaps that arise due to shifting organizational priorities. Leaders who implement organizational change make decisions based on organizational fit and design models that address specific gaps and challenges. The final step in designing and implementing organizational change is to properly evaluate whether the process is adequate and appropriate for the organization (HBS Online, 2020; Poole et al., 2004; Raffaelli, 2017).

Community college leaders tasked with implementing institutional change must address environmental challenges that will impact staff (Kotter, 2008; Raffaelli, 2017). When decisions are made, community college leaders should consider who needs to be informed of pending implementation plans and who needs to be involved in strategic planning and communication necessary to achieve successful change (Kotter, 2008). Additionally, change agents should know as much as possible about the origin of the change initiative. Leaders should evaluate each step of the change process for flaws, impacts, and areas of improvement. Furthermore, when implementing change in a multidimensional community college district, leaders should consider

how to explain the need for implementing the change initiative in comparison to impacting existing activities in the organization (Raffaelli, 2017).

Organizational Theories of Change as a Process

Organizational theories have offered explanations of change management processes that account for the characteristics, influences, and roles of human agency on change (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004; Raffaelli, 2017). Organizational change and innovation theorists have suggested the phenomena of change are best explained through process theories (Abbott, 1990, 1992; Mohr, 1982; Poole et al., 2000). Poole et al. (2000) described the advantages of process theory: (a) describing the mechanism that drives the process, (b) accounting for the role of critical events in change and innovation, and (c) incorporating the role of human agency in change (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). Van de Ven and Poole (1995) argued there are various typologies of change that underscore how the process of change may happen differently depending on the circumstances governing the context in which change occurs. There are four types of change that include: (a) the lifecycle process theory, which depicts change as occurring in stages or phases; (b) the teleological process theory, which stipulates changes is a cycle of formulation, implementation, evaluation, and modification of actions or goals; (c) the dialectical process theory, which considers change is a response to confrontation and conflict between opposing forces; and (d) the evolutionary process theory, which views change as competition for scarce environmental resources between groups who are part of the same population (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004; Poole et al., 2004).

Poole and Van De Ven (2004) presented four theories of change to answer how and why change occurs; they differentiated between theories of change and theories of changing which focus on implementing change. Poole and Van de Ven suggested organizational change

processes are more complex than the four ideal types because organizational change and innovation occur across space and time. This realization about change only adds to the already complex environment of a multidimensional community college and the change initiatives being implemented related to ATD.

Theory 1: Internal Environment

Lewin's (1947) field theory provided a conceptualization and framework of how change occurs in the community college and community partner internal environment (Swanson & Holton, 2009). According to Lewin (1947, as cited in Swanson & Holton, 2009), "All behavior is conceived of as a change of some state of a field in a given unit of time" (Swanson & Holton, 2009, p. 315). The foundational principle of field theory is that individual behavior or change is a result of or dependent upon the symbolic interactions and set of forces that exist in a group/specific population (Burnes, 2004; Daft, 2016; Swanson & Holton, 2009). Burnes (2004) interpreted this theory to mean individual behavior is a function of the group environment, or "field." A field can be defined as any life space or space where an individual is situated at any given time (Lewin, 1947; Burnes, 2004). Examples of "fields" include teams, departments, organizations, and community college districts (Lewin, 1947; Burnes, 2004; Swanson & Holton, 2009). Lewin believed change was the result of various forces present in a person's immediate field that disrupt the equilibrium of behavior (Swanson & Holton, 2009). Driving forces push a person toward positive change, and restraining forces present barriers to change; thus, change is the product or outcome of tension, interaction, or relationship between driving and restraining forces, in which even a small imbalance can instigate major change (Lewin, 1947, as cited in Swanson & Holton, 2009; Schein, 2010). Lewin (1947, as cited in Schein, 2010) provided a three-stage model that conceptualized how change unfolds in an organizational context by (a)

unfreezing (i.e., disequilibrium forces people to question values); (b) restructuring (i.e., people alter values based on new learning); and (c) refreezing (i.e., new learning is integrated into the culture).

Lewin's (1947) field theory, in combination with Harris and Wood's (2016) SEO model, provided a framework for understanding how organizational change in a community college setting can impact Black men (Astin, 1993; Harris & Wood, 2016). Harris and Wood (2016) suggested when students enter a postsecondary institution, they bring with them certain input variables (i.e., background characteristics and societal factors) influencing their experience on campus and impacting outcomes, such as persistence, success, and retention. Not only do these input variables influence how students adjust to the higher education environment and perform academically, but they can also impact the institutions themselves (Harris & Wood, 2016). Kezar (2018) argued the increase of diversity in student populations on campus has created pressure on higher education institutions' structures and support for students from different backgrounds. Lewin (1947) considered these pressures to be driving forces that push institutions, including community colleges, toward positive change that involves being more inclusive and improving their ability to effectively serve and support a diverse student body (as cited in Swanson & Holton, 2009).

According to Harris and Wood (2016), certain socioecological domains (e.g., academic, campus, environment) in the institution would need to undergo a process of unfreezing, movement, and refreezing to undo the institutional racism preventing students of color from positive higher education experiences and create a climate more conducive to serving students of color; however, from a CRT perspective, these same domains can be restraining forces that preclude positive change from occurring (Ladsen-Billings, 2006; Tate, 1995; Tate, 2005). As

universities and colleges experience pressure from students to change, historical legacies of racist practices, policies, structures, and systems can slow and stymie transformation. Institutional racism impacts the academic confidence, motivation, and access to precious resources and services of Black men, contributing to lower student success outcomes at the community college level (Palmer & Young, 2009).

Theory 2: External Environment

The general environment, also called the external environment, includes outside factors and influences impacting business operations necessary to maintain organization success (Black & Bright, 2019; Daft, 2016). External environmental forces that impact the organization include (a) sociocultural, (b) technological, (c) economic, (d) government and political, (e) natural disasters, and (f) human-induced problems. Daft (2016) suggested a correlation between the complexity of the environment, the stability of events, and the availability of financial resources. The correlation increases uncertainty in the various dimensions of an organization and creates the need for information on the changing environment and the need for resources to address challenges generated by increases in environmental complexity (Daft, 2016; Black & Bright, 2019). The general environment creates uncertainty and assessing uncertainty can uncover how much complexity and dynamism has impacted the various dimensions of an organization. Uncertainty can contribute to leaders not having sufficient information to make decisions, leading to poor use of resources and increased risk of failure.

The relationship between the general environment and the organization begins in the environmental domain with its associative dimensions. Each dimension impacts the complexity, dynamism, and resources available to the organization. Higher levels of uncertainty lead to more significant differentiation of departments and roles and decentralized structures and systems.

Similarly, resource dependency affects control of the environmental domain concerning associative organizational activities and established relationships (Daft, 2016, 2021). When the general environment exists in uncertainty exacerbated by differentiation and decentralization of roles and departments vying for control of limited resources related to creating conditions for successful change to occur, organizational leaders should consider how to initiate change in complex, dynamic systems with limited resources. As resources become scarcer, uncertainty and decentralization increase the structures, relationships, and control of resources in an organization (Daft, 2016, 2021). The likelihood of implementing change successfully across the organization dramatically decreases proportionately to the level of access to resources and the level of uncertainty in an organization.

Daft (2016, 2021) described the general (i.e., external) environment as sectors that indirectly impact daily organizational activities. These sectors include the government, nature, sociocultural factors, economic conditions, technology, and financial resources, which eventually affect all organizations and their internal functions. The government sector influences regulations, the nature impacts sustainability, the sociocultural sector describes pressure from advocacy groups to improve working conditions, the economic conditions sector affects how organizations conduct business, the technology sector impacts the technological advances in an organization, and the financial resources sector affect the ability of an organization to fund business activities including implementing organizational change (Daft, 2016). Environmental influences on an organization can be described as patterns and events that occur in three dimensions: (a) dynamism, (b) complexity, and (c) abundance (Daft, 2016; 2021). In contingency-based relationships between environmental uncertainty and organizational response where the level of stability is measured by the level of complexity (Daft, 2021), low uncertainty

environments are simple and stable, and high uncertainty environments are complex and unstable (Daft, 2016). High-uncertainty environments are the most demanding for organizations to navigate, impacting the ability to implement change activities effectively. Moreover, high-uncertainty environments are characterized by many administrative personnel who coordinate and integrate organizational activities necessary to implement change (Daft, 2016). General environmental sectors, directly and indirectly, impact daily organizational activities, influencing how organizational change is implemented across the institution successfully.

Leading Organizational Change

Organizational change leadership has become highly integrated and more strategic, and the focus has shifted from personal and group dynamics to more organizational-based outcomes. Organizational leaders must be aware of trending practices, emerging crises, and constantly evolving environments (Dumas & Beinecke, 2018; Moran & Brightman, 2001). Dumas and Beinecke (2018) viewed change as more than just growth of the organization; they said change is a catalyst for motivating staff to commit to the changes necessary for strategic implementation. From this perspective, organizational change then becomes an opportunity for leaders to task staff with implementing change activities and advancing strategies related to new organizational goals and objectives. ATD provides an opportunity for growth among staff and is a vehicle for leading institutional change.

Leaders and change agents who are responsible for guiding staff through organizational change should create environments that support sustainable change. Buchanan et al. (2005) suggested change requires sustainability through the cultivation of an environment conducive to making the changes become routine elements of the organization. Although curating sustainable environments where leaders develop favorable conditions for change to occur is important,

leaders should also use an ethical approach toward decision making that considers the impact of change on staff and their ability to successfully take on the change. Burnes et al. (2016) saw organizational change leadership as an ethical decision-making process where leading organizational change should be a way of life. Implementing organizational changes such as ATD requires total commitment from every level of the organization.

Leading others through change requires generating commitment from all involved parties and stakeholders. Implementing ATD across a multidimensional community college district requires a level of commitment, awareness, and intention that is different from implementing similar programs and initiatives in other higher education institutions. As such, organizational change in a multidimensional community college district requires transformation of members' attitudes, values, and behaviors through authentic leadership, where leaders effectively model behavior and serve as the embodiment of the change being implemented (Eriksen, 2008; Heifetz & Linskey, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). To ensure sustainable change in the multidimensional structure, organizational leaders must implement organizational change across the different dimensional elements of an organization using a multistep process that considers the many perspectives of staff and their needs related to change.

Styles of Change

Change can be both process and content on transformational and transactional factors. Burke and Litwin (1992) provided a model of organizational performance portraying predictive variables that explained performance in terms of how those variables affected change. The model described a change in the flow of influential factors in the organization where change initiatives fail due to not accounting for all administrative areas (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Change can involve loss and may affect the reactions of others at various times. Additionally, change can

produce positive results if well-planned organizational change management policies are in place. Furthermore, change must involve and support the organization's workforce on personal and professional levels. Kubler-Ross (1969) suggested a five-stage change management model for organizational leaders to understand and empathize with their employees during organizational changes. Change can be an emotional response by organizational staff, leading to resistance (King & Anderson, n.d.). Kotter (2008) argued 70% of organizational change initiatives fail because most organizations lack proper preparation or do not see the project through correctly. Kotter's (2008) eight-step change management model focused on employees' response to change.

Resistance to Change

Resistance to change is inevitable in most organizations; therefore, leaders must consider how to manage change in a multidimensional organizational context. Part of the management approach should address the beliefs and values that people in an organization hold (Kogan, 2019). Leaders must acknowledge if people's beliefs and values are in line with the change and if people feel as though the change will positively benefit them or not. Kotter (2008) suggested change agents can mitigate resistance by creating a shared vision for change, which can lessen the likelihood of opposition to new realities. Senge et al. (1994) defined creating a shared vision as "building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principals and guiding practices by which we hope to get there" (p. 6). In addition, preparing employees for the inevitable change process may need to be considered. Leadership must consider if the organization is providing developmental opportunities to build the resilience necessary to examine one's own beliefs and values. It is equally important for the community partner to realize, as Liu et al. (2021) stated, leadership development happens for

individuals at different rates across the entirety of their lifespan. For this reason, there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

Schein (2010) outlined techniques used to address employees' resistance to change and those related to the process of creating psychological safety. Schein (2010) described "learning anxiety" as the realization that to change, one must give up their old ways of doing things and learn new habits and ways of thinking. Anxiety related to change may manifest itself in one or more of the following ways: (a) fear of loss of power or position, (b) fear of temporary incompetence, (c) fear of punishment for incompetence, (d) fear of loss of personal identity, and (e) fear of loss of group membership (Schein, 2010). To combat these anxieties, a leader or organization must aim to create psychological safety by implementing the following activities:

> Creating a compelling vision, providing formal training, involving the learner, providing informal training of relevant 'family' groups, and teams, providing practice fields, coaches, and feedback, providing positive role models, supporting groups where learning problems arise, and providing systems and structures that are in line with the new way of thinking and working. (Schein, 2010, p. 305-307.)

There are many reasons why an individual, whether employee or staff, may be resistant to change. As such, it is up to the organization and its leadership to prepare and plan for how they will deal with resistance when it arises.

Organizational Change and Community Colleges

Organizational change has long been synonymous with innovation, especially in community college settings (Levin, 1998). Levin (1998) suggested to understand and explain organizational changes in community college setting, leaders should acknowledge the multiple identities that occupy community colleges. Organizational change in community colleges

involves social transformation activities designed to increase access to education. Leaders involved in implementing changes should emphasize altering systems and structures that support access, opportunities, and outcomes. Change actions arise as expressions of the multiple identities based on the organizational mission of community colleges (Levin, 1998). The very nature of community college identity as an organization is based on institutional changes rooted in growth and expansion. By reinventing what the community college could become through adopting new strategies and by adapting to new conditions, "an institution of choice . . . and a target for social and economic policy" (Levin, 1998, p. 3) where the organizational mission serves as an expression of institutional actions makes community colleges conducive for organizational change to occur.

The organizational mission of the community college has changed since the sector's establishment over 100 years ago (Malm, 2008). Researchers have found leading such organizations requires leadership approaches and change processes indicative of the organization (Malm, 2008; Porter, 1990; Yukl, 2002). Researchers have also suggested organizational change implemented at community colleges requires its leadership to operate with specific practices, approaches, and skills (Gleazer, 2001; Malm, 2008; O'Banion, 1994; Porter, 1980). Environmental challenges and uncertainties initiate organizational change on community college campuses that shape leadership approaches such as (a) declining funding sources, (b) increased student enrollment, and (c) increasingly diverse populations (Keener et al., 2002; Kinkel, 2003; Malm, 2008; MA Higher Education Consortium, 2003). Community college environmental challenges can include internal culture and degree completion prioritized by urgency, engagement, and life-cycle positioning. Internal culture challenges include (a) cultural diversity, (b) organizational structure, (c) values, (d) accountability management, and (e) efforts to

maintain desirable outcomes. Contextualizing community college organizational challenges related to changing internal culture, degree access, and completion may not be prioritized as the most significant nor the most preferred challenge to address based on the time horizon and lifecycle of the challenge. In Malm's (2008) study of leading change in community college settings, six community college presidents were asked about the implementation of formal organizational change to gain buy-in and overcome specific environmental challenges. Participants in the study were also asked to differentiate between change processes they intended to use to resolve challenges and list the specific change processes by the level of complexity (Malm, 2008). Findings indicated community college presidents did not have a formal codified change process nor specific leadership approaches to address environmental challenges effectively (Malm, 2008).

Perception is central to investigating organizational change on community college campuses because these dynamic organizations are embedded in rapidly changing environments. Change becomes fundamentally more critical to this higher education sector because of the direct link between the local communities served by these organizations and the institutions themselves. For this reason, community colleges are more sensitive to the changing conditions of the environment in which they are situated over other higher education institutions. As such, community colleges have a natural disposition to change and have, over time, developed expansive capacity to implement institutional change (Van Wagoner, 2004). Because change is about the people experiencing it, contended perception is central to investigating organizational change in community colleges—including sources, extent, process, and value of change (Azzone & Noci, 1998; Langan-Fox & Tan, 1997; Tushman & Romanelli, 1995; Van Wagoner, 2004).

In their study on organizational change, Van Wagoner (2004) studied changes with the organization's mission and linked changes to strategic goals to provide greater contextual knowledge for individuals in the organization. Van Wagoner found that: (a) time negatively influences perceptions of organizational change, (b) knowledge about institutional strategic goals positively influence perceptions of organizational change, (c) perception of change is experienced as a unique phenomenon, and (d) individuals' perceptions of change are influenced by the amount of change related to perceived value in the changes. Van Wagoner (2004) also suggested individuals accept change efforts when organizational changes are put into a larger context of the environment in which they operate (Van Wagoner, 2004).

Structural Change in Multidimensional Higher Education Organizations

Successful change in higher education organizations relies heavily on the type of structure present in the organization. Student success infrastructural elements share similar features enhancing their effectiveness that suggest basic ways higher education can reorganize to better support student success outcomes. Kezar (2021) argued student success infrastructure effectiveness is observable by the presence of: (a) stakeholder engagement, (b) collaboration, (c) learning, (d) clarity and transparency, (e) equity, and (f) alignment. Systemic inequities in higher education have continued to contribute to lower retention and completion rates among low-income, first-generation, and racially or ethnically systemically nondominant students. As educators have continued to implement comprehensive programming that offers holistic support to students, literature exploring the efficacy of comprehensive college programming has focused on the role of supporting and promoting academic self-efficacy, retention, sense of belonging, and other intermediate outcomes linked to college student success (Kitchen et al., 2021). Kitchen et al. (2021) developed a model for explaining the promotion of students' self-efficacy for the

purpose of developing appropriate responses necessary to build their confidence based on diverse cultural contexts.

Holcombe and Kezar (2020) demonstrated evidence of the value of comprehensive, integrated programs that align several interventions to create student success; however, the researchers acknowledged there is little understanding of how and why such programs are effective. The researchers suggested successful integrated program effectiveness occurs as a result of a unified community of support for students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, Holcombe and Kezar considered a unified community of support that leverages structural changes to faculty and staff knowledge, beliefs, actions, and relationships as a unique and novel way for organizing and conceptualizing effective student support either through structural changes or individual support rather than a mutually reinforcing combination of the two (Holcombe & Kezar, 2020). Kezar and Holcombe (2019) discussed organizational learning as an important tool to facilitate change and acknowledge the lack of research on organizational learning in multi-institutional change initiatives and the unique challenges associated with promoting learning in cross-institutional settings. Holcombe and Kezar outlined barriers to organizational learning that occur when external organizations attempt to facilitate learning in a multidimensional higher education organization. Barriers to organizational learning include (a) psychological or cognitive elements that prevent changes in mindsets (Argyris & Schon, 1996), (b) organizational factors (Schilling & Kluge, 2009), and (c) external threats or pressures (Kotter, 1996).

Organizational Change Management

Organizational theories have offered explanations of change management processes that account for the characteristics, influences, and the role of human agency on change (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004; Raffaelli, 2017). Organizational change and innovation theorists have

suggested the phenomena of change are best explained through process theories (Abbott, 1990, 1992; Mohr, 1982; Poole et al., 2004). Poole et al. (2000) described the advantages of process theory as: (a) describing the mechanism that drives the process, (b) accounting for the role of critical events in change and innovation, and (c) incorporating the role of human agency in change (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). Van de Ven and Poole (1995) argued there are various typologies of change that underscore how the process of change may happen differently depending on the circumstances governing the context in which change occurs.

Change as a Process

There are four types of change that include (a) the lifecycle process theory that depicts change as occurring in stages or phases; (b) the teleological process theory that stipulates changes is a cycle of formulation, implementation, evaluation, and modification of actions or goals; (c) the dialectical process theory that considers change is a response to confrontation and conflict between opposing forces; and (d) the evolutionary process theory that views change as competition for scarce environmental resources between groups who are part of the same population (Poole et al., 2004; Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). Poole and Van De Ven (2004) presented these four theories of change to answer how and why change occurs, and they differentiated between theories of change and theories of changing, which focus on implementing change. Poole and Van de Ven (2004) suggested organizational change processes are more complex than the four ideal types because organizational change and innovation occur across space and time (Poole et al., 2004). This realization of change only added to the already complex environment of a multidimensional community college and the change initiatives being implemented related to ATD.

Kotter's Theory of Change Management

To theorize how the institution of interest can transform to improve the student experience for Black male students, a model for organizational change is needed. Kotter's (2007) change management model provides a framework for understanding how organizations can implement change initiatives effectively by following specific action steps that help avoid change failure (Daft, 2016; Kotter, 2007, 2013). Although there are many organizational change models as options for this study, Kotter's change management model was chosen for this study for several reasons. First, Kotter's model is simple and clear to communicate, making it advantageous for investigating change in complex organizations, selecting independent and dependent variables for the study, and communicating recommendations to key stakeholders (Byatydzienski et al., 2017; Haas et al., 2020; Wentworth et al., 2020). In addition, the use and longevity of Kotter's eight stages as a change management model in various types of organizations provide validity despite the lack of empirical data about its effectiveness (Pollack & Pollack, 2015). According to Calegari et al. (2015), Kotter's change management model focuses on the behavioral, cognitive, and affective aspects of change. This focus was advantageous for understanding resistance to change at the community college district, one of the most significant factors contributing to change failure at the school.

Leaders have used Kotter's change management model to navigate the common challenges to change processes in organizational contexts (Chappell, 2016; Kotter, 2007; Procopio et al., 2017). According to Kotter (2013), most change initiatives end in failure because leaders do not think holistically about the change process and use the most effective techniques for seeing change through to the end. The change management model conceptualizes change as a top-down process leaders can use to successfully implement change in an organization (Kotter, 2001, 2008). According to Kotter (2006), change is most successful when the process occurs in a

series of well-planned, sequential steps. According to Calegari et al. (2015), the steps

recommended by Kotter provide a "roadmap for developing methods and tactics for creating and

maintaining both participant engagement and continuous organizational improvement" (p. 32).

Kotter's change management model includes eight stages that focus on employees' response to

change. The eight stages are:

- Create a sense of urgency: Step 1 in the Kotter's change management model is to create a

  sense of urgency for change in the organization (Fisher & Henderson, 2018). Kotter

  (2007) noted the majority of change efforts fail because this first step of instilling

  urgency is overlooked; thus, change agents are unable to generate buy-in from key

  stakeholders and compliancy stymies any movement for change overall.

- Build a powerful coalition: Step 2 in Kotter's (2007) model is the creation of a team that

  can help guide the change effort from start to finish. Kotter argued a powerful coalition of

  dedicated and skilled change agents must be established early in the process to help

  generate momentum and create linkages across the organization that need to work in

  concert for the change to stick long term.

- Create a vision: Step 3 in the model is to create a vision for the change and define the

  specific outcomes the change will achieve (Kotter, 2001). If a vision is not established,

  the change effort can descend into confusion and ultimately lead the organization in

  different directions than the type of change needed for the organization (Kezar, 2011;

  Springer et al., 2012).

- Communicate the vision: Step 4 Kotter (2007) purported is essential for effective

  organizational change is robust and expansive communication of the vision for change.

  According to Wentworth et al. (2020), communicating change must occur early in the

process with as much detail as possible so members can understand the vision and be prepared to participate in the effort.

- Removing obstacles and barriers for change and empowering others to act on the vision: Stage 5 argued by Kotter (2007) is crucial for change is to identify barriers and systematically address them. Kotter asserted roadblocks to change can include structural and systematic barriers or members' emotional and behavioral responses to change, which can result in resistance.

- Planning for and creating short-term wins: Kotter (2007) argued Stage 6 in an effective change process is strategizing how to demonstrate change process and impact. One of the factors that undermines change implementation is the loss of momentum and engagement resulting in member attrition (Liag & Abocejo, 2021). The purpose of short-term wins is to provide evidence that the change implementation is making the intended impact on the organization, keeping coalitions together and members engaged in the change process (Kang et al., 2020).

- Consolidating improvements and producing more change: Stage 7 in Kotter's change management model is to continue the change process by making efforts to build off short-term wins and produce continuous change efforts (Kotter, 2013, 2014). Kotter (2007) argued change implementation results in failure when leaders end implementation by declaring success too soon.

- Institutionalize new approaches: The last stage in Kotter's model requires anchoring the changes into the organizations culture (Kotter, 2013b). Demonstrating the positive changes that have resulted from change implementation is a way to ensure change vision becomes part of the culture and climate moving forward (Wentworth et al., 2015).

Although Kotter's eight stages have traditionally been applied to private and corporate settings, they are also relevant for implementing organizational change in higher education (Haas, 2020). According to Wentworth et al. (2020), organizational change in higher education is necessary and inevitable and a key to successful implementation is a robust practice that can drive the process. Fisher and Henderson (2018) argued further that Kotter's change management model is also appropriate to use at the department level because that is where decisions are made in higher education institutions that can be scaled to the rest of the school, college, and university. A sample of previous applications of Kotter's model with higher education include (a) research by Springer et al. (2012), who employed Kotter's model to undertake curriculum reform in a department of nursing at Boise State University; (b) Calegari et al. (2015) who used Kotter's model to enhance faculty involvement in updating accreditation standards at a large university; and (c) Wentworth et al. (2020), who fused Kotter's model to explain the implementing a change to an instructor evaluation system at a higher education institution. The use of Kotter's change management model in these examples demonstrates that the model can be effective for exploring, studying, and implementing change to improve student outcomes for Black students at the community college district (Kang et al. 2020; Wentworth et al., 2020).

Organizational Structure

By design, organizations are based on purpose and structure; two factors that alter the institution and occur when implementing institutional change. Consider the role of strategy in an organization's design; as organizations establish strategies to keep the organization competitive, components of the organization (e.g., systems, procedures, processes, relationships, networks) transform to help the organization achieve new goals and objectives. Strategy influences the design of the organization where the design is impacted because of the organization adapting to

change (Daft, 2016). According to Daft (2016), strategy generates both opportunities and threats in an organization because it introduces new resources that are available for supporting achievement of goals and objectives but also uncertainty that can disrupt its equilibrium and foster resistance. Moreover, Daft (2016) contended that strategic intent is based on fit between external opportunities and internal strengths where "organizational design is the administration and execution of the strategic plan and used to implement goals and strategy as a means to determine organizational success" (p. 49). A gap exists in literature about the organizational design of multidimensional organizations (e.g., community college districts); thus, the research team argues further examination is needed to help provide insight into how these types of institutions are affected by change initiatives and programs.

Understanding community college organizational structure

As the need to understand the operational and structural nuances of the community college regarding its operational complexity and institutional efficiency, the need for identifying and understanding its organizational structure increases (Samuels & Miller, 2022). Three traditional hierarchical models exist in terms of community college organizational structures (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; McPhail, 2016; Samuels & Miller, 2022). Traditional models of how community colleges have been structured may negatively impact implementing change across organizations (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Samuels & Miller, 2022). Samuels and Miller (2022) conducted a study where 60 community colleges were identified by geographic region, business operations or services, and institutional needs. The study found that variations in business operation responsibilities makes standardization of services and their functioning divisions difficult (Samuels & Miller, 2022). Community college administrators should consider

reorganizing cross-functional divisions based on business operations to increase institutional

effectiveness (Samuels & Miller, 2022).

Variations within the community college organizational structure

Reorganizing community colleges based on functions and operations to increase

effectiveness requires understanding structural varieties occurring within community colleges.

Several variations of community college organizational structures exist, and these variations

define structural alignment of community college divisional services and functions (Underwood,

1999). Underwood (1999) conducted a study of 118 two-year, public, single-campus community

or junior colleges that examined how each organization reviewed, revised, or requested

assistance with changing their organizations structurally. Findings from the study explained

changes to organizational structure as a function of management where the administration,

faculty and governing board recommended structural changes, and the president held final

approval authority within a traditional organizational design (one president, three to four vice

presidents or deans) (Underwood, 1999). The study discussed the effectiveness of current models

used to describe community college organizational structure by campus presidents who found

their organizations inadequately provided "clearly defined roles when responsibility is shared,

cost effectiveness, and opportunities for professional advancement" (Underwood, 1999, 38).

Underwood's study identified several organizational functions that were nonexistent on

community colleges at the time of the study with opportunities for future applications that

included "student job placement services, student pre-assessment, co-op education, business and

industrial training, learning assistance center, planning and remedial or developmental education,

staff development, telecommunication courses, government programs and grants, instructional

development, alumni affairs, development and fundraising, human resource management and

personnel, and legislative liaison" (39). By aligning structural functions along divisional lines, community college administrators can lead change initiatives more effectively.

Organizational Culture

Culture is an important dimension of the studied district that influences their capacity for implementing organizational change. Although the phenomenon of culture and its influence on an organization has been debated in the field of higher education, scholars and practitioners have commonly recognized culture as a crucial element affecting management, performance, and overall effectiveness in any organization (Austin & Claassen, 2008; Daft, 2016; Tierney, 1988; Tierney & Lanford, 2018). Organizational culture is influential because it constitutes the values, beliefs, norms, language, and symbols that underlie how individuals and groups behave, act, think, and feel (Daft, 2016; Schein, 2010; Tierney, 1988). Schein (2010) described organizational culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as the organization solves problems associated with adapting to external forces while internally integrating lessons learned through solving previous problems. These solutions become the rules, routines, structures, and norms that guide the organization. According to Schein (2010), there are three levels of organizational culture: (a) basic assumptions—the unconscious beliefs and values that underscore how people in an organization think, act, and feel; (b) espoused values and beliefs—the ideologies, philosophies, and attitudes of how people work and interact in an organization; and (c) artifacts—the visible layer of culture in an organization that includes observed behavior, structures, language, symbols, stories, and ceremonies. The levels of organizational culture described by Schein become the pattern of automatic assumptions in an organization that manifest as the way in which people interact (i.e., relationships), how the organization manages internal and external complexity (i.e., environment), and the

organization's systems and structure (i.e., design; Daft, 2016; Ijins et al., 2015; Schein, 1986, 2010).

Culture and Higher Education

Tierney (1988) argued higher education institutions have a unique culture compared to private sector corporations because of their history as a social institution. The literature described higher education as being characterized by two subcultures: (a) an administrative culture responsible for the operational functionality of the institution, and (b) a disciplinary culture accountable for the curriculum and academic outcomes (Butler, 2015; Kezar, 2018; Tierney, 1988; Valimaa, 1998). According to Valimaa (1998), these two subcultures can create tensions in the university or college because they have different goals, different ways of operating, different ways of communicating, and different ways of solving problems. Schein (2010) argued administrative and academic cultures have separate norms, behaviors, and ways of operating because these two functions of higher education institutions have had to solve fundamentally different problems—the administration works to sustain operational viability and faculty address problems with curricula and courses. Further complicating the phenomenon of higher education culture is that each department, unit, and campus in an institution or district has their own culture (Kezar, 2014; Tierney, 1988). In Kezar's (2018) conceptualization of higher education culture, each department, unit, and campus in the district has a separate culture consisting of unique assumptions, values, and artifacts derived from the need to address issues germane to their positionality in the organization. These distinctive cultural characteristics in higher education make it challenging to implement organizational change initiatives and programs.

According to Austin and Claassen (2008), human services and public organizations (e.g., higher education institutions) are characterized by formal and bureaucratic cultures that

emphasize or stress stability and efficiency. Higher education institutions, such as community colleges, engender bureaucratic cultures to generate the stability and security necessary to effectively achieve their mission of serving students and community (Cahn, 2004; Daft, 2016; Tierney, 1988). The development of bureaucratic cultures in higher education institutions are the result of a historical pattern of institution building focused on creating a strong culture that can withstand internal and external complexities threatening the mission and purpose of these organizations (Kezar, 2018; Tierney, 1988; Tierney & Lanford, 2018; Valimaa, 1998). From a critical race perspective, the issue of bureaucratic cultural development is problematic, because the historical formation of U.S. higher education was predicated on institutional racism and resulted in systems and structures intended to retain White supremacy (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016). Even with the focus on diversity and antiracist efforts occurring in conventional higher education, historical roots of racism in education are difficult to overcome and still impact the ability to support all students effectively (Ladsen-Billings & Tate, 1995; Squire et al., 2018). This scenario is true for community college districts that have invested significant efforts in creating an antiracist organization, yet inequities in student success outcomes persist (Institute of Education Science, 2021).

Organizational culture in higher education continues to evolve. The recent increase of private and for-profit colleges and universities in the United States has resulted in a shift in organizational culture from bureaucratic to flexible typology to help institutions better address modern complexities of operating in a knowledge economy (Butler, 2015; Kezar, 2018). A reason for this shift is for-profit and private institutions are led by corporate business leaders who value open cultures to effectively respond to changing environments and student needs (Austin & Claassen, 2008; Fusilier & Munro, 2013), but nonprofit and public colleges and universities,

including community colleges, are led by academics focused on service to communities and students (Carpenter & Bach, n.d.). According to Clark (2004), many for-profit and private universities and colleges employ a flexible culture that provides individuals and departments with decision-making power to help the institution quickly adapt to environmental changes.

Although open organizational cultures have become more common in the public sector higher education space, Tierney & Lanford (2018) argues the community college district under study is characterized by a formal and bureaucratic culture; for example, there is an extensive leadership hierarchy that delineates management roles and responsibilities for each campus, department, and administrative unit in the district. Butler (2015) asserted this type of leadership structure is consistent with the traditional model of higher education as a professional bureaucracy composed of dual-power and authority systems that support a culture of stability and security. Even in a multidimensional community college district, where authority systems fluctuate across campuses and shared governance exists between departments and units, delegates are still allocated or assigned decision-making power that cultivates a formal and bureaucratic culture more so than one that is open and flexible (Austin & Claassen, 2008; Butler, 2015). According to Butler (2015) and Kezar (2018), implementing organization change in formal and bureaucratic cultures is difficult and slow because innovation threatens the stability and security the culture is intended to provide.

Organizational Change and Culture

When discussing the relationship between organizational leadership and culture, there must be consideration for where culture begins. Schein (2010) described three sources where culture originates: (a) beliefs, values, and assumptions held by the founders during the development of the organization; (b) learned experiences shared by members during periods of

growth in the organization; and (c) new sets of beliefs, values, and assumptions introduced by new leaders during periods of transition. Additionally, there must be consideration for the roles organizational design and structure play in culture formation, specifically during each phase of organizational growth. For proper context, there should be consideration for how functional responsibilities divided; how the organization is designed to survive in the external environment; and how the organization is structured to make decisions on behalf of multiple stakeholders.

The most important question is whether the organization is designed for maximum effectiveness. Schein (2010) discussed how the assumptions held by leadership impact organization design and structure. Whether leaders build a centralized hierarchy, a decentralized autonomous organization, or they negotiate solutions in a matrix organization is inconsequential. Although organization design and structure can explain the assumptions held by leaders, they cannot provide an accurate description of how employees interpret the organizational design and structure in real time. Additionally, there must be consideration for organizational systems and procedures and their impact on culture. Culture can be codified in the organization's cyclical artifacts (e.g., reports, forms). Schein observed how systems and procedures contributed to culture formation through design; serve a structural function by making organizational operations predictable and stable; provide formal processes and elevate what leadership deems as important to organizational effectiveness; and reinforce mechanisms that highlight inconsistencies in the culture. Schein (2010) concluded by offering several principles on culture and change initiatives: (a) culture change is based on a specific problem, and not in response for the organization needing a "culture change" (Principle 3); (b) old cultural elements can be destroyed by removing people who possess these behaviors and new cultural elements can be learned if new behavior leads to organizational success (Principle 4); and (c) culture change is

transformative by nature and requires unlearning behaviors which can be psychologically painful (Principle 5).

Organizations with a long history of operations, such as higher education institutions, are more resistant to change because their cultures (e.g., basic assumptions, values and beliefs, artifacts) have become ossified and more impervious to new environmental complexities (Daft, 2016; Hansen, 2007; Schein, 1986, 2010). Austin and Classen (2008) argued for organizational change to be successful in higher education institutions, each level of the organization's culture must be thoroughly understood and reconditioned to new realities. The idea that organizational change is sustainable only when each level of an organization's culture has undergone a degree of transformation is commensurate with Nadler and Tushman's (1980) theory of internal interdependence, which stipulates change is possible when all components of an organization's culture have similar change experiences. Moreover, Harris and Wood (2016) asserted in the SEO model that all structural and cultural domains (e.g., noncognitive, academic, environmental, campus ethos) of a community college must work collectively to improve student success outcomes for men of color. As such, the research team of this case study argues each dimension of the district must undergo change for ATD initiatives and programs to succeed in advancing student success outcomes for Black men.

Regardless of category, culture as a dynamic phenomenon and a coercive background structure intentionally creates and shapes value. Schein (2010) argued microcultures are the most dynamic category and provide opportunities to observe the formation and evolution of culture. Categorically, culture is described in terms of (a) visible structures and processes known as artifacts; (b) espoused beliefs and values expressed as aspirations, ideologies, and rationalizations; and (c) basic underlying assumptions about behavior, perception, thought, and

feeling (Schein, 2010). Leadership's connection to culture is clearest in the organizational and microculture levels, and the creation and management of culture is essential to leadership. Schein suggested leadership is synonymous with culture. Deciphering organizational culture is determined by discovering the purpose of the organization and by assessing its performance with tools that reveal the intentions of why the organization was formed and basic assumptions about why the organization exists. Schein (2010) stated, "culture is best revealed through interaction" (p. 179); therefore, culture can be determined by observing organizational interactions. Determining organizational culture presents an opportunity to objectively observe that the purpose of the organization aligns with its performance. Determining organizational culture assesses the organization's alignment with its intentions. Simply, deciphering organizational culture considers how organization structure and function interactions operate in organizations.

Learning Cultures and Organizational Change

Predicting behavior requires leaders to continuously adapt to circumstances by perpetually learning about the type of culture that exists in their organization. Culture stabilizes the environment, predicts behavior, and creates meaning; however, the most desirable cultures, by definition, are stable and hard to change (Schein, 2010). Leaders should establish a culture that favors perpetual learning and flexibility over predictability and stability. Schein (2010) presented a multidimensional leadership framework that explains what a learning culture may look like. Leaders who prioritize learning in the organization must be proactive and committed to the learning process. Establishing learning cultures in organizations involves learning about external environmental changes and internal relationships and determining if the organization is suited to adapt to these changes. Creating a learning culture also requires leaders to trust others, which requires leaders to create psychologically safe organizations. When guiding others through

change, failure is inevitable. Additionally, leaders tasked with establishing a learning culture require appropriately responding to the change necessary to alter the environment. Leaders should convince their staff of the possibility of successful change. Learning culture assumes solutions derive from pragmatism and inquiry. Schein (2010) stated, "As the problems we encounter change, so too will our learning method have to change" (p. 368). In learning cultures, leaders must recognize their own lack of knowledge while teaching others to accept personal gaps in their own knowledge simultaneously (Schein, 2009a, 2010). Building learning cultures assumes creating systems that communicate the level of commitment necessary to create transparency. Establishing commitment to cultural diversity within a learning culture establishes a commitment to systems thinking (Schein, 2010; Senge, 1990). Finally, believing in the importance of conducting cultural analysis as part of the learning process is necessary for leaders seeking to understand how tasks are completed and where responsibility lies for completing the tasks associated with developing a culture of learning. Leaders who develop a culture of learning should understand how the process of learning influences all aspects of organizational life.

Multidimensional Organizations and Culture

There is a distinct culture in a multidimensional organization that is based on "team play" (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). In this culture, everyone knows their roles and how the game is played. Everyone works toward a common goal and resources are shared with this objective in mind. In this format, a multidimensional organization moves away from awarding sole managers for their performance and position in the organizational structure and hierarchy. Additionally, the multidimensional organization creates one general ledger tracking multiple characteristics, which aims to help create one single trusted source of performance data. These performance data are open and accessible to all dimensions (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009).

Organizational Culture and Structure Alignment and Organizational Effectiveness

Knowledge management practices can influence organizational effectiveness in the relationship between organizational culture, structure, strategy, and organizational effectiveness. Zheng et al. (2010) suggested knowledge management fully mediates the impact of organizational culture on organizational effectiveness, and partially mediates the impact of organizational structure and strategy on organizational effectiveness. Zheng et al., (2010) extend the scope of research on knowledge management to examining a system wide mechanism connecting internal organizational resources to competitive advantage (Zheng et al., 2010). Nathan (2015) presented evolving dimensions of dominant models of culture (i.e., Hofstede (5), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (7), GLOBE (9), referred to as the 5-7-9 cultural dimensions) that essentialize culture, leading to ethical concerns restricting the capacity of agency for choice and identity necessary for the democratization of organizations.

Nathan (2015) discussed the implications of organizational culture in terms of agency, identity, and structure in multinational or multicultural organizations. Nathan (2015) suggested, "the GLOBE study defines organizational culture as consisting of commonly used nomenclature within an organization, shared organizational values and organizational history" (p. 107). Nathan argued for understanding meanings of systems and institutions that interact and participate rather than simply ascribing attributes based on statistics featuring national cultural dimensions. Diversity management moves beyond nationalities and considers multiple identities and the implications of identity within asymmetrical power relations. Nathan (2015) stated, "One can argue that organizational structure is the basis for the organizational culture" (p. 117). Nathan concluded essentialist notions of culture reinforce asymmetrical power relations and the vulnerability of certain stakeholders. Nathan highlighted the importance of choosing an

appropriate organizational structure and culture that allows for internal and external stakeholders to exercise agency and choice without domination.

Bate et al. (2000) described a holistic model of intervention geared toward achieving transformational change by integrating culture and structure through leadership processes or bringing together organization design and organization development by advocating a culturally sensitive approach to organization structuring. Bate et al.'s study emphasized processes where development and design are brought together by transitional structures and lead to collective sensemaking. Bate et al., (2000) explored the relationship between culture and structure, enabling a discussion of design choices or organizational archetypes articulated through a four-phase change model focused on processes that reframe the culture–structure relationship. Bate et al. (2000) suggested, "organizational change needs to be coordinated across a number of dimensions of which structure and culture might be seen as the two most fundamental" (p. 2). Bate et al., suggested culturally sensitive restructuring as the four-phase intervention model that describes the process of designing and implementing change for the purpose of revamping an organization; a model with connections to Lewin, Senge, etc.

Summary

This review of literature guided the following research questions: (a) How does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs; and (b) What individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation that can or have improved institutional capacity to address African American male students' opportunity gaps? Based on an initial review of the literature, several themes emerged, including: (a) the impact of structural design on institutional change implementation, and (b) how change is observed in multidimensional

organizations. Studies that focused on institutional change defined the change in terms of any difference observed over time in an institution (Van de Ven & Hargrave, 2004). Implementing change through a series of processes across multiple environmental sectors can be observed as a set of concepts related to organizational activities or a description of how the change has been implemented. The literature review identified specific forces that affect areas in multiple environmental positions comprising the community college institution by reframing the higher educational organization as interconnected systems influenced by internal and external factors. Although the examples featured in the literature heavily concentrated on environmental and process-based organizational changes, approaches toward understanding change response to environmental pressures (Daft, 2016; Poole et al., 2004) are contextualized in the community college setting.

Chapter 3 describes and outlines the methodology, research design, and procedures for this investigation, including a detailed data analysis plan and a discussion about the measure of quality through bias, transferability, and researcher positionality.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how the multidimensional community college context impacts the implementation of organizational change from the perspective of faculty, staff, and administrators. In this study, Achieving the Dream (ATD) initiatives implemented in the studied district were used as a case study to explain how the various dimensions of the district affects organizational change efforts related to the advancement of student success outcomes for systemically nondominant populations. The following questions guided the study: (a) how management of organizational change by the community college affects the implementation of ATD initiatives and programs, and (b) what individual, cultural, and structural change related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address opportunity gaps for Black male students?

This chapter provides an in-depth description of the research design and methodology used in this study, including rationale and the researchers' roles. The research design and rationale section expound on the context of the study, the theoretical framework, and research questions that informed the lens guiding data collection and analysis. An explanation about data collection is provided, including survey instruments and protocol. The approach to data analysis is also discussed, providing details about the plan for coding and interpretation. Next, quality measures are outlined to ensure readers the study was trustworthy and credible. Finally, this chapter concludes with an explanation of how bias was controlled, along with a description of the delimitations of the study.

Approach

A qualitative design using a case study methodology was used to address the research questions. Yin (1994) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a

contemporary phenomenon and context in its real-life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 284). Case study research is a qualitative approach for investigating a phenomenon of interest; the approach occurs in a bounded system using multiple data collection techniques to obtain a thick description stakeholders can use to understand a problem, issue, or concern (Corcoran, 2004; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 1978; Tellis, 1997a). Moreover, case study research is useful in the higher education space because it can provide a critical analysis of practices in colleges and universities that can result in the improvement of teaching, learning, and overall effectiveness of the institution (Corcoran et al., 2004; Dillion & Reid, 2004; Kyburz-Graber, 2004). When applied to higher education, case study research can provide a holistic portrayal of a phenomenon in an institution and an understanding of how and why education practice contributes to its manifestation (Merriam, 1985; Stenhouse, 1985). As such, case study methodology was an appropriate approach for this dissertation.

The purpose of the case study approach was to improve the ability of the case organization to implement organizational change initiatives across multiple dimensions to advance student success outcomes for Black men. The unit of analysis in this case study was a community college district in the Pacific Northwest (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Meyer, 2001). The phenomenon of interest was organizational change efforts across a multidimensional organization to implement ATD initiatives for the purposes of improving student success outcomes for Black men (Hammersly et al., 2009; Pearson et al., 2015; Stake, 1978). The community college district's implementation of ATD initiatives from 2012 until 2021 was the bounded system this dissertation investigated (Tellis, 1997b; Widdowson, 2011).

A common criticism of the case study methodology is the lack of empirical rigor to produce meaningful generalizations (Corcoran et al., 2004; McGolin, 2008; Noor, 2008); however, Yin (1994) argued case studies can overcome these criticisms through robust validation techniques, analytical processes, and thorough documentation. To ensure the case study design produced meaningful and accurate assertions, the research team employed a set of rigorous data management and manipulation techniques (Njie & Asimiran, 2014), including using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to explore how leaders and staff experienced organizational change in a multidimensional context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Larkin & Thompson, 2012). According to Smith and Osborn (2008), an IPA approach is appropriate when researchers are "trying to find out how individuals are perceiving the particular situations they are facing, how they are making sense of their personal and social world" (p. 55). IPA uses an idiographic approach to examine individual experiences with a unique phenomenon in a particular context to give voice to participants and make meaning of their experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2017; Larkin et al., 2006; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA involves generating knowledge from intersubjective meaning-making with participants, establishing a thorough understanding of the context in which participants are situated, and gathering first-hand accounts directly from participants about their lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eatough & Smith, 2017a; Larkin & Thompson, 2012).

Context of the Study

The setting for this research study was a community college district with multiple campuses located in the Pacific Northwest. The community college district was selected for this study because one of their strategic objectives was to increase student success outcomes for Black male students, and they had employed various organization change efforts to address this

issue. The community college district is located in a large suburban geographical area with approximately 1 million residents (Community College District, n.d.; United States Census Bureau, n.d.). The district was composed of two full-time and three satellite campuses serving over 16,000 students in basic skills, transfer, and professional technical programs. The student demographic for all full-time enrolled students comprised 46% of students identifying as White, 19% identifying as mixed race, 9% identifying as Hispanic, 8% identifying as Black, and 8% identifying as Asian or Pacific Islander (Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, n.d.).

ATD is a national initiative leading the most comprehensive nongovernmental reform network for community college student success in higher education history. ATD seeks to close achievement gaps and accelerate student success nationwide through guiding institutional change, influencing policy development, promoting knowledge creation, and fostering public engagement (Achieving the Dream, n.d.). Despite affiliation with ATD and other various efforts used by the district to improve its culture, climate, and environment to make the institution more responsive to the needs of systemically nondominate populations, progress for reconciling opportunity gaps between Black men and other student populations has not been fully realized (Community College Leadership, personal communication, October 27, 2021). For these reasons, the study setting was ideal because of its student demographic profile, disparity of student success outcomes by race and gender, and history of organizational change efforts to address these issues of equity and disparity.

Data Sources

The data sources in this study included both primary and secondary data to help build a comprehensive understanding of how faculty, staff, and administrators experience organizational

change implementation in a multidimensional community college context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Maxwell, 2005). The primary data source in this study came from faculty, staff, and administrators who engage in the implementation of ATD programs and initiatives. The purpose of the primary data was to capture the direct experiences of individuals who work in the district and how they have been affected by organizational change initiatives in a multidimensional context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; McMillian, 2016). The firsthand accounts from faculty, staff, and administrators who participated provide insight into how the community college district's organizational structure presents challenges and opportunities for improving students' success outcomes for Black male students.

Secondary data in this study came from documentation and records provided by the community college district. Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) described documents as "personal or agency records that were not prepared specifically for evaluation purposes or to be used by others in a systemic way" (p. 420). Additionally, records were described as official documents or data prepared for use by others and are typically collected and organized more carefully than documents (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), documents and records serve as a source data that can corroborate and extend findings from the primary data as well as provide additional insights about a phenomenon of interest.

The retrieval of documents and records was facilitated by stakeholders at the community college district organization through email. The researchers also collected publicly available documents and records via the community college district website. Documents and records were stored in a password-protected folder on a digital platform (i.e., Microsoft Teams) only the research team could access, ensuring secure storage of any sensitive documentation. The research team also understood the limitation of document analysis in that participants involved in

the creation of the documents were not necessarily articulate nor provided accurate information, which may have biased the interpretation of results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Instrumentation

The instrument in this study was used to collect data about faculty, staff, and administrator perspectives on the successes and challenges of organizational change in a multidimensional community college district. Through a literature review on organizational change scales and measures, the Organizational Change Questionnaire–Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness (OCQ–C, P, R; Bouckenooghe et al., 2009) was identified as an appropriate survey tool for this study. The purpose of the OCQ–C, P, R questionnaire is to gauge the internal context or climate of change, the factors influencing change, and readiness for change in an organization. The questionnaire includes 43 items and covers 11 scales that include the context in which change occurs and how change is managed (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009). The context operates at three levels: (a) the organizational level—how open and ready the organization is to change, (b) the departmental level—how the diversity between departments can impact the ability of management to lead change, and (c) the individual level—how people's readiness for change affects the successful implementation of change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009).

To establish construct validity, Bouckenooghe et al. (2009) administered the questionnaire to over 1,358 employees at 42 organizations in Belgium. A factor analysis of the scale was performed to determine internal consistency and overall validity. Of the 11 scales, each had a Cronbach's alpha above .70 (Process of change and communication, $\alpha = .88$; Participation management, $\alpha = .79$; Attitude of top management, $\alpha = .73$,; Cohesion, $\alpha = .74$; emotional readiness for change, $\alpha = .70$; intentional readiness for change, $\alpha = .89$; support by supervisors, α

= .82; trust in leadership, α = .79) except two (cognitive readiness for change, α = .69; Politicking, α = .68). To replicate the study and further establish validity and reliability of the scales, Bouckenooghe et al. (2009) administered the questionnaire to 1,285 employees in 47 nonprofit and private organizations in Europe. Construct validity was established by performing a confirmatory factor analysis simulation on the 11 scales in the questionnaire. According to Bouckenooghe et al. (2009), the scale met the goodness-of-fit index by exceeding the cutoff score of .9, the scales satisfied the root mean square residual with values under .05, and the scale values of the root mean square error of approximation were smaller than the .08 criterion.

The research team adapted a select set of questions from the OCQ–C, P, R questionnaire to include in the focus group protocol. The adapted questions from the OCQ–C, P, R were converted to structured and open-ended questions by altering some wording and phrasing to fit in a qualitative data collection methodology. The specific constructs that are used to measure readiness for change in the OCQ – C, P, R survey which the research team modified for this study to anchor semi-structured interview questions in validated concepts include: (a) cohesion – cooperation, trust, and togetherness of individuals in an organization and degree of collegial support; (b) process participation – extent to which staff are involved in and informed about decisions that directly concern the; (c) quality of communication – the clarity, frequency, and quality of communication related to change; (e) readiness for change – beliefs, thoughts, affective reactions, and preparedness for change; (f) attitude of top management – involves the stance top management take with regards to change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009). The altered questions aligned with the themes and terminologies of the scale criteria to preserve internal validity and reliability. A table mapping the original OCQ – C, P, R survey questions to the adapted semi-structured research questions are in Appendix C.

Data Collection

The collection of primary data from the target population involved semi structured focused group interviews. Semi structured focus group interviews were used because they provided opportunities for participants to (a) surface ideas about organizational change together; (b) confirm experiences, challenges, and successes related to ATD implementation; and (c) encourage concept building, leading to a richer understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Geertz, 1973; McMillian, 2016). Six focus group interviews were conducted via Zoom with lengths between 45 - 70 minutes. Faculty focus group interviews were conducted separately from staff and administrator focus group interviews to ensure a comfortable environment for participants by reducing power dynamics that exist between the different roles in the community college district (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Three focus group interviews were conducted for faculty and three for staff and administrators. Focus groups were conducted by three members of the research team: (a) a facilitator who asked questions and facilitated discussion, (b) a cofacilitator who supported facilitation activities, and (c) an observer who performed notetaking throughout the session. Focus groups sessions were recorded via Zoom upon participant consent, and transcribed using Otter.ai software during the data analysis phase.

Data collection also included acquiring secondary data in the form of documents and reports from the community college district. The district research unit provided documentation based on requests by the researchers following Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol. The researchers also collected publicly available documents and records via the community college district website. Documents and records were stored in a password-protected folder on a digital platform (i.e., Microsoft Teams) only the research team could access, ensuring secure storage of any sensitive documentation. The research team also understood the limitation of document

analysis in that participants involved in the creation of the documents were not necessarily articulate nor provided accurate information, which may have biased the interpretation of results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the documents and records used in this study.

Table 1

Documentation and Records

Document data source	Description	Year/s	Relevancy to study
Institutional effective report	This report serves as a resource for planning and decision-making and demonstrates how well the district is achieving their mission	2019	Information in the report provides context about student success outcomes and staff experience in the organizational
IPEDS data feedback report	This report includes a selection of statistics and indicators related to student success outcomes that are compared with other institutions.	2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021	Information in the report provides trends and patterns of Black male student success outcomes compared to peers.
Accreditation reports	These reports include a selection of statistics related to a variety of institutional success indicators (e.g., student outcomes, campus climate, staff development).	2011, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2019	Information in the report provides trends and patterns of overall student success outcomes compared to peers and staff experience and moral in the organization.

Population

The general population for this study included faculty, staff, and administrators who were employed by the community college district located in the Pacific Northwest. According to the community college district's LinkedIn page (LinkedIn, n.d.), the number of employees ranges between 1,000–5,000 staff, faculty, and administrators. The study sample totaled 12 participants (4 faculty; 8 staff and administrators) who were involved with the implementation of ATD initiatives and programs. Participants in this study were identified by stakeholders as change agents who could provide perspectives about successes and challenges of organizational change

implementation related to the ATD programs and initiatives in the district. By recruiting 12 participants, the research team achieved the minimum number necessary to support data saturation for study research (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Fusch & Ness, 2015).

The sampling method used in the study for the target population was purposeful sampling. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), purposeful sampling is when researchers "intentionally sample a group of people that can best inform the research about the research problem under examination" (p. 148). Yin (2009) argued purposeful sampling is a recommended method in case study research because it requires acquiring in-depth information about a specific situation that only certain individuals know about and, as such, are targeted for study recruitment. Inclusion criteria for participants included: (a) full-time employment at the community college district, (b) member of ATD design team, (c) identified as a leader by stakeholders, and (d) identified as staff by stakeholders. Participants were excluded from the study if they were not directly involved in ATD implementation nor knowledgeable of its programs and initiatives.

Participant Recruitment

Key stakeholders at the community college district acted as gatekeepers by identifying participants of the target sample who met the inclusion criteria. Stakeholders generated two email contact lists of the target sample; one for faculty and a separate one for staff and administrators. Stakeholders initiated contact by email explaining the purpose of the study, confirming of IRB by Seattle University, and providing an online scheduling form where individuals could indicate their interest in the participation and availability for focus group interviews. A separate email was sent to faculty and another to staff and administrators helping to ensure no overlap occurred between the two groups during collection. Upon acknowledgement

of interest from participants, the researchers sent focus group meeting invitations containing the Zoom link and a Seattle University Institutional Review Board informed consent form (Appendix). Prior to the focus group interviews, the researchers sent an optional online survey asking participants for demographic information.

Analysis Procedures

A qualitative design was chosen for this study because it required methods for surfacing experiences related to organizational change in a specific context that was not readily identifiable using a positivist, empirical design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Geertz, 1972). The interpretation of data was rooted in an interpretative phenomenology analysis (IPA) approach (Larkin & Thompson, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2007). The research team believed organizational change is best understood by examining the experience of people (i.e., faculty, staff, and administrators) directly involved in the change efforts in a specific organizational culture and context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2005). An IPA approach helped the research team understand how the multidimensional context affects people's ability to carry out change directives and the challenges they experience overall (Kim, 2014). As such, any knowledge about organizational change must come directly from people who interact in a specific context (Eisner, 1992).

A common criticism of case study methodology is this approach lacks the empirical rigor to produce meaningful generalizations (Corcoran et al., 2004; McGolin, 2008; Noor, 2008); however, Yin (1994) argued case studies can overcome these criticisms through robust validation techniques, analytical processes, and documentation. To ensure the case study design produced meaningful and accurate assertions, the research team employed a set of rigorous data management and manipulation techniques (Njie & Asimiran, 2014). IPA is a hermeneutic

approach that encourages an iterative and dynamic analysis process to establish a comprehensive and accurate understanding of participants' experience with the phenomenon of organizational change in a multidimensional context (Eatough & Smith, 2017). The iterative analysis process began by producing accurate transcriptions of data collected from the focus group using Otter.ai, an online speech to text transcription service (Bailey, 2008; McLean et al., 2004). Bukhova and Downey (2018) contended any research study that includes data transcription should not proceed without verifying the accuracy of the speech-to-text technology. In a study of speech-to-text technology used to assist deaf and hard of hearing students, Millet (2021) evaluated several software platforms (i.e., Interact Streamer, Ava, Otter, Google Slides, Microsoft Stream, Microsoft Translator, Camtasia Studio, YouTube) to determine transcription accuracy. Of all the platforms that were assessed in the study, Otter.ai was one of the most accurate, with a 98–99% speech-to-text precision rate (Millet, 2021). Transcriptions were reviewed by a member of the research team to ensure accuracy. Member checking was performed by sending transcriptions to participants for review to accuracy and the content reflected their experience in the interview. The transcribed data was stored electronically in MSWord.doc files in a secure folder in the research team's Microsoft Teams site for further analysis.

The analysis of data from focus groups involved an inductive process "that helps to distill units of meaning and then to combine them in a new way into groups or categories" (Ivankova, 2015, p. 239). Each member of the research team conducted an independent analysis of the data using thematic coding and direct interpretation techniques to identify patterns, themes, and emergent ideas in the data (Cousin, 2005; Creswell & Poth, 2018). During this individual analysis, research team members performed memoing to help generate meaning from the data and establish an audit trail for use in future validation strategies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Results

from the independent analysis of focus group data were converted to a shared codebook using a Microsoft Excel file.

The next analysis phase involved a group analysis of the themes and memoing from the independent analysis intended to cross-validate findings and narrow the thematic codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ivankova, 2015; McMillian, 2016). This collaborative process followed the procedures for fostering relationships of themes recommended by Creswell and Poth (2018), which involved generating initial coding names, expanding on codes, and then narrowing findings to final codes and descriptions of themes. During the group analysis, the researchers performed a between-group analysis of data from the faculty and staff/administrator focus groups to identify any differences in experiences related to organizational change in the district. Upon this review, the research team determined that no significant differences existed between the groups. The information produced through this process provided the research team with a name of each theme category, a description of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for each theme, and examples of each theme using excerpts from the focus group data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ivankova, 2015; Maxwell, 2005; McMillian, 2016). The inductive analysis produced a total of eight overall themes; four themes related to research question 1 and three themes related to research question 2.

The analysis of documentation was an ongoing process that paralleled the collection and analysis for primary data (e.g., data collected from focus groups). By collecting and reports documents, the research team aimed to find supplemental information about organizational change in the district to validate the themes from found in the primary data collection sample. This form of review was advantageous because it allowed the research team to collect data in a way that was unobtrusive (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The analysis of documentation and

reports followed a parallel inductive process that involved an independent and group analysis. Research team members performed an independent analysis of the documents searching for relevant data and insights that supported the research questions. Memoing was performed during the independent analysis phase to support later theme and code development during group analysis. Upon a thorough review of the documentation, however, the researchers determined that the secondary data was not relevant to the study and provided no useful insights that helped answer the research questions. As such, the findings reported below include information from the focus group data only.

Member checking

Member checking was performed by sending transcriptions to participants for review to ensure accuracy and confirm the content reflected participant experience in the focus group interview. Although member checking is most commonly done by sending participants the preliminary results (first descriptions of themes and codes) for their review (Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillian, 2016), Busetto et al.(2020) assert that member checking can also involve sending participants transcriptions from focus groups interviews as a method of respondent validation. According to Busetto et al. this form of member checking occurs after data has been collected and is performed by sending participants the transcripts and asking to verify if the representation is accurate or to elaborate on any missing points. Caretta and Perez (2019) argue that member checking techniques are common in social sciences research as they used to improve "accuracy of data and analysis through a dialogical and recursive process of consensus building among researchers and participants" (p. 360). Member checking in this study involved the research team sending participants MS Word document versions of the focus group transcripts via email after they were processed through Otter.ai (the speech-to-text platform used

to transcript raw interview data) and reviewed by a member the research team. In the communication to participants, the research team provided a description about the purpose of the request and its importance to validating the results that were to be produced during the data analysis phase. Participants were asked to review the transcripts and clarify if there were any errors, missing content, or records that did not reflect their experience in the focus group interviews. Participant follow-up can be challenging in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and to account for attrition after data collection, the research team asked for participants to confirm their review within one week of receiving transcripts. The research team received confirmations from half of the participants; the other half were lost to follow-up. However, confirmation from the majority of participants that transcriptions were accurate provided confidence that the data was collected correctly and would support valid findings (Busetto et al., 2020; Caretta & Perez, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillian, 2016).

Memoing

The researchers analyzed all the documents collected by writing memos of initial thoughts and highlighting areas that may have been of importance. In this initial first step, the researchers were able to gain an initial sense of the data. As stated by Mills and Gay (2016), this step is the only time the researchers approach the data "fresh" and helps to capture initial thoughts that serve as a point of departure for final codes and themes generation. Memoing was conducted by writing thoughts in the margin of the documents via the comment feature in MS Word. Memos were used during the group analysis phase to help the researchers begin the coding process and help to develop descriptions of themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Coding and Concept Mapping

Memoing that was initially conducted with the documents allowed the researchers to condense the collected documents into a more manageable form. Researchers then compiled the data into categories and themes. The researchers identified labels that were mutually defined and agreed upon. These labels functioned as a shorthand code and served as a reference point later in the study (Mills & Gay, 2016). Once labels were identified and documented, the researchers began the process of concept mapping. As described by Stringer (2021), in concept mapping, elements identified in the coding stage are plotted dramatically so the researchers can visualize the way these themes related to the problem under investigation.

A group analysis phase followed that involved themes being further narrowed to final codes and descriptions of themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Results from the interviews and document analysis were transcribed into the codebook where cross coding occurred for the purposes of comparison and refinement of themes (Biddix, 2016; Ivankova, 2015; Maxwell, 2006). Content analysis of themes was conducted using the constant comparative method to identify themes related to core domains and new themes related to organizational change in a multidimensional community college district (Glasser, 1965). Ivankova (2015) argued the constant comparative method supports the inductive process of theme development by systematically comparing each segment of data collected in a research study to determine new analytic categories and new relationships between the categories of data.

Measures of Quality

In these next sections, measures taken to maintain the quality of the study are discussed. These measures include credibility, positionality, dependability, transferability, and control for bias.

Credibility

MacMillian (2016) argues that credibility "refers to whether the results accurately portray the view and meanings of the participants" (p. 308). Credibility in qualitative research establishes results as believable and promotes confidence that study findings accurately reflect truth (Ivankova, 2015). Stahl and King (2020) contend that credibility is established through various methods of triangulation techniques and methodological procedures that establish identifiable patterns of outcomes and accuracy in the data. Specific triangulation and methodological activities that are commonly used to establish credibility include: (a) member checking – results are returned to participants to ensure accuracy of transcriptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018); (b) investigator triangulation – multiple researchers compare results and discuss analysis of results (Stahl & King, 2020); and (c) researcher reflection – self-reflection of possible biases, background, and values that could threaten credibility (MacMillian, 2016). Each of the techniques and procedures described above were utilized by the research team to produce credible study findings.

Credibility of the study findings were established using multiple techniques and procedures. To ensure that data collection methods accurately captured participant experiences, the research team conducted member checking procedures. Focus group transcripts were sent to participants by the research team to confirm the accuracy of data and provide feedback if there were any changes necessary. Member checking helped authentic the data promoting confidence that the research team was analyzing accurate and "real" data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ivankova, 2015). In addition, the research team used investigator triangulation to confirm the study findings were accurate (Stahl & King, 2012). Data was analyzed and interpreted by four members of the research; data was first analyzed individually and then in a group setting. This iterative data

analysis process helped surface multiple perspectives of the data, supporting cross-validation of findings and adding depth to interpretation overall. The research team also utilized constant reflection of self to help reduce bias and positionality from affecting the analysis of data. Reflection was a significant part of the group analysis process where researchers were encouraged to consider how their background, experience, and expertise contributed to their interpretation of themes and codes.

Positionality

This qualitative research study was a subjective process influenced by the beliefs, values, principles, and intentions of the individuals conducting the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A researcher's background and identity can shape the way data are collected, analyzed, and presented, which can uniquely impact how a community responds to wicked problems. Conducting meaningful research on individuals and communities requires researchers to understand their worldviews and perspectives (Biddix, 2018). To create research that catalyzes social change and is meaningful to individuals and communities, Payne (TEDx Talk, 2014) argued researchers must develop a thorough and deep understanding of the population's lived experience being examined. Developing this intimate perspective requires a worldview repositioning to better align priorities and perspectives with those of the community being served. This worldview readjustment is predicated upon a research positionality anchored in an awareness of the power and privilege one holds. Below are statements of the research team members that reflect their positionality in this study,

Researcher 1. Researcher 1 was a White, cisgender female who was born, raised, and educated in Washington State. She was raised in multiple households, creating instability and a lack of consistency in educational experiences due to changing schools often. Although her

maternal grandparents and secondary caregivers were both college educated, her immediate family (i.e., mother, father, and two brothers) were not. Researcher 1 holds an MFA in Arts Leadership from Seattle University and at the time of the study was a doctoral candidate in the Educational and Organizational Learning and Leadership program at Seattle University.

Researcher 1 had worked in higher education for the past 5 years in college admission at the time of this study and considered herself a strong advocate for college-seeking individuals gaining equal access to college opportunities and receiving the resources necessary to achieving their academic goals. Her positionality was of consideration as she conducted this research, as she had strong opinions and biases that could have interfered with the study.

Researcher 2. Researcher 2 identified as a White, cisgender female who grew up in a less-than-diverse rural community as the child of divorced parents with low socioeconomic status. One parent dropped out of college and the other finished their 2-year degree as a nontraditional student. Education, however, was highly valued and supported. Researcher 2 holds an MFA in Arts Leadership from Seattle University and a BA (Bachelor of Arts) in General Studies from Western Washington University. Raising a son as a single parent during their educational journey was a source of pride and satisfaction in modeling the importance of an education. Community college provided the first step in their path to achieving a doctorate and as such, they are committed to creating access and removing barriers to community college, especially for those with a background as a nontraditional, rural, or low socioeconomic student.

Researcher 3. Researcher 3 identified as White, cisgender, and heterosexual from a middle-class family in an affluent neighborhood in Seattle. Researcher 3 acknowledged their socioeconomic and racial positionality had awarded them high social, economic, and cultural capital, supplying abundant power and privilege in U.S. society. Membership of the dominant

culture had permitted easy navigation of social, economic, and political institutions and comfortable access to resources and services that bolstered their status in society. At the time of this study, researcher 3 was a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership and Organizational Learning at Seattle University. Researcher 3 is interested in investigating how a student's perception of their ability to accomplish school-related tasks correlated with academic performance. Researcher 1 is also interested in improving student success through organizational development and change initiatives and programs.

Researcher 4. Researching with a community college focus pulled from various aspects of the educational journey and professional experiences of researcher 4. Researcher 4 identified as a Black, cisgender, heterosexual male living in a slightly rural suburban area of Pierce County—slightly adjacent to Lakewood, Washington. As a community college graduate and a parent of a Black male community college student currently enrolled at the community college district, the researcher acknowledged his biases. As a prior professional for two community college districts, his previous experience afforded a perspective that allowed him to draw from these experiences without forming decisions before the research was conducted. Additionally, both parents completed graduate degrees in education, ensuring their children had access to higher education. The researcher earned Master of Education and a Master of Public Administration degrees with focuses on higher education leadership and nonprofit organization leadership. At the time of this study, Researcher 4 was a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership and Organizational Learning at Seattle University. As a father of five children who have had collegiate experiences, the researcher understood the importance of college access as a necessity for students from marginalized communities. At the time of the research study, the researcher

Dependability

Ivankova (2015) argues that dependability in qualitative research refers to "the extent to which the findings are consistent and could be repeated" (p. 266). Multiple strategies for establishing dependability including: (a) data triangulation – using different data sources, methods, participant to confirm patterns in the results; (b) audit trail – study procedures for data collection, analysis, and interpretation are well documented; and (c) external audit – an individual not involved in the study reviews procedures to ensure accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ivankova, 2015). Dependability was established through robust documentation of the processes and procedures used by the research team to conduct the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Documentation included details of the data collection methods (participant selection, recruitment, instruments), data analysis (transcription technologies, iterative analysis procedures, theme development, memoing), and validation techniques (member checking) (Moon et al., 2016). In addition, data triangulation was another strategy employed by the research team to verify dependability. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting data from two different groups in the target sample, faculty, and staff/administrators. Including data collection from different groups in the sample allowed researchers to corroborate findings from individuals who have different positionality and power in the case study organization.

Transferability

Ivankova (2015) defines transferability as the "extent to which the findings are applicable to other contexts" (p. 266). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability can be established by providing a thick description of the participant's experience and the context in which the study was conducted. Thick descriptions of the participant experience and context of the case study organization were included by researchers in this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Detailed descriptions of the case study organization including the structure, culture, and climate were based upon participant and stakeholder descriptions plus publicly available documentation retrieved from the district's website. In addition, the researchers provided detailed descriptions of the participants experience related to ATD and organizational change via memoing, individual and group analysis notes, theme development, and discussion (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ivankova, 2015). Using these procedures, the researchers took measures to provide data that made transferability judgements possible by other researchers interested in studying multidimensional community colleges and organizational change.

Control for Bias

To ensure research was conducted objectively and ethically, various control measures were used to mitigate bias. One type of bias that needed to be controlled in the study was observer bias. McMillian (2016) described observer bias in qualitative research as the process of finding results that fit assumptions, expectations, prejudices about the researcher, and expected outcomes. Critical reflexivity is one approach for managing research bias used in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researchers used critical reflexivity to surface implicit values, assumptions, and beliefs about the world and how these influence the analysis of data and interaction with study participants (Maxwell, 2005). Reflexivity was used throughout the data analysis process to help researchers manage power relationships to reduce explicit values that may privilege certain decisions and observations (Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillian, 2016; Vanderberg & Hall, 2010).

Another type of bias that can affect the objectivity and trustworthiness of the research is response bias. According to Villar (2011), response bias is when participants in a study answer question or portray themselves in misleading or inauthentic ways due to pressure to provide

socially acceptable answers. Response bias was of particular concern in this study because of the focus on participants' involvement in organizational change initiatives, which could have contributed to feelings of fear, anxiety, and insecurity. To mitigate response bias, the research team provided participants with IRB documentation demonstrating that strict protocol would be followed to ensure study participant anonymity and protection. In addition, in-vivo coding was employed by the research team during the analysis phase to ensure participant names were excluded in the reporting, reassuring participants they were protected throughout the research process (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how a multidimensional community college context impacted the implementation of organizational change from the perspective of leaders and staff. Participants in this study included leaders and staff in the district who participated in implementation of ATD initiatives and programs. Data collection involved focus group interviews using a semi structured protocol for the purposes of collaboratively constructing knowledge about organizational change processes in the district. Data analysis was conducted using IPA with a focus on finding emergent themes related to participants' experiences with organizational change across different campuses. Bias was controlled by using methods of reflexivity through the data collection and analysis process, semi structured focus groups to generate shared knowledge about the phenomenon of interest, and strict IRB protocols to ensure participant safety, security, and anonymity.

Chapter 4 provides an interpretation and analysis of the results of the data collected, including themes identified and explored by the research team, in relation to the research questions.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study is to examine organizational change related to the implementation of Achieving the Dream (ATD) in a multidimensional community college district and the impact on Black male opportunity gaps. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study including a definition of the problem, description of the purpose of the study, research questions, and definition of terms. A review of the literature in Chapter 2 outlined the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, a definition of multidimensional organizations, and exploration of scholarship related to organizational change, structure, and culture. Chapter 3 provides a rationale for the research design, data collection procedures, instrumentation, and approach to data analysis. In this chapter, findings from six semi-structured focus group interviews with eight staff and four faculty of the multidimensional community college district are presented.

Analysis was conducted using an interpretive phenomenological approach that involved an inductive process of independent and group analysis to generate themes and codes. Findings to answer the following research questions for this study: (a) how does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs; and (b) what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps? This chapter includes a summary of the research design, data collection and analysis procedures, study setting, and participants followed by presentations of themes that emerged in relation to the research questions.

Preliminary Data Collection

This section provides a reporting of preliminary data that was gathered by the research team during the study. This data is defined as preliminary data that the research team collected

from key stakeholders to help map the context of the study setting. Stringer and Aragon (2021) argue that this process is a common technique used in action research to help the researchers develop an understanding of the "social dynamics, identifying stake holding groups, key people, the nature of the community, the purposes and organizational structure of relevant institutions and agencies, and the quality of relationships between and among individuals and groups" (p. 93). According to Herr and Anderson (2015), preliminary data collection done in coordination with stakeholders is a way for researchers who embody an outsider positionality to gain insider knowledge that can inform the development of the research design, data collection instruments, and provide framing for the interpretation of data. In an action research context, preliminary information gathering is viewed as a beneficial starting point for a research study because it helps build a picture of the context that is used to set stage of all subsequent research procedures (Stringer, 2014). The preliminary information gathered by the research team was used to understand the study setting, help define a multidimensional organization, conceptualize the community partner's organizational structure and culture and frame the development of data collection instruments.

The purpose of preliminary data collection was to learn more about how ATD operated in the district, background history, and successes and challenges. Preliminary data collection began shortly after initial contact with the community partner and involved two interviews (referenced as Community College District, 2022a and College District, 2022b) with key stakeholders in the district. Key stakeholders identified these individuals and made introductions to the research team via email; the research team subsequently coordinated the scheduling of the interview day and time. The following interviews were conducted electronically using Zoom video conferencing software: (a) interview with the Presidents of two district campuses, and (b)

interview with the Director of Institutional Research. Interviews were unstructured to allow for an informal conversation format to support the natural course of dialogue to surface knowledge related to the ATD (Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillian, 2016). Each interview ranged in length between 45 and 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded and extensive notes were taken by a designated member of the research team. Topics of discussion during the interviews included: (a) how ATD was organized in the district; (b) the logistical and functional operations of ATD; (c) how decision-making in ATD functioned; (d) historical and current challenges related to ATD; (e) staff, faculty, and administrator involvement in ATD; (f) ATD leadership and management; and (g) external support from ATD central office. The transcripts and notes were subsequently analyzed independently by each member of the research team-member and discussed in a group format.

Findings from the preliminary data collection helped to inform the research team understanding of how ATD operated in the district as well as the development of the research design. An analysis of the data obtained from these two interviews revealed that ATD is a district-wide vehicle for change intended to create quality education opportunities for nondominant students signaling its potential for significant structural and cultural transformation in the organization. In addition, an evaluation of the data underscored that ATD's configuration in the district has evolved overtime with different structural iterations being implemented to achieve optimal performance suggesting that the organizations structural format does impact the way ATD operates and functions. Furthermore, the interview data illuminated how ATD operated on day-to-day basis, who was involved in ATD work, and how decisions were made and communicated. These findings highlighted that ATD had a unique culture of its own within the district that valued collaboration, diversity of thought and voice, transparency, and impact.

An understanding about the ATD leadership structure and management apparatus emerged from the interview data indicating a hierarchical authority configuration resulting in bureaucratic processes related to decisions, approvals, and activities. Barriers to success and specific challenges related to ATD implementation were also surfaced spotlighting that tensions and resistance to ATD that existed within the district and that certain ATD programs and initiatives were less effective than others at producing the intended impact they aimed to achieve. Through these specific findings, the research team was able to glean messages from district leaders about the organizational dimensions they felt contributed to ATD successes and challenges including its structure, culture, and the management of ATD across the different locations in the district (Community College District, 2021; Community College District, 2022a; College District, 2022b).

The findings described above contributed to the development of the research team's definition of multidimensional organization as well as the research design. In particular, the finding that there were key dimensions of the organization which contributed to the success or failure of ATD initiatives and programs prompted a realization that the district had a more complex structure than its matrix design revealed. In fact, the district was composed of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal relationships that underscored a diversity of sub-cultures, a reliance on collaboration to support performance, a network of complex communication channels, and a differentiated structure mediated by location. The surfacing of this knowledge influenced the research team's definition of multidimensional organization to include components of structure, culture, and location. Conceptualization of a multidimensional organization helped to inform the development of the questions included in the semi-structure focus group interviews. Because the district's structure and culture were identified by stakeholders as key dimensions impacting ATD

implementation, the research team needed questions that unearthed participant knowledge about the features and functions of these two dimensions. Specific questions that were derived from these realizations include: (a) how would you describe the culture in the District; (b) how would you describe the organizational structure in the District?; (c) how do you think the structure and culture of the district contributes to organizational change efforts related to ATD?: (d) are there specific structural and cultural changes within the district spurred by ATD that have improved opportunity gaps for Black men?; (e) are there specific structural or cultural changes that you think would benefit Black men students that ATD can address?. In addition to questions about structure and culture, recognition that communication in the district was challenging across multiple locations, questions needed to be included in the focus group interviews that helped the researchers understand how communication about ATD functioned. As such, the research team included the following question in the focus group protocol: in your experience, how would you describe the communication between leaders and staff about the organizational change? Finally, because the research learned that there was resistance to ATD programs and initiatives across the district, a question was included to generate an understanding about why there was tension about ATD in the district. The specific question added to the focus group interview protocol was: in your experience, how is change related to ATD perceived by leaders and staff within the district in your experience?

Summary of Research Design

A qualitative case study research design was utilized to investigate how the multidimensional community college context impacts the community college district's capacity to implement change for improving opportunity gaps for Black men. Participants in this study included staff, administration, and faculty employed full-time at the district and who were

involved in the implementation of ATD programs and initiatives. Data collection involved six focus group interviews, separated by staff and faculty, using a semi-structured protocol to collaboratively construct knowledge and build themes about organizational change, structure, and culture in the district. Data analysis was conducted using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to explore how leaders and staff experience organizational change in a multidimensional context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Larkin & Thompson, 2012). This qualitative design was chosen for this study because it provided a method for surfacing experiences related to organizational change in a specific context that is not readily identifiable using a positivist, empirical design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Geertz, 1972).

The Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness (OCQ – C, P, R) (Bouckenooghe et al. 2009) was identified as an appropriate survey and quantitative interview questions were adapted for a semi-structured focus group interview format. The OCQ – C, P, R survey is publicly available via the Seattle University Library making accessibility feasible for the researchers. The specifics questions from the survey that were adapted include the following: (a) there is good communication between project leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes, (b) corporate management team consistently implements its policies in all departments; (c) departments are consulted about the change sufficiently; staff members were consulted about the reasons for change; (d) do department's senior managers pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that the changes could have for their staff members; (e) information provided on change is clear; (f) I have a good feeling about the change project; I experience the change as a positive process.

Data Collection Process

Data was exclusively collected from individuals employed in the district who agreed to participate in semi-structured focus group interviews from our sample population: (a) faculty affiliated with ATD; and (b) staff and administration affiliated with ATD. A purposive sampling method was employed in collaboration with the district to recruit participants. The district identified groups of individuals meeting the following inclusion criteria: full-time employment at the community college district, member of ATD design team, identified as a faculty by stakeholders, and identified as administration and staff by stakeholders. An email containing an explanation of the study and invitation to participate were sent to individuals by the district. Individuals indicated their interest in participating by completing an online interview scheduling form. Upon acknowledgement of interest from participants, the researchers sent an online demographic survey and a Seattle University Institutional Review Board informed consent form (Appendix).

Data collection also involved acquiring documents and reports from the district. The archival data gathered by the research team included three institutional reports: (a) institutional effective report – an assessment of the district's work and achievement of their mission; (b) IPEDS data feedback report – a selection of statistics related student success outcomes compared with peer institutions; and (c) accreditation report - statistics related to a variety of institutional success indicators (e.g., student outcomes, campus climate, staff development). In addition, researchers performed a comprehensive review of the district's website for publicly available documentation relevant to the research questions. This effort yielded 5 IPEDs documents for the years 2015-2020 that reported student outcomes statistics for a variety of indicators (e.g., admission, persistence, and graduation rates). Archival data was analyzed separately from focus group data with the intention that it would validate findings from the primary data.

Data Collection Instrument

Semi-structured interviews were employed as a qualitative data collection method in this study. Interview questions adapted from the OCQ – C, P, R (Bouckenooghe et al. 2009) and used as the instrument to collect data. The purpose of the QCP – C, P, R questionnaire is to gauge the internal context and climate for change, the factors influencing change, and readiness for change (Bouckenooghe et al. 2009). The specific constructs that are used to measure readiness for change in the OCQ – C, P, R survey which the research team modified for this study to anchor semi-structured interview questions in validated concepts include: (a) cohesion – cooperation, trust, and togetherness of individuals in an organization and degree of collegial support; (b) process participation – extent to which staff are involved in and informed about decisions that directly concern the; (c) quality of communication – the clarity, frequency, and quality of communication related to change; (e) readiness for change – beliefs, thoughts, affective reactions, and preparedness for change; (f) attitude of top management – involves the stance top management take with regards to change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009). Bouckenooghe et al. (2009) employed multiple strategies to validate these constructs. Of note, one study involves administering the questionnaire to over 1,358 employees at 42 organizations in Belgium.

After running a convergent validity analysis of the scales, internal consistency of the relevant scales used in the study reported a Cronbach's alpha above .70 (cohesion, .77; process participation, .78; quality of communication, .80; intentional readiness for change, .86; attitude of top management, 7.2). For these reasons, the research team felt confident adapting specific questions from the QCP – C, P, R questionnaire to serve as the core semi-structured interview questions about how organizational structure, culture, and climate impacts organizational change within the district.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study utilized an interpretative phenomenological analysis approach to surface experiences related to organizational change within the community college district (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Smith & Osborn, 2007; Larkin & Thompson, 2011). Participants shared their experience about the challenges and successes of organizational change related to ATD and the improvement of Black male opportunity gaps. Data collected during the semi-structured focus group interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai speech-to-text online transcription service and then manually checked by members of the research team for accuracy and to conduct any in-vivo coding to protect participant confidentiality (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Member checking was performed to validate the accuracy of interview transcriptions; participants were sent fully transcribed documents and asked to verify if the content accurately reflected their experience in the interview (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Analysis involved an inductive process using iterative analysis phases including independent and group analysis procedures to surface a comprehensive understanding of participants experience with organizational change and ATD (Eatough & Smith, 2017). This inductive process was employed to surface a comprehensive understanding of participants' experience with organizational change and ATD implementation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2005).

Iterative data analysis involved each team member independently analyzing the focus group interview transcripts for themes and codes. Rigorous memoing was conducted during these reviews to support future thematic coding and establish an audit trail for validation strategies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A group analysis of the themes and memoing from the independent analysis was conducted to narrow the thematic codes into final categories and definitions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ivankova, 2015; McMillian, 2016). Focus group data was

further analyzed in a group setting to capture any emergent themes and concepts. Codes, concepts, and core categories were then refined and relabeled and mapped to research questions (Creswell, 2014).

The analysis of documentation and reports followed a parallel inductive process that involved an independent and group analysis. Research team members performed an independent analysis of the documents searching for relevant data and insights that supported the research questions. Memoing was performed during the independent analysis phase to support later theme and code development during group analysis. Upon a thorough review of the documentation, however, the researchers determined that the archival data was not relevant to the study and provided no useful insights that helped answer the research questions. As such, the findings reported below include information from the focus group data only.

Study Setting

This case study was conducted at a community college district in the State of Washington of the United States. The district is composed of two full-time and three satellite campuses that serve over 16,000 students in basic skills, transfer, and professional technical programs. The student demographic of full-time students is comprised of 46% of students identifying as White, 19% mixed race, 9% Hispanic, 8% as African Americans, and 8% Asian/Pacific Islander (Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, n.d.). At the time of this study, the community college district employed between 1,000 and 5,000 staff, faculty, and administrators. The district has been a member of the ATD network since 2012 and has achieved exemplar status in the network being awarded a leader college in 2014 and a college of distinction in 2018. Currently, ATD in the district consists of 5 design teams focused on topical

areas of institutional interest and are responsible for developing and implementing interventions (Community College District, n.d.).

Study Participants

Twelve full-time employees of the community college district participated in this study. Participant roles included faculty (4) and staff and/or administration (8). The range of years employed at the district is 2 to 20 years with the reported average being 9 years. Participants worked at various locations across the districts with some being located at a specific campus and others holding a district wide position, serving multiple campuses. Of the participants who reported gender, 7 identified as female with 5 no response. All participants who reported race identified as white. Participants had varying degrees of involvement with ATD throughout their employment in the district with only 1 participant stating they have not participated in organizational change efforts related to ATD. Participant characteristics are described in Table 1. Participant role types are described in Table 2; an alphabetical letter (A through K) was assigned to each participant and no other personal characteristics are being reported to protect participant identity.

Table 2

Participant Demographic Characteristic

Characteristic	Description	Total
Role	Faculty	4
	Staff	8
Gender	Female	9
	Male	0
	Self-Described	1
Race	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
	Asian	0
	Black/African American	0
	Hispanic or Latino	0
	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0

	White	8
	Two or more races	0
Years Employed in the District	1 - 4	2
	5 - 9	4
	10 - 14	1
	15 - 19	1
	20+	2

Table 3

Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Role Type
Participant A	Faculty
Participant B	Faculty
Participant C	Staff and/or Administration
Participant D	Staff and/or Administration
Participant E	Staff and/or Administration
Participant F	Faculty
Participant G	Staff and/or Administration
Participant H	Faculty
Participant I	Staff and/or Administration
Participant J	Staff and/or Administration
Participant K	Staff and/or Administration

Findings

Upon an analysis of focus group data, several findings emerged based on the research questions. In this section, we describe common themes that emerged as they correlate to each research question.

Research Question 1: Overview of Themes

The first research question in this study asks: How does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college impact implementation of ATD initiative and programs? Data analysis procedures followed an interpretative phenomenological approach

using iterative phases of independent and group analysis to establish a comprehensive understanding of participants experience with ATD and organizational change in a multidimensional higher-education context (Eatough & Smith, 2017). Themes that emerged from this analysis strategy include: (a) high turnover and attrition rates in the district (19 = 8, 8.26%); (b) overall effectiveness of change efforts (66 = 10; 28.7%); (c) issues with effective communication (49 = 11; 21.3%) (d) cross functional teams and collaboration (n = 48; 20.87%). Details of these themes are described in the sections below.

High Turnover and Attrition. Throughout the focus groups interviews and stakeholder discussions, the researchers learned that the district structure is hierarchical, de-centralized, and constantly evolving. Moreover, the district's structure is variable with deviations of authority schemes, decision-making procedures, coordinating systems, and activities existing at the divisional, unit, and team level. This structural inconsistency and ever-changing nature of the district's structure impacts ATD implementation, causing high turnover and attrition which impacts the way that ATD functions. Participants primarily cited that structural inconsistency across the organization is a common source of frustration leading to a loss of institutional knowledge influencing the effectiveness of ATD overall. For example, Participant A describes how the district the knowledge was lost in a recent turnover stating:

> Work appears, the person who kind of headed up everything, which I don't even know if that person has been replaced for our ATD work, or who that would be if they were replaced? I don't know. He has something called a Smartsheet, or something, it kind of looked like an Excel thing or kind of look like an off brand organizational thing a ma-jiggy, the minutes were on there, and the proposals were on there.

Participant H added that high turnover and attrition is occurring because of frustration and confusion related to structural changes the district is attempting to make stating:

I've heard in many spaces for many people that happens, those who show up starting in, like around when, when, when [the district] decided we are an anti-racist institution, the way that the administration spoke to employees really flipped, and it never flipped back. And it's, I see the intention around it, initially. But it's gone to a really negative space...And that is what's happening to the district, particularly among the administration right now, is they are holding so tight to this is who we are. And, so what's sad, is like, seriously, like, whole departments are losing people. We're at bare bones in many departments. And some of the people left without [any jobs in place].

Participant B went onto describe that there is a lot of confusion in how ATD operates causing a lot of confusion and frustration expressing:

We recently got a new person whose title is ATD project manager, and I am wondering if that position is one that was previously vacant, and used to be filled by the person you're thinking of? It's actually unclear to me what this like… I've seen this person so some things, but it's unclear to me what their role encompasses because that's not transparent either.

Participant B describes how the impact of high turnover within the district has had on them and their motivation to participate in ATD going on to say:

This is ending up a [number] of year for me being on a priority group that impacts either single parents and/or black and brown students of color. And I think that's why I kind of lost inspiration to participate the last few months because it didn't seem like anything was going anywhere. And the chairs were always different each year. I was a chair, a co-chair. The first year was someone

else. I just dropped off the second year. And then those two chairs didn't know anything, it seemed from the previous year of all the work we did the previous year. It was very discouraging.

Participant H went onto give some examples of why there has been such turnover within the district because of the lack of accountability related to the changes the district espouses stating:

Our administration does not go to those people and say, here's how you are harming students, we will support you in developing your skills. And if you can't do it, we got to hold you accountable, and you got to be out. And unfortunately, part of the problem is that there are a lot of people at high levels, there are people at the administrative level. And you know who those departments are. Because almost all of their staff are gone. We have had a huge exodus in the last few months, there is no mystery as to who is harming students. Their people are gone.

Effectiveness of Change. The inconsistent organizational structure of the district causes variations in the effectiveness of change initiatives. As a result of the varied structures across the district, sustainable change is extremely challenging. The environment that the change would exist within both at the district level and campus level are different in size and involvedness, so it makes scalability and sustainability more complex. Participant A goes onto explain that scalability is challenging because there is a lack of consistent structure for change:

Leadership. I mean, they often will refer to achieving the dream our efforts in that as building the plane at the same time or flying it. So, that doesn't give us a lot of assurity as to the direction we're going, what's going to be accomplished. Um, you know it, it feels a little discombobulated. Yes, we've made great strides. I've witnessed many great strides over the

years. The ones, the effectiveness of the changes I wanted to make. No. But I've seen some

committees make good, great strides.

Participant B then goes onto describe that there is no roadmap available to help staff

involved in ATD implement change, impacting the scalability of organizational change efforts

stating that:

The need for that sort of transparency in the organizational change process. Like what is

it that we're trying to do? Why are we trying to do this? And what does our proposal need

to have? And what channels does it need to go through in order for it to be a successful

thing that actually results in the change that we're trying to make? And that level of

organizational transparency about how the change actually has to happen is what's

missing.

Participant B gives an example of what typically happens when an initiative is lost,

stating that:

Oh, well this was approved by the Dean and the Vice President. But then the President

sent it back to the chancellor at you know, what, wherever things go in the process,

having some transparency about who's currently looking at it, so that people who are

interested in seeing that change happen know where it is in the process and who to reach.

Participant H went onto describe change within the district as slow related to decision-

making, stating that:

And it's often hard to get decisions made. So, change is very slow. Because there's this

sense of like, wait, who's going to implement accountability? Who's going to actually

make these decisions? But then what happens because there's this front of being flat, but

in actuality, there's a hierarchy. What will sometimes happen then is decisions will have

been discussed by the administration, but not conveyed to the rest of the campus community.

Participant F portrays resistance to change facilitated by ATD as another reason why change effectiveness is challenging:

> Oh, my goodness, the culture, I would say, collaborative for sure. And I would also say, mixed, most people I think are interested in making change. And there's also, you know, folks who are like the way it is and kind of want to, want to stick with, with the status quo. So you know, and some of us feel that way about some things and not about other things. So, yeah, I'd say collaborative interested in change, with some hesitation and resistance from, from folks, based on what, what the change is.

While resistance change is notable in the district, Participant C indicates enthusiasm for changes at the divisional which are perceived are tractable citing:

> And so they may not always come back and say, hey, we did this thing that you suggested. So later on, people are like, what happened to this? And we're like, oh, that's being done. So that happens with fair frequency because there are a lot of good ideas that come up, and they're like, Oh, we can run with that right now, that doesn't have to be an ATD based intervention, because that doesn't require this large scale. This is actually a small thing that happened right now. So yeah, that moving those, getting all those moving pieces moving together and making sure that's communicated out. Because if there's an opportunity to immediately impact students' success and boosting excellence and opportunities, folks will act on it, which is great. But we also have to make sure that we're, we're telling folks, hey, we actually did this already, so that you're immediately.

Effectiveness of communication. The organization's hierarchical structure creates ineffective communication across the district that manifests itself as a lack of transparency and

inconsistent messaging. Three participant responses included iterations of these sub-themes

when asked about how departments were consulted about organizational change efforts.

Participant K was candid with regard to the lack of transparency that existed within the

district as attempts to communicate effectively across divisions unsuccessfully about the types of

change occurring in the district stating:

I'm just gonna be really frank here. Like, we work in a predominantly white institution,

and many of the people on the committees are white. So it's not just in communications

decentering whiteness is a challenge that we have in all of our work. So while yes, we

certainly focus on achievement gaps based on gender, race, ethnicity, multiple kinds of

disaggregated pieces. It is the work of the leaders on those teams to continuously shift

back to what is the focus of our work? And how is this impacting our students of color?

How is this impacting male students of color like, or even more detailed into whichever

group you're working with?

Multiple participants discussed how the organization's attempts to inform faculty and

staff were inconsistent with messaging often lacking context or clearly communicated levels of

importance. Participant A commented:

Yeah, my experience has been mainly emails and at all district days where we you know,

rah, rah, sis, boom, bah, you know, yay, welcome back, that kind of thing. And then we're

presented with information, usually verbally, there's not a lot of visual aids, although

sometimes there are. It's kind of, it's kind of hard to, to absorb contextually.

Participant H added:

here's also, um, again, not a lot of clear communication about how decisions are being

made, and so ATD works, it feels like the ATD groups have agency in coming up with

interventions. But what often happens is then interventions are actually shuttled down to those groups. And so they actually often feel like, oh, there's actually not all that much agency.

Cross-Functional Teams. Analysis of focus group interview data shows that participants believe that the organizational structure provides the opportunities for the emergence of cross-functional teams that can impact change on a variety of levels. Participants described ATD as a vehicle that has increased collaboration across the district by creating stronger linkages between staff, departments, and leaders. The organizational structure helps individuals and teams build relationships that provide opportunities for stronger collaboration across the district as well as a greater diversity of voices. Conversely, these cross-functional teams have also led to decision paralysis and role and authority confusion. Participants affirmed the existence of these sub-themes when asked about how change implementation impacts team formation throughout the organization.

Data collected from the focus group participants found that ATD implementation provided an explanation for how various levels of cross-functional teams are composed and what occurs within those teams tasked with implementing the change initiative. Participant G mentioned:

> You've got a couple of layers here. So, you've got your executive team, which you're probably familiar with, that's where a lot of these things are discussed. You've got your dean team, which plays a role. And you have the ATD efforts which draw people into developing interventions. And so, those interventions go up through the process of the ATD team. So those are all ways that efforts to innovate and make change are shared.

And in E Team, that's where they're implemented. Or at least at the top level, I mean, there are all layers of implementation for a lot of this stuff.

Findings from participants confirmed that cross-functional teams increased the likelihood of a greater diversity of voices to be heard within these teams. Participant E stated:

Our organization, the structure, where the structure really helps us with changes because there's the opportunities for multiple voices at the table, which allows a diverse perspective, from a lot of different constituencies around the institution. And that can make us more nimble, because we can make a decision quickly because we can get the right people around the table. But at the same time, that same structure can limit us because we just can spin in not really making any change, you know, not really getting out of the spiral of talking about change. You have all those voices and all of those voices bring really good ideas to the table around the organization. and change and make a better institution on behalf of students.

Participants confirmed the formation of cross-functional teams presented a specific issue within the decision-making process. Participant J mentioned:

I think the wheels turn really slowly when you're doing collaborative change. And sometimes we bogged down. And you can only consult so many voices, and everybody's not going to agree. And then who makes the decisions and all of that just, it seems to take a long time. Especially around change.

Participants also discussed how cross-functional teams create confusion among faculty and staff with regard to roles and responsibilities, specifically related to ATD implementation. Participant H affirmed:

I would say people may not know what authority they have at this moment in history. And I would say, part of that is because we are intentionally making shifts about being an anti-racist institution, we're making shifts about black and brown excellence, you know, we're making, we're trying to make those shifts as an institution.

Research Question 2: Overview of Themes

The second research question asks: What individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address African American male student opportunity gaps? Data analysis procedures followed a similar interpretative phenomenological approach that involved both independent and group analysis of data to surface themes and codes. Common themes that emerged from the analysis of data include: (a) heightened awareness of Black male opportunity gaps (26 = 10; 11.30%) (b) shared vision for change (22 = 10; 9.57%), and (c) cross functional teams (48 = 8; 20.87%). Details of these themes are described in the sections below.

Heightened Awareness of Opportunity Gaps. Participants describe a result of ATD initiatives and programs has been a heightened awareness of opportunity gaps that plague nondominant groups amongst employees (faculty, staff, administration) As a result, this has led to the centering of Black men and an overall increased commitment to ATD. An evident theme that emerged with each focus group was the focus of the work of ATD on underserved student populations, specifically Black and Brown men. At the heart of the work is this question that Participant F shared:

What is an effective way to engage the African American male population, to you know, improve the educational experience, the engagement, you know, feeling like they belong at the college, like people are welcoming and, you know, really are engaged in having,

having African American males present and having a really beneficial educational

experience and bringing their perspective into the classroom and into the college and

having it valued, not pushed aside, or devalued in any way?

Participant F shared that they continually hear the district stepping up its game on

focusing on the Black male student experience continually as this ATD project has evolved.

Participant C states:

Central to all of our conversations, it's been a very deliberate move to make sure that we

are having conversations, and specifically centering our students, specifically Black men.

And it comes up every meeting like okay, how are we centering Black and brown men

right now? What is this going to do to help support them and move them forward. And

we're not perfect at it. But it is a constant coming back and making sure that we're

explicitly addressing the needs of Black and brown men.

Within this theme, there was an acknowledge about how data has helped employees understand

opportunities, raising concern that the opportunity gap was not closing. Participant B noted:

We would look at the data. And there would be improvements with our Black and Brown

Male students, but it would be of the lift all boats variety, like everybody's improving,

and so, the gaps aren't closing that kind of thing, which is helpful, but doesn't close the

equity gap it's been to the kind of lift all boats variety, and although we have evidence

that it is impacting our most marginalized students in a positive way, it's not closing the

equity gaps because it's just kind of helping everybody if that makes sense.

Participant F stated that their "overall impression is that we're trying a lot of different

efforts to improve equity for the African American male population, and a lot of them have not

really raise the data level, like we would like to see it be is that lots of boats are really raising and the gap is still present.

Participants described how ATD has focused the work of the institution and that the ATD process has been really beneficial for the district. Participant F goes on to say that:

> The work that we've been doing for several years about anti-racism as a college as a whole, I believe that that has, that has to have had an impact on African American students' success in general, because I really think that folks who hadn't thought about it, are now thinking about it. We're all at different spots on, on that, that evolution, but there have been a lot of opportunities for people to, to really learn about what the African American male experience is like in higher education, you know, as well as, as an art college, and to, to hear what some student's experiences have been and understand it in a different way. Thus the evolution has created a renewed commitment to ATD.

Participant L highlights the connection to commitment to ATD and the work of improving opportunity gaps for Black men:

> After we started implementing changes and bringing in new ideas and innovating at a higher level, especially around our data pieces, and having that support, I think there was a bit of a shift where we were able to share some of the creative things we were doing more from a leadership perspective. So, it really helps connect us with other institutions and expand our opportunities for ideas that, you know, can focus on areas of inequity and other things like that.

Shared Vision. A theme consisting of a shared vision of an anti-racist organization creates an overall resiliency and increase in commitment to ATD. Participants described how ATD inspired to become involved in change efforts, enhancing institutional capacity by

bolstering engagement, dedication, and absorption in the work related to organizational change. Participant C highlights that people have become more engaged in ATD work as they participate more deeply in projects and understand the goals and aspirations of the initiatives and programs stating "ATD at this point, I think like, almost everyone was, like, even the folks who weren't as engaged when I first started are more engaged now directly. Um, so that's really tricky, because I think that they're involved in the processes more than they were when I first started." The changes related to ATD, while challenging, are not impeding the hopes and goals of the organization and their employees as they remain committed to the overall vision of the organization.

Through building community, the organization encourages commitment to a shared vision. Participant F states that "the organization uses the all-district days, the in-service days times where the whole college is together to talk about change and initiatives and, and things like that." Participant G states further that the "entire focus of our all-district days, which are professional development days has been about supporting themes that we've evolved in, through our ATD efforts, priorities we've established that are informing our overall effort to be an anti-racist institution."

ATD provides the opportunity to further support the mission and commitment through what Participant K describes as the way we look at ATD is shifting resources to meet mission:

> So, what ATD allows us to do is shift resources to where it serves students. This reflects the comment from Participant D when we think about the culture in the ATD work, underpinning all of the work is just a general, a general desire to help students, which is and that that's the drive of everybody that's involved in ATD. And that creates a real culture of camaraderie and, you know, common goals moving forward.

Participant D advocated that the culture of ATD has spurred a common desire to change the institution to better support systematically non-dominate students stating:

I also think that when we think about the culture in the ATD work, underpinning all of the work is just a general, a general desire to help students, which is and that that's the drive of everybody that's involved in ATD. And that creates a real culture of camaraderie and, you know, common goals moving forward. And so that's been my experience is that it's, it's very much all about helping students, and especially helping our systemically non dominant students or more marginalized student populations.

Cross-Functional Teams. Analysis of focus group interview data show that over half of participants believe the emergence of cross-functional teams have bolstered institutional capacity to address Black male student opportunity gaps. Participants described ATD has as a mechanism that has increased collaboration across the district by creating stronger structural and cultural linkages between staff, departments, and leaders. The increase in collaboration was indicated by participants as a benefit to the district because it helps support the scale of district-wide organizational change efforts related to ATD by aligning structural systems and cultivating a culture of collaborative problem-solving. In addition, collaboration was viewed by participants as advantageous to addressing Black male opportunity gaps because it allows for different and diverse voices to join together to develop novel solutions to the issue. The increase in different voices contributing to ATD programs and initiatives are perceived as important for developing solutions that comprehensively address issues throughout the district, resulting in deeper, systematic change that improve outcomes for systematically nondominant students.

Participant D provided insight about how ATD has broken down siloes within the district by bringing people together to problem-solve:

I think that what the work has shown me is, first of all, how we have amazing, amazing minds at work at [the district]. I think it is brilliant colleagues and I would not have, you know, been at the table or you know, been in the same Zoom Room with them under normal circumstances. So, it [ATD] helps to break down a lot of those institutional silos that tend to exist in colleges. And, so that's been, that's affected my job because I also then see what else is going on at the college, and, you know, how can the work that I do, collaborate with, work in other departments.

Participant E extends this finding by suggesting that by bringing together from across the district, ATD advances the capacity of the institution to improve itself and achieve its mission and vision by stating simply: "You have all those voices, and all of those voices bring really good ideas to the table around organization and change and making a better institution on behalf of students."

Participant C describes how ATD strengthens linkages across the district that improves institutional capacity to problem solve and remain nimble to address change:

I get a lot more folks reaching out to me for a lot of different things. And so initially, I had folks who would reach out to me for random stuff, but like that, that has increased tenfold. I field a lot of different types of questions. And I'm able to make connections with people in different ways now than I was before [ATD]. Because I've worked with so many folks across the institution, I say, oh, I don't do that. But I know who does. Let's get you all in contact. And so, we can bridge those connections pretty quickly. And we can do warm handoffs, as opposed to me saying, oh, I have no idea. And then calling any number of our colleagues saying, who does this, how do I get this done, how do I get this person to help resolve [this issue].

Summary

In this chapter, study findings are presented, and major themes are described from a thorough analysis of data collected from semi-structured focus group with 12 participants employed at a community college district in the Pacific Northwest. An inductive and iterative analysis approach that involved independent and group analysis of data was utilized to surface themes in relation to the research questions for this study. Research question 1 sought to investigate how the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs. Data analysis established four themes including (a) high turnover and attrition, (b) effectiveness of change, (c) communication, and (d) cross-functional teams. Research question 2 explored what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps? An analysis of focus group data surface three themes include: (a) heightened awareness of opportunities gaps affecting Black men, and (c) cross-functional teams and collaborative opportunities.

Chapter 5 continues the discussion of the findings and interpretations, while providing recommendations and suggestions for future research based on identified gaps/limitations/weaknesses discovered through the data analysis phase.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study examined challenges faced by community college districts when implementing organizational change initiatives to improve student success outcomes for Black male students (Eskrine-Meusa, 2017; Gipson et al., 2018; Lewis & Middleton, 2003; Palacios & Alvarez, 2016; Rawlston-Wilson et al., 2014). Research questions that guided this study are:

1. How does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs?

2. What individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation has improved institutional capacity to address African American male students' opportunity gaps?

The study investigated how a multidimensional organizational structure impacts efforts to implement change and to build institutional capacity that address opportunity gaps for Black men. The research questions that guided the study were intended to surface knowledge about the challenges and successes of organizational change efforts related to implementing ATD and how these efforts may have impacted institutional capacity to address the needs of systemically nondominant students. A qualitative case study design was utilized to investigate the research questions by examining the experiences of faculty, staff, and administration directly involved in the change efforts related to implementing ATD.

Data was collected using semi-structured focus group interviews with core questions derived from the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness (OCQ – C, P, R) survey (Bouckenooghe et al. 2009). The specific questions from the survey that were adapted include the following: (a) there is good communication between project

leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes, (b) corporate management team consistently implements its policies in all departments; (c) departments are consulted about the change sufficiently; staff members were consulted about the reasons for change; (d) do department's senior managers pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that the changes could have for their staff members; (e) information provided on change is clear; (f) I have a good feeling about the change project; I experience the change as a positive process (Bouckenooghe et al. 2009).

Six semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted followed by an analysis of themes using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Participants (n = 12) included currently employed staff and faculty of the multidimensional community college district directly involved with Achieving the Dream. Over the course of six focus group sessions, eight staff and four faculty participated. The IPA approach underpinned an iterative inductive process of independent and group analysis procedures to surface themes and connect to scholarship about organizational change and multidimensional organizations and future research. Data collection in the study also involved acquiring documents and reports from the district including the institutional effective report, IPEDS data feedback report, and accreditation report. The analysis of documentation and reports followed an inductive process that involved an independent and group analysis. Upon a thorough review of the documentation, however, the researchers determined that the archival data was not relevant to the study and provided no useful insights that helped answer the research questions. As such, the findings reported below include information from the focus group data only.

Themes that emerged from the analysis included high turnover/attrition, effectiveness of change, effectiveness of communication, cross-functional teams, heightened awareness of

opportunity gaps, and shared vision. Of note, participants felt strongly that the hierarchical and ever-changing nature of the district's organizational structure contributed to high turnover and attrition, which had a cascading effect on the effectiveness of ATD implementation and overall employee morale. A deeper analysis of how the district's structure contributes to ATD implementation found that participants believed it impacted change efforts' effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability. One finding was that communication is more challenging in a multidimensional organization that impacts messaging and buy-in. However, participants indicated that when messaging is received, this is a form of effective communication that can generate commitment and a shared vision for the change efforts, increasing institutional capacity to address opportunity gaps for Black male students. Findings indicated that the institutional capacity for improving equity and social justice for Black men in the district was enhanced through collaborative opportunities and cross-functional networks that strengthen knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and fosters relationships. Finally, according to participants, a key piece to institutional capacity building was awareness of the issues affecting Black men and having the knowledge and tools to act. The following section is a high-level presentation of the notable findings in relation to the literature and research questions.

Findings

The first research question addresses how the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impacts implementation of ATD initiatives and programs. Four themes emerged from the research; high turnover/attrition, effectiveness of change, effectiveness of communication, and cross-functional teams. The second research question explores what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity

gaps. Three themes that emerged from the research in relation to the second research question are heightened awareness of opportunity gaps, shared vision, and cross-functional teams. The discussion of the findings addresses challenges associated with implementing organizational change across multidimensional higher education organizations seeking to improve student success outcomes for historically nondominant populations enrolled at community colleges (Eskrine-Meusa, 2017; Gipson et al., 2018; Lewis & Middleton, 2003; Palacios & Alvarez, 2016; Rawlston-Wilson et al., 2014). The findings also highlight the importance of multidimensional organizations conceptualizing systemic issues related to race while improving institutional capacity within a matrixed organizational structure whose antiracist organizational culture seeks to dismantle intergenerational barriers caused by institutional racism (Tate IV, 2008; Tate et al., 1993). Finally, the findings from the study confirm the existence of the organization's history of implementing change on behalf of historically nondominant student populations, an area of organizational input featured within the Nadler and Tushman (1989) Congruence Model of Organizational Design, as well as the existence of external organizational forces impacting Black male student success outcomes observed within the domains of the Harris and Wood (2016) Socio-Ecological Outcomes Model.

Research Question One Themes

Research question one explores how the organizational structure of the community college district functions within a multidimensional organizational space that affects the implementation of initiatives born from ATD. Research question one asks: how does the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impact implementation of ATD initiatives and programs? The findings from the study, in relation to the

first research question, focus on descriptions of participant's experiences and beliefs about the impact.

High Turnover and Attrition. Throughout the focus groups, mention of high employee turnover rates within the organization was common. High turnover was cited as contributing to an overall loss of knowledge-creating inconsistencies within the organization and explicitly ATD initiative implementation, leading to confusion and frustration. Regarding high turnover, it was mentioned that when a person left the organization, the work that individual had been doing was typically lost. This impacted ATD because design teams often duplicated work, not knowing that a past individual had begun an initiative or process which was halted when they left. Kotter (2007) argued that one of the main factors that undermines change implementation is the loss of momentum and engagement, resulting in member attrition (Liag & Acocejo, 2021). When an individual leaves the district unexpectedly with no succession plan in place, this undermines the change process and leaves people frustrated, contributing to a loss of momentum, especially when a great deal of work was previously done and then lost during the transition.

High turnover and attrition not only affect the development and implementation of change efforts but also how members of the organization receive change, impacting the changes long-term sustainability. Wentworth et al. (2015) stated, to ensure that a change vision becomes a part of the culture and climate moving forward within an organization, leaders must demonstrate the positive changes resulting from the change implementation. Throughout the focus groups, it was mentioned that leadership transitions over the years had contributed to a constant state of flux within the organization calling into question leadership's ability to demonstrate the positive changes of implemented initiatives resulting from ATD. Constant personnel changes make it challenging to keep track of implemented changes and overshadow

the results. Constant turnover makes it difficult to build a powerful coalition which is a crucial element to change implementation, as Kotter (2007) argued. Kotter (2007) stated that for a change to stick long-term, a powerful coalition of dedicated and skilled change agents must be established early in the process to help generate momentum and create linkages across the organization. ATD does a great job of bringing together personnel from across the organization, including senior management, mid-management, to front-line workers, as Kotter suggested. However, constant turnover and attrition undermine this effort leading to loss of knowledge through inconsistency. Take for instance a comment from focus group Participant H "and so what's sad is like, seriously, like, whole departments are losing people. We're at bare bones in many departments."

Another example was given in one of the focus groups about a tool used to keep track of ATD initiatives. The tool was a dashboard that could track ATD initiatives transparently, allowing people from across the organization to see where an initiative was in the implementation process. Focus group Participant A stated that,

> That brings to mind in the very beginning of ATD. Work appears, the person who kind of headed up everything, which I don't even know if that person has been replaced for our ATD work, or who that would be if they were replaced? I don't know. He had something called a Smartsheet, or something, it kind of looked like an Excel thing or kind of look-a-like, off brand organizational thing a ma-jiggy. And the minutes were on there, and the proposals were on there. And then I remember asking, well, don't you think this should be on there? And that should be on there as well. Yeah. And then I got pushed back, like, okay, what does it matter?

The individual who created and maintained this Smartsheet left the organization, and the tracking tool disappeared with them. Kezar and Holcombe (2019) discuss organizational learning as an essential tool to facilitate change. High turnover is detrimental to organizational learning because knowledge, work, and progress are lost when individuals leave the organization.

Factors outside of the community college districts control also contribute to high turnover and attrition. The overall change fatigue that resulted from the global pandemic is another contributing factor to the high turnover. The pandemic was cited by Participant F to be a barrier to the change process stating that:

We're all kind of in that tumultuous place that has had an impact on I mean, it is institutional change. But not intentional institution or not, you're not intentional institutional change, it just is change. So, I certainly think there's burnout and change fatigue, because not that's that ATD is part of but certainly the pandemic is also part of

As mentioned by Black & Bright (2019) and Daft (2016) external factors relating to political issues, natural disasters, and public health concerns etc. all can contribute to outside factors that can affect the organizational external environment which refers to the organization's general environment and includes outside factors that influence the organization. High turnover and attrition within the organization connect to the theoretical frameworks for this research study in several ways. As Nadler (2006) stated, the congruence model ensures that strategy fits in organizational realities related to resources and environment. The congruence model also ensures that strategy fits in formal structures, systems, and processes and that fit exists among all internal organizational components (Nadler, 2006). High turnover and attrition affect all organizational components, including structure systems and processes. When using the congruence model to identify if a strategy fits into an organization's reality, if the organization has high turnover, it

will affect what those realities are. High turnover will affect this if the organization can't sustain and implement its strategy because its organizational realities are in flux due to its being short-staffed or in a constant state of staffing hiring and onboarding.

In addition to this, Strikewerda and Stoelhorst (2009) described multidimensional organizations as collaborative, everyone knows their role and works towards a common shared goal. These organizations use performance data accessible to all dimensions instead of a rewards system (Strikewerda and Stoelhorst, 2009). The organization under study utilizes performance data in this way and has done well to convince people from all dimensions to access and use the data. Take for instance a comment by Participant I

> Yeah, I think we felt it was, it was harder during when we converted our system to what we call our PeopleSoft system. And we were without fully operational Tableau dashboards because everybody got so used to looking at their own data. And, and data was just part of the fabric of what we did. And so, you know, we, it's a lot of that rebuild has fallen to Participant J. But we were kind of like breathing sighs of relief now that, oh, we've got our robust data back. And we can trust that that data and it's not secret, anybody can look at it. And fact is, we get custom design, when we have questions.

Leadership practitioners seeking to address attrition rates within their organization should consider working to create a culture where people from every level and every dimension can speak from the heart about what really matters to them and be heard by senior management and each other. Through the organization of ATD it has become clear that the community college district is skilled at bringing people together in a space to collaborate, but this suggestion transcends that and asks leadership to address the culture at large, and specifically when related to the interactions between staff, faculty, and administrators. As Senge (1994) suggests, the

content of a true shared vision cannot be dictated; it can only emerge from a coherent process of reflection and conversation. Leadership should consider making space for this process to occur. Along with creating a space where a truly shared vision may be allowed to take form, leadership should take care in making sure this space is made safe for all to participate. Patterson (2012) discusses the process of making a space safe for discussion and says that in order for a person to feel able to share sensitive or delicate feedback and information they must feel that leadership cares about them, their goals, and objectives and that means that there is a strong underlying foundation of trust.

Effectiveness of Change. Change effectiveness was cited by focus group participants in that the inconsistent organizational structure of the community college district contributed to inconsistency in how effective change initiatives have been. The structure makes sustainable change efforts more complex and therefore more challenging. Throughout the focus groups, "scalability" was often used to describe a change initiative that could be sized appropriately, most often sized-up to run across the organization. When asked about successful change initiatives, common initiatives were cited, but with them was mention of the complexity in sustaining the change over time or the administration's focus on making successful changes scalable. The community college district, being a multidimensional organization, presents a more complex structure. As Daft (2016) stated, multidimensional organizations are matrix organizations whose organizational structure is multifaceted in product and function or geography and function. Ultimately, the customer is the main profit center (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). For community colleges, the student would be considered the main profit center, and the organization organizes itself around them. Given that people are focused on better serving students, there is a common goal. Initiatives that are implemented outside of ATD that

are successful are not reprimanded. The administration seems to encourage rogue

implementation of initiatives encouraging others to act similarly; however, these

implementations may not be scalable to the entire organization.

Common initiatives were cited as being implemented successfully, and these initiatives

had in common that they were easier to implement because they were localized. These changes

were under the direct control of the implementer. Although these initiatives were successful and

inspired by ATD, none of the participants gave ATD full credit for their implementation, and a

strong connection between implementation and ATD could not be drawn. An overall lack of

understanding about how initiatives moved from administration, from idea to implementation

created frustration and motivation for individuals to act on the initiative themselves.

Effectiveness of change was also called into question because it was hard for participants to

connect ATD initiatives directly and quantifiably with the organization's strategic goals.

Although participants seemed to share a vision for the future of the district and the direction the

organization wanted to grow in, explicit connections could not be made between the work being

done in ATD and the organization's overall strategic vision. Overall resistance to ATD initiatives

was cited as another impediment to effective change. Taking time to convince others of the

importance of initiatives to the outcomes for underrepresented groups takes from executing the

initiative. Lack of full participation due to resistance to change creates a sense of demotivation

and calls into question the accountability of individuals across the organization in relation to the

initiatives.

The theme of effectiveness of change connects to the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO)

model and theoretical framework in that the SEO model presents a way for community colleges

who are seeking to improve student success outcomes for students of color, a way to

conceptualize how the institution can structure itself to create a climate and culture that supports

inclusion, equity, and diversity (Harris and Wood, 2016). Attention has been placed on the

design and implementation of ATD efforts by both faculty and staff members, with focus often

being placed on whether an initiative was enacted or not, for example Participant D stated that,

> And the weakness in that is that it's really difficult to move something in that space,
> because we are working so hard on openness transparency, feedback, brainstorming,
> think tanking, all of those things that invoicing and getting all the voices into a space that
> moving out of that space into anything that is usable is sometimes difficult. Like we're we
> spend a lot of time in that in that initial space and with good intention. And the intention
> is the student.

Although there are good intentions initially in the design of ATD initiatives, often these

initiatives do not make it to implementation and therefore have no impact on the students they

are meant to serve. The SEO model calls for attention to be focused back on the student and their

environment. Harris and Wood (2016) stated that:

> First, the campus ethos domain has an effect on the academic domain. For example, the
> model suggests that students' feeling of belonging and connectedness to the campus and
> its affiliates influences their interactions with faculty and use of campus services.
> Specifically, greater feelings of connectedness and belonging are associated with greater
> and more authentic interactions with faculty and use of academic services that are
> designed to enhance student success.

When focus can be balanced between planning the logistics of implementing an ATD

initiative and taking into consideration the experiences of Black male students and how they

should inform the initiatives, better informed decision-making can occur throughout the initial implementation process. This would also aid in future planning and maintenance of initiatives.

Connecting effectiveness of change to the multidimensional organization, there is an example given by Strikewerda and Stoelhorst (2009) which described a multidimensional organization, going on to state that:

The main profit center is the customer and the primary task of all of the unit managers is to optimize IBM's position with its customers. To balance customer demands and the efficient use of resources and to be able to respond to tactical buying behavior of customers that attempt to increase their bargaining position vis-à-vis different IBM units, product and account managers confer each month. (p. 20)

The example translates to the community college district in that the organization must also balance customer needs and the efficient use of resources, however their customer is their students. Through focus group participant responses, it became clear that although people from different organizational dimensions do not feel they are in competition for resources there does seem to be a sense of confusion about how to request resources which in turn impacts the overall implementation and effectiveness of the changes underway. Take for instance a comment by Participant B,

Now, I wouldn't say that individual groups feel like they are in conflict with each other. I wouldn't say that Group A and Group B feel like they are competing for the same fiscal resources. My perception is more that none of the groups at such and such level, feel like they know the exact formula to use when requesting the resources to make the change happen.

Leadership aiming to address the overall effectiveness of change initiatives should consider Kotter's eight step model, specifically the steps that require empowering others to act and planning for short-term wins. Leadership can motivate others to act by removing systems or structures that undermine the overall vision (Kotter, 2018). In this case, the community college district can remove confusion around how change initiatives reach approval, which will be helpful in eliminating confusion around who has the authority to enact the change as well as signal to employees where a change initiative is in the process of implementation.

In addition, leadership should consider building into their overall vision plans for short term wins. Moving towards being an anti-racist organization is a noble goal to have but it is one that is ongoing and requires constant evolving and processing. Motivation can be lost when change seems to never be implemented or take root even though significant benefits could have taken place. Leadership should build into their plans for change short terms wins. Short term wins, according to Kotter (2018), consist of definable and visual performance improvements. Recognition should be given to those who are regularly contributing to those improvements. Failure to acknowledge short term goals or to plan for milestones can result in loss of motivation and overall lower morale.

Effectiveness of Communication. The focus group participants highlighted several factors related to effectively communicating messages throughout the community college district organization. Findings from the study indicated the increased need for identifying and understanding its organizational structure (Samuels & Miller, 2022). Participants stated how the organization's structure created opportunities to effectively communicate information related to project importance but failed to effectively communicate information related to project

involvement. Several participants discussed how leadership effectively communicated the importance of implementing the ATD change initiative; Participant F stated:

There is a chain for things that really don't fit in the department level work. I noticed that in our groups, that was something that we really tried to find our way of identifying what belonged in that bigger intervention process, versus what really belonged at the department level work.

However, the participants were unclear about the proposal approval process associated with the work occurring within the ATD Design and Core Teams. Additionally, participants suggested that organizational structure hindered opportunities to effectively communicate ideas by stating that the organization's structure impacted the likelihood of messages originating from faculty and staff communicating within ATD Design and Core Teams, All-District Day events, and other communication opportunities successfully arriving to other organizational areas. Participant C stated "identifying what…funding tracks look like. That's where some of that organizational structure starts coming in, like, 'Who does this?"

Effectively communicating across the organization is clear within smaller, more well-defined units like the ATD Design and Core Teams but becomes less clear once messages are dispersed out to larger, more stratified groups like departments and divisional teams. Participant C commented:

So being on the sending end of some of the emails, at times, we think that information gets further than it does. And then we find out it didn't. And then we're like, oh, hey, sorry about that. And then we try again.

The participant's statement acknowledged the organization's overreliance on communicating through email distribution lists and presentations made during highly attended

events like All-District Days. Several participants mentioned that successful communication originated from leadership which aligns with literature on multidimensional organization structure (Daft, 2016; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Some participants disagree on how the organization uses appropriate methods of communication to send out messages throughout the organization; however, most participants agreed that the pandemic significantly impacted both frequency and style of communication.

An analysis of the participants indicated that faculty and staff have conflicting views concerning the conceptualization of their organization's structure, which supports the existing literature on multidimensional organizations (Daft, 2016; Dohler, 2015; Galbraith, 2010; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Literature confirmed the participants' responses concerning multidimensional organization structure and its association with decentralized divisional managers with autonomous control over resources to achieve organizational goals (Galbraith, 2010; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Several participants confirmed that communicating through a multidimensional organization exploited intangible knowledge-based resources and created value by diffusing knowledge throughout the organization by communicating information through well-established lines (Strikwerda and Stoelhorst, 2009). A participant described the community college district as a matrix organization that relies on communicating open, accessible performance data (Daft, 2016; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Participant H stated:

> It's a matrix organization. And I think it's constantly evolving. So you have an
> administrative structure of Dean's vice presidents that are working district wide. And you
> have people that are primarily assigned to one campus who work at one campus for its
> Fort Steilacoom, and there's been work to sort of transition to more of a district wide

culture, particularly around student services, to ensure that there's consistency and how

we approach the kinds of supports that we provide.

Participants mentioned the flexibility in the design of the organization that values the

individual (Eddy, 2010). Participants affirmed the influence that autonomy has on interest groups

competing for influence over organizational tasks, which leads to conflicting agendas at

information exchange points as information diffuses throughout the organization (Dohler, 2015).

The theoretical framework of this study supports the use of CRT as a lens to expose racial

oppression within postsecondary educational institutions, including community colleges (Patton,

2016). An analysis of participant responses provided an opportunity to inquire about the impact

that race and racism has on educational opportunities for Black men within American education

(Tate et al., 1993), to consider the impact of systemic racial oppression within social institutions

(Yi et al., 2020), and to understand the importance of providing quality educational services for

Black male students as a systemic issue (Tate, 2008).

Data collected in this study confirmed the literature regarding prioritizing Black male

needs on community college campuses (Harris & Wood, 2016). Findings from the study indicate

that prioritizing Black male students' needs has been successfully communicated across the

community college district; however, participants are conflicted on the connection between the

organization's strategy concerning Black male students and the change management initiative,

ATD (Nadler, 2006; Tushman & Nadler, 2012; Raffaelli, 2017). Participant G's comment

supported the literature by saying that:

> through our ATD efforts, priorities we've established that we're informing our overall
>
> effort to be an antiracist institution…and so, various levels of thought go into various

approaches to communicating about the priorities and about ways to support it and professional development to help people understand and support those efforts.

Participant F confirmed these statements stating that, "I continually hear the college stepping up its game on focusing on the Black Male student experience continually as this ATD project has evolved." Additionally, Participant K described how "we have designed that tool to be able to filter and prioritize our African American males…we actually are prioritizing or allowing folks to prioritize outreach for our students that are for this form of equity." These comments support the literature on how community colleges who seek to improve Black male student success outcomes can conceptualize the institution's organizational structure to create a climate and culture that supports inclusion, equity, and diversity (Harris & Wood, 2016).

Leadership practitioners seeking to communicate change initiatives effectively should identify emotions that inhibit and facilitate purposeful action through understanding the barriers and catalysts involved with implementing change (Ganz, 2010; in Nohria & Khurana, 2010). Ganz (2010) stated that "leaders mobilize the emotions that make agency possible when we experience the world as it is, rather than when perception comes into conflict with the values that define how the world should be" (in Nohria & Khurana, 2010, 535). Ganz describes accountability as evidence that the action being undertaken matters. Leadership should develop a narrative that explains the need for change implementation. To effectively communicate the need for change, Ganz (2010) suggested the need for a powerful story that must include three elements; a plot, character, and moral whose setting is dependent upon the storyteller and the audience. In terms of communicating effectively to audiences, leaders should identify the challenge being addressed, the choice to be made by those empowered to decide, and the preferred outcome from these decisions. The organization under study encourages effective

communication through continuous improvement necessary to sustain the work that contributes to fulfilling the mission of the organization (Community College District, 2022b). Ting-Tooney (1999) provided a framework for communicating across cultures and suggests that organizational leaders should consider communication differences when implementing change because cultural differences can prevent staff from accurately perceiving, analyzing, and decoding change-related situations (Osland, 2018). Ting-Tooney (1999) stated that leaders who do not consider the cultural nuances of communication styles run the risk of their staff misinterpreting the vision and not receiving proper input and feedback while also explaining distinct differences in communication styles being based on the use of language to communicate, the application of language in terms of tone of intent, one's effort or performance, and the presence or absence of silence (Osland, 2018).

Cross-Functional Teams. The participants confirmed several factors impacting the formation of cross-functional teams within the organization. The study revealed that teams are created with specific goals related to ATD implementation that campus administrators guide.

Throughout the study, participants referred to ATD Design and Core Team participation as opportunities for diverse voices to be heard. Literature indicated that cross-functional teams are opportunities for diagnosing why change is needed, determining how change should be implemented, and evaluating the impact that change has on the organization, including an explanation of who will be affected and how will success be measured through collaborative "team play" where everyone knows their roles and how the game is played (Kotter, 2008; Raffaelli, 2017; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). Participant E stated:

> Our organization, the structure, where the structure really helps us with changes because there's the opportunities for multiple voices at the table, which allows a diverse

perspective, from a lot of different constituencies around the institution. And that can

make us more nimble because we can make a decision quickly because we can get the

right people around the table. But at the same time, that same structure can limit us

because we just can spin in not really making any change, you know, not really getting

out of the spiral of talking about change. You have all those voices, and all of those

voices bring really good ideas to the table around the organization. and change and make

a better institution on behalf of students.

Participant I stated, "I think the wheels turn really slowly, when you're doing

collaborative change. And sometimes, we bogged down. And you can only consult so many

voices, and everybody's not going to agree. And then who makes the decisions and all of that

just, it seems to take a long time. Especially around change" and that "being a district, that does

mean that we have more voices that have to be consulted."

Participants claims conflict with existing literature on how organizational structure

impacts organizational change efforts, which states that organizational change leadership has

shifted from personal and group dynamics to more organizational-based outcomes associated

with trending practices, emerging crises, and constantly evolving environments (Dumas &

Beinecke, 2018; Moran & Brightman, 2001). Participant responses confirm existing literature

concerning creating a powerful coalition of dedicated and skilled change agents to help generate

momentum and create linkages across the organization that need to work in concert (Kotter,

2007). The coalition should consist of senior management, mid-management, and front-line

workers to ensure coverage across the organization and understand the organization's need for

change (Fisher & Henderson, 2018; Kotter et al., 2021). Participant G stated:

You've got a couple of layers here. So, you've got your executive team, which you're probably familiar with, that's where a lot of these things are discussed. You've got your dean team, which plays a role. And you have the ATD efforts, which draw people into developing interventions. And so, those interventions go up through the process of the ATD team. So those are all ways that efforts to innovate and make change are shared. And in E Team, that's where they're implemented. Or at least at the top level, I mean, there are all layers of implementation for a lot of this stuff.

Participant A stated, "implementing the pillars of the inclusive pedagogy framework that we've developed at the different levels of the institution also, like it's an ecosystem. And so, it's one thing to practice inclusive pedagogy in the classroom. It's another thing for our institution to practice those principles also." The comment presented an example of the dynamic and interdependent relationships within the organization's constructs and interactions as depicted within the Socio-Ecological Outcomes Model's five domains (Harris & Wood, 2016).

Findings from the study extended the literature by acknowledging that multidimensional organizations possess a decentralized organization structure based on decision-making authority that operates from a top-down perspective where decentralized managers are held accountable based on the performance of these dimensions (Galbraith, 2010; Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009; Daft, 2016). Participant H stated, "there's a definite hierarchy, but the administration tries to portray that that's not there." Traditional community college models may negatively impact implementing change across organizations due to its organizational structure (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Samuels & Miller, 2022). Participant A stated, "the organizational structure does seem to be administrative heavy."

Leaders implementing change activities across flexible organizational structures and over multiple locations should consider developing cross-functional teams. Traditional approaches to change management look for problems, diagnose the problem, and seek solutions. These approaches align with theoretical models that prioritize American business practices and view human systems as interchangeable parts. Such approaches focus on what is wrong; this emphasis on the problem creates the belief that for every problem, a solution exists. Cooperrider et al., (n.d.) challenged traditional change management approaches and applied an "appreciative" perspective that envisioned organizations as organic expressions that "you cannot take apart to study in pieces" (Hammond, 2015, p. 5). The community college district has committed itself to initiating, leading, and sustaining community partnerships through collaborative efforts that advance educational opportunities and align with regional economic development outcomes (Community College District, 2022b). European and Japanese companies seeking to make changes focus on changing attitudes and behaviors of key people; modify the flow of communication and decision-making processes; and consolidate the changes by realigning the structure to mirror the changes that have already occurred. US companies modify the organizational structures and hope the new structure will cause changes in interpersonal relationships and processes, leading to changes in individual attitudes and behaviors. Kagono et al., (1985) suggested that Western managers believe they have greater control over the organizational environment which leads to more decisive managerial action once the need for change is perceived (Osland, 2018). Implementing change successfully requires action which refers to the "bottom line of the relational, motivational, and strategic work" necessary to achieve outcomes (Ganz, 2010, p. 553). The nature of relationships observed within social movements can be useful as a model for transforming organizational culture and can aid in developing cross-

functional teams. Ganz (2010) suggested that change management leaders can mobilize their

staff through voluntary commitments of time, skills, and effort, and contended that mobilization

shared an inverse relationship to resource deployment. Ganz (2010) also suggested that change

management leaders face challenges related to collaboration and making claims where

collaborative work empowers participants to action. Ganz (2010) contended that the challenge of

translating strategic intent into successful outcome can be achieved through developing a culture

of commitment with specific measurable outcomes with real deadlines and embedding intrinsic

rewards within the work. Ganz (2010) stated, "leaders must learn to coach, avoid both

micromanagement and hands-off management," host meetings regularly where staff learn about

the change, and plan for contingencies by remaining "resilient, creative, and ready to adapt

practices in real time" (in Nohria & Khurana, 2010, p 556).

Research Question 2 Themes

Research question two investigates what individual, cultural, and structural changes

related to ATD implementation has improved institutional capacity to address African American

male students' opportunity gaps? The findings from the study focus on three major themes: (a)

heightened awareness of opportunity gaps; (b) a shared vision, and (c) cross-functional teams.

Heightened Awareness of Opportunity Gaps. Focus group participants

overwhelmingly shared that within their work, the centering of Black men was essential to

creating goals and understanding opportunities for students, specifically around the opportunity

gap. Participant C shared:

> Central to all of our conversations, it's been a very deliberate move to make sure that we
>
> are having conversations, and specifically centering our students, specifically Black men.
>
> And it comes up every meeting like okay, how are we centering Black and brown men

right now? What is this going to do to help support them and move them forward. And we're not perfect at it. But it is a constant coming back and making sure that we're explicitly addressing the needs of Black and brown men.

The theoretical framework of the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) Model, which seeks to explain community college student success through the postsecondary educational experiences of Black males, is supported through the data of the study. The SEO model carries an ability to contextualize the student experience for Black Males and identifies organizational structures and cultural elements of a community context that directly impact student success outcomes. The SEO model explores different factors that influence the experience of students of color in community colleges. Factors include inputs – life experiences and societal factors that occur prior to matriculation; socioecological domains – the environments spheres of activity that shape interaction and experiences of students in a community college; and outcomes – observable and tangible ways students have changed because of inputs and socioecological domains (Harris & Woods, 2013; Harris & Wood, 2016). During the focus groups, participants shared that there have been opportunities for students to share their experiences through surveys and a convening of Black men. According to the SEO Model factors, the data exists as to what the inputs are; however, without a complete understanding of the socioecological domain, the outcomes remain elusive. While ATD has provided the context for staff and faculty to raise their awareness about the opportunity gap, they are not seeing the work engage Black men so much as what Participant B described as:

> We would look at the data. And there would be improvements with our Black and Brown Male students, but it would be of the lift all boats variety like everybody's improving, and so the gaps aren't closing that kind of thing, which is helpful, but doesn't close the equity

gap it's been to the kind of lift all boats variety, and although we have evidence that it is impacting our most marginalized students in a positive way, it's not closing equity gaps because it's just kind of helping everybody if that makes sense.

The SEO model provides a conceptual framework for community colleges experiencing organizational change, understanding how to align the organizational factors for improving Black male student success outcomes, and provides an assessment tool that can inform the professional development of leaders and staff to build their capacity to serve Black male students. Adding to this model, an increased commitment to ATD shifts awareness and focus onto the Black male experience and how the multidimensional community college can see positive outcomes such as the opportunity gap beginning to shrink.

Leaders experiencing a change in work structure and focus due to increased awareness and learning in a multidimensional organization are faced with complex priorities and challenges. Kanter (2010; in Nohria & Khurana, 2010) describes critical aspects of leadership as institutional, integrative, and identity in how uncertainty, complexity, and diversity are managed. Kanter (2010; in Nohria & Khurana, 2010) further argues "that the meaning that is most important for institutionalizing an organization is a purpose and values that provide a rationale beyond the transactions or activities of the moment." and that as a leader, "he or she must convey that the institution is larger than any one person so that people are not following a leader but rather are following the values and principles of the institution". Leading through complexity takes the ability to recognize that operating a multidimensional organization happens with "more moving parts, more variables in play simultaneously, and more dimensions of interest", where time is not a factor; it is going to happen when it happens. Integrative work needs an open, flexible structure to operate in, where individuals are encouraged to be leaders and operate with

more decision-making power. Leadership is inherently about people, and people do not always agree even if they believe in the same mission and vision. Lastly, identity work "involves shaping awareness and actions in terms of both differentiation (acknowledging differences) and inclusion (finding points of commonality)."

CRT served as another framework for the study which is a way to understand racial oppression in postsecondary education. Tate (2008) examined the challenges of providing adequate educational access to Black men, arguing it is a systemic issue that can be examined by creating more inclusive research design methods to investigate the root causes of intergenerational inequalities related to Black male educational attainment. In relation to centering Black men, it connects with findings and data. The study's second research question asks what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps, the study's findings and data provide a link to how ATD has helped to focus and center the opportunity gap experienced by Black men into the individual, cultural and structure of the organization.

Shared Vision. Through statements made by the focus group participants, a theme emerged around a shared vision, with an overall shared resiliency and increased commitment to ATD initiative implementation. Findings from the study show how the culture of the organization is transitioning to an overall shared vision based on their mission and vision and the work conducted through ATD. Participant G shared about the transitions that the organization is in "and there's been work to sort of transition to more of a district wide culture, particularly around student services, to ensure that there's consistency and how we approach the kinds of supports that we provide. I think there's a lot of commitment, I think there's a lot of hard work." Participant I clarifies this further stating:

Part of our mission is our values. We value learning integrity, respect, accountability, sustainability. So those are all written into our mission, that we create quality educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners to thrive in an evolving world. And we repeat that. I mean, it's kind of our mantra that we know it's an evolving, you know, community and change is consistent, and that we have to evolve with our community.

The Congruence Model of Organizational Design is focused on fit, and alignment is essential to the design model. The congruence model of strategy implementation describes an organization as a system whose essential components must fit together to achieve optimal performance and suggests that implementing change successfully requires alignment between its structures, systems, culture, tasks, and competencies (Nadler, 2006; Tushman & Nadler, 2012; Raffaelli, 2017). However, challenges exist in the different stages in which individuals find themselves and the organization. While the vision exists, and the work is centered on how individuals find their place in the organization differs. This is recognized through a conversation with a focus group participant about how staff and faculty arrive at that same point and purpose. As Participant F shares, "you know, I think some folks, folks are different journeys in their anti-racism, different places in their anti-racism journey, and there's still some white resistance hanging around in in places, you know, kind of, from, from who people are and what work they're willing to do and what they're willing to see." There is no clear answer, yet the idea of an overall shared vision is evident. Data suggests that a shared vision and commitment to ATD implementation is guiding the change process by allowing for grace and a greater awareness of the central goals of their work. Data collected in this study supports Research Question 2 in regard to the culture of the case organization and how a shared vision can contribute to the overall institutional capacity to address Black male opportunity gaps.

Overall, an increased commitment to ATD was found in both themes. Findings and data from the study show that, while ATD has been at the case organization for a number of years, the commitment has also shifted, towards shifting resources as an anti-racist organization. Participant K, "what ATD allows us to do is shift resource to where it serves students. And that's generally how we speak about at, oh, where do we, it helps us identify where we need resource and then do a budget process shift that resource around. So it all feels very positive, and mission driven." However, challenges continue to exist to decentering whiteness. Participant F shares:

> I would also say that, you know, we're still a predominantly white institution with a big desire to hire people from, you know, many different cultural backgrounds, ethnic backgrounds, life experiences. And I think as we, I've noticed, as we've hired more diverse workforce, that there's a lot more conversation with new ideas that come forward that are not specifically based in the in the white educational experience.

CRT creates an opportunity to understand the historical implications of race in an organization, specifically in postsecondary education. The second research question asks what individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation have improved institutional capacity to address Black male students' opportunity gaps. The study's findings and data provide a link to how an overall shared vision and renewed commitment to ATD, through the lens of CRT, can create a culture that is based on multiple perspectives. While challenges remain, participants are aware of and see needed changes happening.

In creating opportunities to build a shared vision, leaders would benefit from the definition and descriptions of shared vision that Senge (1994) shares. Senge (1994) defines a shared vision as "building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future" and "the principles and guiding practices" (p. 6) created and used to get there. Shared

vision "is centered around a never-ending process, whereby people in an organization articulate their common stories – around vision, purpose, values, why their work matters, and how it fits in the larger world" (Senge, 1994, p. 298) As a leader, "the heart of building shared vision is the task of designing and evolving ongoing processes in which people at every level of the organization, in every role, can speak from the heart about what really matter to them and be heard. A true shared vision cannot be dictated, it can only emerge." (Senge, 1994, p. 299). The community college district would do well to explore the many voices that are engaged in the work of creating a shared vision for the district. As the focus of the work has changed, so must the shared vision as an evolving and ever-changing process.

       Cross-Functional Teams. An analysis of the focus group data indicates that cross-functional teams are an important component of institutional capacity needed to address opportunity gaps for Black men. Scholars of CRT argue that collaboration has the potential to increase diversity of thought and voice related to decision-making in social institutions which can disrupt the White homogeneity and thus, transform traditional power dynamics that reinforce dominate cultural norms and institutional racist practices (Dixson & Anderson, 2018; Hiraldo, 2019; Patton, 2016). As such, diverse cross-functional teams can advance institutional capacity to interrupt the White intellectual property mindset that pervades higher-education and generate policies, programs, and initiatives geared toward creating a more conducive climate for Black men to succeed (Ledesma & Calderon, 2015). Throughout the focus group interviews, participants repeatedly mentioned that teams composed of staff, administrators, and faculty from across campus significantly improved their ability to implement ATD program initiatives and address district-wide challenges. The benefit of cross-functional teams was described as the ability to develop novel solutions to systemic challenges by bringing together diverse voices that

break-down knowledge siloes in the district and reinforce professional linkages that help the district more nimbly address barriers affecting Black men.

Although participants identified collaboration as a challenge that can impede ATD implementation, cross-functional teams were also recognized as a vital feature of ATD that advances institutional capacity for resolving barriers to success for Black men. The perspective among participants was that addressing opportunity gaps required a holistic and comprehensive approach that addressed the systemic issues residing at all levels of the district. Participants indicated that collaboration enhanced their ability to identify how challenges affecting Black men manifest throughout the district, allowing them to develop solutions that can systemically address the issue. Moreover, participants felt that the collaboration ATD facilitates is valuable because staff, administrators, and faculty can make connections they would not otherwise make, generating new linkages and relationships that are important for implementing district-wide organizational change efforts. By bringing together diverse voices from across the district, participants believed that new knowledge, skills, and perspectives were easier to leverage and apply toward solutions that can address barriers to student success in the district.

According to Bigley (2018), multidimensional organizations which encourage collaborative cultures exploit knowledge networks that bolster value-based solutions. Galbraith (2010) argues that performance in multidimensional organizations depends on the quality of collaboration which strengthens the ability to diffuse innovations throughout the organization more efficiently, helping to advance change necessary for achieving new strategic goals. In the literature, it is acknowledged that collaboration in a multidimensional organization can be challenging due to the decentralized structure; however, if the various structural and knowledge networks can be aligned, the organization can advance its capacity for change (Ackoff, 1977;

Goggin, 2000; Prajogo & McDermott, 2010). Findings indicate that ATD can facilitate structural and system alignment through cross-functional design teams, which cultivate collaborative networks that can better diagnose issues within the district and develop innovations for addressing them (Beekun & Click, 2001; Seldon & Sowa, 2004). Kezar (2018) asserts that leveraging collegial culture through collaborative mechanisms (such as ATD) is the best way to instigate deep-level change necessary for organizational change in the higher-education context.

The congruence model suggests that cross-functional teams are an important component of organizational design that improved the capacity for change and innovation to unfold (Nadler & Tushman, 1980; Sabir, 2018). According to Nadler and Tushman (1986), cross-functional teams or committees such as ATD serve as formal linking mechanisms that "bring people together from diverse areas of the organization to work on common opportunities or problems" (p. 83). These formal linking mechanisms are organizational arrangements that bridge connections, foster relationships, and provide structures that spur creativity and problem-solving by leveraging the diverse knowledge and skills across an organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1986; Sadir, 2018). Cross-functional teams can instigate knowledge sharing and idea generation that help formulate innovations that holistically address the challenges in the organization's internal and external environment (Nadler & Tushman. 1989). Scholars of organizational congruence theory hypothesize that formal gathering spaces such as ATD design team meetings provide opportunities for individuals from multiple disciplines to leverage collective knowledge toward the development of change innovations that address the complexities that exist in organizational that contain many different dimensions (Galbraith, 2010; Nadler & Tushman, 1980; Prajogo & MacDermott, 2010).

Harris and Wood (2016) contend that ATD bolsters institutional capacity to address Black male opportunity gaps because it assembles internal validating agents in spaces where they can collectively derive solutions to systemic barriers and institutional racism. Internal validating agents are staff, faculty, and administration that interact daily with students and have a direct influence on their academic and social experience in a community college setting and, as such, have better insight into their specific needs and demands (Harris & Wood, 2013; Harris & Wood, 2016). Thus, when internal validating agents collaborate they have a better chance of changing the institutional domain to be more conducive to Black men's needs because they understand how the various dimensions of the institution impact their student success, sense of belonging, and ability to thrive (Harris & Wood, 2016). Participant E provided evidence that diverse cross-functional teams can help the district generate solutions that help Black men stating:

> The structure really helps us with changes because there's the opportunities for multiple voices at the table, which allows a diverse perspective, from a lot of different constituencies around the institution. And that can make us more nimble, because we can make a decision quickly because we can get the right people around the table…you have all those voices and all of those voices bring really good ideas to the table around organization. And change and making a better institution on behalf of students.

From a CRT perspective, the only way that institutional racism can be dismantled in higher education is if staff, faculty, and administration have collaborative dialogue and praxis about the issues affecting systematically nondominant students (Amiot et al., 2020; Hiraldo, 2019; Ledesma & Calderon, 2015). This discourse can build capacity in higher education institutions for understanding how systems and structures perpetuate Whiteness and identify how change can

improve the culture and climate for Black men, reducing opportunity gaps and advancing student success outcomes (Hiraldo, 2019).

While cross-functional teams were viewed as an important component of institutional capacity building to address racial equity by participants, the reality of their advantage may be overstated in a PWI. A critique of the finding underscores that participant demographic characteristics could present a bias; participants in this study who reported race each identified as White. According to Maznevski and Chul (2018), racial heterogeneity on a team can cause tension and conflict because they must navigate different cultural norms, beliefs, and expectations which can impact inclusion, cohesion, and identity. Gusa (2010) argues that the White presence and privilege in PWI can make cross-functional team collaboration difficult because the knowledge, experiences, and skills of staff, faculty, and administrators are dismissed and rejected in favor of White behavior and beliefs. Patton et al. (2007) contend that in a PWI, a paradigm exists where decision-making favors rationality and scientific methods which disallows contribution from different worldviews, epistemologies, ideas, and practices. Even PWI with the best intentions of advancing racial equity through programs such as ATD must acknowledge that their climate may present barriers to effective collaboration due to a negative, hostile, and chilly environment for staff, faculty, and administrators of color (Fasching-Varner, 2009; Killough et al., 2017; Patton et al., 2007). Thus, while participants may feel that cross-functional teams are an instrument of capacity building to address racial equity, their colleagues of color may feel otherwise and perhaps are less likely to become involved in ATD work.

Diverse cross-functional teams are not only instruments for capacity building to address racial inequity as this study suggests, literature on team research contends that they bolster performance by promoting creativity and innovation (Bellman & Ryan, 2009; Johnson &

Johnson, 2017; Mazevski & Chul, 2018). Because of the evidence that diverse cross-functional teams benefit organizations, it is advantageous for the community partner to develop practices and policies that foster inclusive collaboration and diminish White presence, property, and privilege (Patton et al., 2007). According to Fasching-Verner (2009), inclusive teams are not merely a function of its composition but a product of leadership epistemologies. Thus, the diversity of high-ranking members who guide cross-functional teams in a PWI is a significant factor in creating a climate where the knowledge, experiences, and skills of people of color are valued commensurately with those of their White colleagues (Fasching-Verner, 2013; Gusa, 2010; Killough et al., 2017). Moreover, literature on PWI argue that capacity for racial equity is bolstered when individuals are engaged in both the dialogue and practice for social justice (Killough et al., 2017; Welton et al., 2018). According to Gusa (2010), social justice work in PWI can easily become routine and overshadowed by the White institutional presence if those conducting the work are also not directly engaged in racial equity discourse. Engagement in discourse can help establish counter-narratives that disrupt the White intellectual mindset and produce greater cultural relevancy amongst staff, faculty, and administrators (Wingfield & Alston, Wolf & Freeman, 2013). Village time is a current mechanism that the district has in place for racial dialogue to occur between students, staff, Faculty, and administrators. However, this is currently an option but could be made a requirement for individuals working on ATD projects related to racial equity.

Strengths and Limitations

The study had several strengths. First, the researchers conducted a case study on organizational change in a complex higher-education institution. This case study approach provided an opportunity for in-depth analysis of a phenomenon in a specific context providing

robust findings that can be used for practice and policy. Second, the utilization of a qualitative design for the study allowed researchers the flexibility to adjust the methodology to accommodate logistical and conceptual changes. Third, the researchers employed a robust and iterative approach to data analysis which helped to surface key insights and ideas from the focus group data about the phenomenon of interest and contributed to well-grounded recommendations.

The study also had some limitations. A limitation that impacts the generalizability of the results was the small sample size. The target population was staff, administrators, and faculty involved in ATD implementation, which included over one hundred individuals from across the district. The participant sample was a small fraction of those ATD members and volunteers, which limits the applicability of findings and recommendations outside the context of this study. Participant demographic characteristics were another limitation of the study. Demographic information collected from the participants who reported race identified as White and women. Because the research is being viewed through a predominately White lens, there is a potential for the lack of cultural relevance which can result in the misidentification of the issues, challenges, and barriers affecting Black men in the district. This lack of multiple perspectives presented potential for biases which could have resulted in fewer topics being explored or discussed. Additionally, recommendations may be more beneficial to the predominantly white institution rather than the Black men. Another limitation was that secondary data was not collected as the researchers intended in the methodology. Because the researchers were unable to collect secondary, the findings were not corroborated through data triangualation techniques.

Implications of the Study

Implications of the study contribute to an understanding of how organizational change transpires in a multidimensional community college district. Specific implications discussed in this section are: (a) prioritization of raising awareness of the issues affecting Black men; (b) utilizing both centralized and de-centralized change efforts; and (c) the need for more research about the impact of transformative and incremental change on equity and social justice. The value of these implications may help institutions build capacity for organizational change initiatives for the purposes of improving outcomes for systemically nondominant students.

An implication of the study is that efforts to raise awareness of issues affecting Black men should be prioritized by the district to generate capacity for addressing opportunity gaps. Participants felt that heightened awareness produced greater institutional intentionality around centering Black men's needs which effected momentum for the implementation of ATD programs and initiatives in the district. Study findings indicate that individual level changes, such as elevated awareness of inequities and injustices, have a significant impact on an institution's capacity to sustain transformational change intended to produce greater equity and equality in a higher-education context. Scholars of CRT, support this finding by suggesting that consciousness raising is especially important in PWI such as the community college district that have historical legacies of racist structures, policies, and mindsets (Dixon & Anderson, 2018; Ledesma & Calderon, 2015; Patton, 2016). Miller et al. (2020) argue that counter-narratives are a means to expose dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes, challenge harmful racist beliefs and attitudes, and uncover details about the educational experiences of people of color. Counter-narratives can prompt reflection and praxis that can result in emancipatory insights that may inspire action and advocacy on the part of faculty, staff, and administrators (Miller et al., 2020). In a study of administrative leaders in a U.S. middle school, Amoit et al. (2020) found that

counter-narratives were a use education framework that changed racial perspectives and social justice goals of school administrators and thus, has the potential to "disrupt the structural barriers and obstacles to student achievement" (p. 216). Aspects of ATD such as data reporting and Village Time are reported to enhance collective consciousness about the challenges affecting systematically nondominant students in the district which can improve dedication and commitment to equity and social justice. These elements plus additional opportunities for reflection, praxis, and learning have the potential to help the district build institutional capacity to address opportunity gaps affecting Black men.

A second implication of the study is that centralized and de-centralized change efforts should be utilized by the community college district to scale change for addressing opportunity gaps for Black men. Participants mentioned that change efforts controlled by the central leadership team (i.e., Chancellor, Board, Executive Team) had mixed results with some initiatives becoming part of the institutional strategy while others dissipated shortly after launch. Centralized change initiatives were described as beneficial yet become bogged down by hierarchy and bureaucracy while de-centralized change (change occurring at the divisional levels) was sometimes more effective at producing the change necessary to improve the structure, culture, and climate for systematically non-dominate students. These findings are commensurate with the organizational congruence theory notion that change requires both centralized formal arrangements that provide structured authority and decision0making as well as power distributed to the divisions to act as change agents because they are positioned closest to the issue and understand best how to resolve it (Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Sabir, 2018; Tushman & Nadler, 1986). According to Tushman and Nadler (1986), top-down organizational change can be challenging to sustain because an institutions structures and systems are built to

only allow innovation which it is compatible with the norms, behaviors, and patterns already established by past leadership. As such, centralized change can occasionally recreate existing formal arrangements disguised as new innovations but only reinforce prevailing structures and cultures (Nadler & Tushman, 1986). From a CRT perspective, centralized change can be less effective at improving opportunity gaps for systematically non-dominate students because it reinforces the value of Whiteness, limiting diversity, equity, and inclusion to preserve dominant cultural power (Dixxson & Anderson, 2018; Ledesma & Calderon, 2015). Effective change for Black men can be achieved; however, when decision-making power is granted to individuals who are directly connected to students and who understand their needs and demands (Dixxson & Anderson, 2018; Nadler & Tushman, 1986; Pollack & Zirkel, 2013; Tushman & Nadler, 1989).

A third implication of the study is that more research of organizational change for equity and social justice is needed in the field. According to scholars of CRT, transformative change is considered necessary for dismantling dominate cultural norms in the higher-education context (Amiot et al., 2020; Awbrey, 2005; Hoover & Harder, 2015; Kezar, 2018). Amoit et al. (2020) argues that only transformative change in higher education can unravel the Whiteness as property mindset which has established a "culture and climate that has a deleterious impact on the students and schools in terms an acceptance of the normalization of failure of students of color" (p. 78). Incremental change efforts are regarded as surface-level efforts that only maintain existing racial and cultural dynamics and thus, should be de-prioritized by change agents in higher-education (Amiot et al., 2020; Kezar, 2018; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). Themes that emerged from the focus group interviews, however, indicate that participants have a different perspective on this issue.

District-wide change efforts that were intended to transform structure and culture were viewed as having a shallow effect while smaller, incremental change efforts instigated by divisions and teams were more effective at producing a positive impact on targeted student populations. In a multidimensional organizational context, transformative change can be difficult to achieve because integrating innovation at all different levels of the organization is challenging and are commonly meet with resistance, slowing change efforts and affecting their sustainability (Galbraith, 2010; Schein, 2010). Without constant attention and cultivation, transformative change efforts in complex organizations like a multi-dimensional community college district are more likely to experience resistance that interrupts momentum toward realization (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Given the contrasting findings between this study and the literature on CRT and organizational change, more investigation about the impact of transformative and incremental on equity in organizations is warranted.

Recommendations for Practice

Integrate ATD into the Formal Structure of the District

Daft (2016) contends that organizations sustain change when innovation activities operate efficiently. When innovation is implemented without the proper structural boundaries, organizational inertia can emerge, which creates inefficiencies that hinder the achievement of intended outcomes (Bstieler, 2005; Magnusson et al., 2009). The community college district positions ATD as a change vehicle used to alter its structure and culture to advance equity, social justice, and anti-racism. However, participants indicated that a lack of standardization disrupts efficiency because decision-making is unclear, communication is challenging, causes delayed deadlines, and low morale. To improve change efficiency and sustainability, it is recommended that the district operationalize ATD by configuring it into its formal structure. A review of the

district organizational chart outlining the leadership hierarchy as well as the academic and functional divisions show ATD is currently not listed as a formal division. Formalization can proceed similarly to how corporations integrate research and development (R&D) processes into the organizational design. R&D provides a system for managing uncertainty and change innovations initiated in the organizational design, acting as a mechanism for mitigating disruptions to production and advancing efficiency overall (Brun, 2018). The district can structure ATD in various ways, purposefully arranging its configuration to help achieve its overall goals, similar to how R&D units are sometimes structured centrally to bolster innovation efficiency (Chandrasekaran et al., 2015). For example, R&D can be centralized (one department is responsible for innovation) or decentralized (dispersed innovation across the organization) depending upon how the district would like to structure ATD (Daft, 2016). DeSanctis et al. (2002) argue that the way R&D is structured is paramount because the "potential payoffs from organizing R&D effectively are enormous and the costs of ineffective organization structures extremely high" (p. 55). Formalizing ATD in the district's organizational design can align innovation tasks, planning, and implementation, contributing to the organizational congruency needed to sustain change efforts (Colombo, 2017; Daft, 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Aligning ATD into the district's structure also means clarifying leadership, roles, and responsibilities while formalizing communication strategies vertically and horizontally. Daft (2016) states that vertical information systems include "periodic reports, written information, and computer-based communications," and those information systems, in general, make communication up and down hierarchies more efficient. Standard protocols will also help align strategy and communication within the structure.

According to CRT scholars, achieving equity and equality in higher-education is not only about results, but it is also about the process by which it is achieved (Su, 2007). Thus, the process used by the district to achieve equity and social justice must be purposeful, inclusive, include, and designed for sustainability to achieve the intended impact (Draft, 2016; Schein, 2010; Su, 2007). A formal ATD division has the potential to provide a framework that can effectively decenter Whiteness in the change process, provide clarity about roles and responsibilities related to organizational change, and synchronize the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the district to be in coordination with each other (Daft, 2016; Jones & Squire, 2018; Su, 2007; Squire et al., 2018). According to Welton et al. (2018) a well-defined system for change can improve the district's ability to plan anti-racist actions and build the necessary capacity to achieve the desired results/racial equity. As such, a formalized ATD division that is dedicated to organizational change can advance the district's ability to institutionalize anti-racism, which can help make progress toward improving opportunity gaps for Black men.

A centralized division dedicated to ATD can also improve organizational change implementation in a multidimensional organization. According to the congruence model of organizational design, a centralized office can serve as an important linking mechanism helping to align the various dimensions within an organization to be in alignment with new strategic directions (Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Tushman & Nadler, 1986; Sabir, 2018). Ackoff (1977) argues that linking the various elements of a multidimensional organizational to new strategic directions is made more efficient when activity units (or divisions) such as R&D are given the exclusive control of specific functions so that they can then determine the best way to distribute throughout the rest of the organization. Scholars of multidimensional organizations assert that this type of centralization is helpful when implementing new strategic directions across

geographically dispersed business units because they can ensure that uptake within the specified parameters defined by leadership (Ackoff, 1977; Galbraith, 2010; Goggin, 2000; Prajogo & McDermott, 2010). When divisions in a multidimensional organization are left with the responsibility of implementing organizational change without oversight from an accountable body in the organization, different locations can formulate different manifestations of the intended change, leading to misalignment across the various dimensions of the organization and resulting in change failure (Daft, 2016; Nasrallah & Qawasmeh, 2009; Schein, 2010). Moreover, because multidimensional organizations have an abundance of sub-cultures, there greater potential for resistance to emerge because new strategic directions may disrupt norms, beliefs, and modes of working, leading to staff insecurity about their roles and ability to perform their work successfully (Prajogo & McDermott, 2010; Schein, 2010). A centralized R&D office can intervene when there is resistance and help those recalcitrant divisions or individuals to move in alignment with the intended change efforts (Daft, 2016; Prajogo & McDermott, 2010).

In PWI like the community college district, a centralized organizational change division can be a vehicle to ensure change supports racial equity (Patton, 2016; Watt et al., 2021; Welton et al., 2018). According to Welton et al. (2018), advancing racial equity in PWI requires third-order change which is defined as change in "core normative beliefs and ideologies about race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship (dis)ability and other intersecting inequalities within educational institutions" (p. 11). Liu (2017) argues that this type of transformative change is difficult to achieve in PWI because racial equity movements are typically watered-down to make them more palatable to the White dominant culture which leaves unequal structures intact. As such, change efforts focused on racial equity will commonly fade away if leadership does not take direct action to get buy-in, guide the change efforts, and communicate their vision (Liu,

2017; Pak et al., 2018; Welton et al., 2018). In a PWI, racial equity must be an intentional process guided by appropriate leadership that can oversee the distribution across the organization and that it is integrated into the organizations structure, culture, and locations (Griffith, 2007; Stewart, 2018; Wingfield, 2014; Wolfe & Freeman, 2013). A key piece of this centralized effort is identifying change agents across the organization, including different locations, who can champion the anti-racist change and collaborate with other to increase the chances that the intended change efforts will take root in the organization (Liu, 2007; Welton et al., 2018).

Clarifying Decision-Making Roles and Processes

Findings from the study reveal that organizational leaders are inconsistently communicating messages about the roles and processes involved in making decisions related to implementing change. Sub-themes included (a) lack of transparency and accountability, (b) inconsistent messages, and (c) increased opportunities for marginalized voices to be heard. Leaders should consider using inclusive communication practices that prioritize accountability to establish clarity within multiple decision-making processes occurring throughout the district. Effectively communicating change-related priorities diffuses information throughout the organization's structure by creating value to completing strategic goals and achieving equitable outcomes (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009; Beladi & Chakrabarti, 2019).

Role clarity improves leaders' ability to clearly communicate a strategic vision while ensuring members of the organization understand what the processes is for achieving success outcomes. Research suggests that organizations can benefit from a comprehensive view of the change process by integrating digital technology throughout each stage of change implementation (Ewenstein et al., 2015; Kanitz & Gonzalez, 2021). As the community partner seeks to successfully implement ATD across the organization, it can develop clear and concise

policies surrounding the decision-making process. The organization should define roles and tasks in these processes at various steps and clarify what will be needed to ensure that each step occurs successfully. Finally, the organization should consider using tools that monitor change initiative activities to assist leaders to make more informed decisions.

Using Digital Tools to Track Decisions, Roles, and Processes

Findings from the study indicate that participants responded favorably to the topic of using digital tools that clearly define role assignments, track progress of change management activities, goals, and archive processes used during change implementation. Digital technology has altered how organizations make decisions, assign roles, and track the processes involved in change management activities. The organization under study is a multidimensional organization which values a collaborative to their work and relies on data that is open and available to everyone in the organization (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009). It was mentioned that the organization is willing to use data to make informed decisions and regularly seeks to make data accessible. The change process should be viewed in a similar way. A widely accessible digital platform that allows everyone in the organization to view where initiatives are currently at in the change process will be helpful in moving initiatives to successful implementation. Organization leaders should manage change activities by selecting tools and resources based on their adaptability, personalization, and openness to influence or engage organization staff involved in change implementation activities (Kanitz & Gonzalez, 2021). The community college district should consider continuously monitoring the experiences of staff involved in change implementation activities at the individual, team, and divisional levels. According to Amiot et al. (2020) leadership should consider conducting a reflective racial audit that is personal, educational, societal, and ongoing. During this audit, the organization could ask questions of

itself such as: "Do we frequently engage in informal and formal conversations about race with our staff? Do we conduct equity audits that include disaggregation of race data and establish concrete measurable of progress? And, while we acknowledge positive results from incremental racial equity work, do we ensure that it is not the only way for successful enduring change to occur...?" (Amiot et al. (2020). Thus, a digital track tool can be used by the district to ensure that the change is not just benefitting white employees. Ewenstein et al. (2015) argued that leaders could improve change management through the tracking of progress of activities and staff behavior related to change implementation. Kanitz and Gonzalez (2021) suggested that organizations could benefit from leaders who can analyze staff attitudes toward change initiatives, assess staff needs, gain insight about change initiative obstacles experienced by staff, and alter change initiative processes. The leaders of the organization should consider the use of innovative digital change management tools that monitor the perception of change implementation activities across the organization.

Leaders who implement change in multidimensional organizations should consider how new strategies are affected by where organizational resources are located and how these resources are prioritized (Ryttberg and Geschwind, 2021). The case study addressed complex problems requiring evidence-based decision-making across multiple dimensions. Leaders tasked with making decisions about change implementation across multidimensional organizations should adopt an adaptive-collaborative approach toward decision-making to create a method that supports shifts in values associated with leading actionable organizational change (Neely et al., 2021). Neely et al. (2021) suggests using a multiple-loop organizational learning approach to provide assistance and institutional support in a devolved governance structure where decisions are made in cross-sectional collaborative partnerships tasked with developing inclusive,

transformative projects through implementing evidence-based policies and practices. By identifying leaders within smaller, incremental change processes and clarifying roles within various stages of the decision-making process, the community college district increases the likelihood of successfully implementing change initiatives across the district.

Implications for the study extend research on implementing structural changes across multiple dimensions within matrixed higher education organizations (Strikwerda & Stoelhorst, 2009; Daft, 2016; Beladi & Chakrabarti, 2019). The organization should address the loss of knowledge, confusion, and frustration that comes along with a high turnover rate as well as the inconsistency of the effectiveness of the change effort outcomes across the organization using a tracking system for change initiatives. As Kotter (2013a) mentioned, most change initiatives fail because leaders do not think holistically about the change process. Kotter (2013b) stated that change is most successful when the process occurs in a series of well-planned sequential steps. A record-keeping and tracking system for change initiatives will help the organization plan out changes from concept to implementation.

Leadership practitioners should support the creation of well-defined roles and processes associated with change activities to increase equity and elevate diverse voices. Strategic challenges faced by leaders are how to successfully challenge the status quo; and while resources may be limited, opportunities for change can occur at any time because of dynamic environmental changes. Ganz (2010) viewed strategy as a hypothesis of the expected outcome based on the resources at hand used under the current, predictable conditions. Ganz (2010) described strategic capacity in terms of the intersection of salient knowledge, motivation and learning processes. Developing effective strategies enables leaders to effectively communicate activities that impact different organizational areas. Lane et al., (2013) discussed cultural

contingencies associated with the change process in terms of stage or phase model (Osland, 2018). Lane et al. (2013)observed the differences within the stages or phases which included understanding the organization's readiness to change, identifying the organization's desired state or goal, understanding the target group's ability and motivation to change, understanding the implementation plan, and acknowledging the need for reinforcement (Osland, 2018). Additionally, Lane et al. (2013) acknowledged a variety of terms and phrases from prior literature used to describe change processes and activities and connects them to cultural contingencies that should be considered by change management leaders. As such, change agents who seek to implement the recommendations featured within this study should consider the cultural contingencies offered by Lane and colleagues related to the ability and willingness to work in teams, communication styles, trust, and multicultural team process (Osland, 2018). The organization under study engages and supports its employees through promoting an equitable, diverse environment where work activities supported by shared governance occurs (Community College District, 2022b).

Improving Transparency and Communication to Increase Equity in Service

Findings from the study indicated that using cross-functional teams improves transparency between organization leaders and staff. Sub-themes from the findings associated with effectively communicating change management activities included (a) stronger collaboration across the district, (b) greater diversity of voices, (c) decision paralysis, and (d) role and authority confusion. The organization should consider creating more opportunities for creating cross-collaborative teams throughout the district. Creating opportunities to form collaborative teams encourages leaders to align organization values with increasing equitable outcomes for diverse groups. Implications for the study advances research in implementing

innovative structural changes within community colleges that seek to improve equitable access to resources for historically marginalized student groups (Levin, 1998; Malm, 2008). Implications for the study extend research for practitioners who seek to implement equitable change outcomes for multidimensional organizations by connecting structural changes to the organization's mission and linking these changes to strategic goals that provide contextual knowledge for the organization's staff (Van Wagoner, 2004; Schein & Schein, 2018).

Considering the two specific themes of improving communication effectiveness and developing equitable cross-functional teams, three obstacles associated with hierarchical organization structures like the organization under study often lead to unintended consequences in the absence of humble leadership (Schein & Schein, 2018). Schein and Schein (2018) observed three obstacles that hierarchical organizations face with effectively communicating: managerial cultures resisting efforts initiated by newcomers, leaders undermining their efforts, and new CEOs overturning effective improvement programs. Organizations have different parts and goals, which creates different incentives for managers throughout the hierarchy, identifying and developing future managers by incentivizing current managers to assist in new leadership development (Schein & Schein, 2018). Additionally, creating cross-functional teams tasked with implementing inclusive programs cannot occur without an equitable conversation, and equitable conversations cannot occur if teams cannot agree on the definition of terms (Winters, 2020). The community partner organization seeks to decenter Whiteness and move towards an antiracist status while implementing change designed to improve the academic experiences of Black men. The community college district should begin having equitable conversations on how to achieve these goals. The community college district should develop clear definitions of equity-related terms, recognize positions of power in conversations, establish a deep understanding of positions

of power, and explore creating an equitable environment for inclusive conversation (Winters, 2020).

Leaders should build transparent relationships when implementing change because relationships based on increasing equity should be rooted in transparency. Leadership practitioners who initiate change with a focus on achieving equitable outcomes should form interpersonal relationships that link individuals, networks, and organizations through voluntary commitments rather than formal structures (Ganz, 2010). Ganz (2010) defined these relationship-based commitments as "exchanges of interests and resources between parties" where an exchange indicated the beginning of a relationship only when a mutual commitment to share resources has been agreed upon (p. 531). This model encourages growth through recruiting others who accept the responsibility of growing the organization's capacity to train other leaders "not only at the top" (Ganz, 2010). Hammond (2013) suggested an appreciative approach that identifies what works in an organization "because the statements are grounded in real experience and history where people know how to repeat their success" (p. 6). The community partner values equity, diversity, and inclusion; one of its core themes and objectives is the promotion of "an equitable, diverse environment for teaching, learning, and working, with collaborative decision-making and mutual respect" through fostering positive opportunities, engaging and supporting a model of shared governance, and engaging in equitable, inclusive experiences (Community College District, 2022b). Leaders should develop personal narratives that describe why the change is important and serves as a call to action throughout the organization. Ganz (2010) saw the telling of one's story to communicate identity where choices and values are expressions of lived experiences. Leaders make abstract terms like equity and service tangible by sharing personal experiences leading to increased transparency in communicating the need for

change through leading by example. Ganz (2010) suggested that structuring organizations for change required the development of campaigns, or a plan that strategically organized change activity in a motivational way by targeting and timing through facilitating specific objectives and unfolding a structured narrative.

Strategically Think about Collaboration

According to Daft (2016), managers who oversee collaborative efforts must learn new executive skills. An example that Daft gives is an example of a crisis in an organization that was not appropriately managed due to an inability of managers to collaborate and communicate effectively across organizational boundaries. This inability to collaborate played a significant role in the disaster that occurred. On the other end of the spectrum, Lozano et al. (2021) discussed how collaboration, when done correctly, tends to provide more benefits than challenges for organizations. However, Lozano et al. discussed some cases in which organizations achieve less from collaboration than expected.

The community college district presents an example of an organization that strives for collaboration and inclusion. This is not necessarily a weakness. As Lozano et al. (2021) state, collaboration is usually more beneficial than detrimental to an organization's productivity. There is a point; however, at which collaboration becomes counterproductive when a decision can never be reached, and the team cannot move from innovation to implementation. Lozano et al. stated that the best situation for organizations when it comes to collaboration is for the organization to reach a point where there are more benefits to collaboration than there are challenges. This is considered by Lozano et al. to be "optimal collaboration." If the organization focuses excessively on collaboration, the number of challenges increases, and there begin to be significant limitations to overall growth.

The community college district and its leaders can motivate its employees to collaborate around a shared goal and vision. This is no small feat; however, too much of a good thing can lead to challenges. When building the shared goal and vision, it is important that leaders recognize the shared "creative tension" that exists between the reality and the vision (Senge, 1994). Holding space for a collective shared vision and goals to emerge instead of dictating or controlling the process is essential. Leadership must convey that "the institution is larger than one person so that people are not following a leader but rather are following the values and principles of the institution" (Kanter, 2010). Leaders need to remember that reaching consensus "does not require unanimity since members may still disagree with the final result" yet they remain willing to work towards a common purpose, shared vision, and goals (Parker, 2006, p. 667). The researchers recommend scaling down collaboration and focusing on reaching consensus so that teams can move forward in bringing their creative and innovative ideas to life.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study had many implications for organizational change in a multidimensional community college district, the study offers three areas for future research to explore. This study demonstrates that little is known about how multidimensional higher-education institutions operate and address organizational change. Only a handful of literature about multidimensional organizations exists, with even fewer about multidimensional colleges and universities. This dearth of scholarship underscores the concept that multidimensional higher-education institutions are an emerging construct worthy of future research and investigation. The second opportunity for future research is an in-depth examination of the specific structural and cultural changes higher-education institutions can make that would improve the climate for Black men. While this study provides recommendations that can

improve the implementation of organizational change, further investigation into the specific types of changes that can bolster equity and social justice in colleges and universities are needed to reduce opportunity gaps for Black men. Third, more research about organizational change procedures related to Achieving the Dream programs and initiatives is needed to further practical knowledge about the best ways this program can be integrated into the strategy and organization of community colleges around the country. The researchers suggest using a mixed methods design to quantify the change practices that are most effective for driving ATD work plus a qualitative element that can surface hidden ideas, concepts, and notions about effective change methods.

Summary

The purpose of this case study was to examine the experiences of faculty, staff, and administrators involved in organizational change efforts in a multidimensional community college district. The research focused on analyzing how the district's various dimensions (cultural, structural, spatial) contributed to their ability to build capacity for addressing opportunity gaps for Black men. ATD was used as a case study example to investigate how the multidimensional context affects organizational change implementation related to the advancement of systemically nondominant student groups. A qualitative design was utilized to surface thick descriptions of the challenges and successes of implementing ATD initiatives and programs and how these contributed to the district's capacity for addressing improving equity and social justice for various student populations. The study participants included twelve staff, faculty, and administrators who participated in ATD and attended semi-structured focus groups. Analysis of focus group data was an iterative and inductive process involving independent and group analysis to surface themes applicable to each research question.

The iterative analysis produced several themes that help answer the research questions of this study. Research question 1 examined how the organizational structure of the multidimensional community college district impacts implementation of ATD initiatives and programs. The themes that emerged from the analysis that provides insight into the question include: (a) high turnover and attrition, (b) complexity of change, (c) effective communication, and (d) cross-functional teams. Research question 2 investigated the individual, cultural, and structural changes related to ATD implementation that have improved institutional capacity to address African American male students' opportunity gaps. Analysis of focus group data surfaced three overarching themes that offer insight into this question, including (a) heightened awareness of opportunity gaps, (b) shared vision, and (c) cross-functional teams. The implications of these findings reveal various tensions that leaders must navigate when implementing organizational change in a multidimensional higher-education institution. Tensions must be considered, including the clashing between transformative and incremental change, the conflict between census and action, and friction between centralized and decentralized structures. While this study provides insight into how organizational change transpires in a multidimensional community college district, the small sample and lack of gender and racial diversity limit the generalizations and utility of recommendation in other higher-education contexts. For this reason, more research is needed to develop the concept of a multidimensional organization and explore how organizational change can advance the capacity to improve opportunity gaps for Black men.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Protocol for Leaders and Staff who work in the Community College District

Interview Protocol: Leader and Staff Focus Group

Time of Focus Group:

Date:

Location:

Facilitator:

Cofacilitator:

Observer:

Introduction:

Thank you for joining us today. We are [researcher names], doctoral students in the Education and Organizational Learning and Leadership (EOLL) program at Seattle University. Our research project is focused on understanding how a multidimensional community college district influences organizational change efforts to improve student success outcomes for systematically marginalized students. We define organizational change as a process that encompasses four distinct areas: organization culture; ethical values; innovation and change; decision-making processes; and conflict, power, and politics. We are particularly interested in learning about your experiences related to implementation of ATD programs and initiatives. We will ask you questions about the district, your experience with change implementation, and your perspective on the success and challenges of ATD implementation. We are looking for your personal experience and some specific examples of what you have experienced.

Questions:

1. How long have you worked here?

2. Where do you work in the district/what is your location in the district?

3. Have you been part of organizational change in the past?

4. What is your role in the district?

5. In your experience, is there good communication between leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes?

   a. Is the information provided about organizational change clear and does it reach all departments/units in the organization?

6. In your experience, departments/units across the district are sufficiently consulted about change efforts and initiatives?

   a. Is sufficient time given for consultation with departments/units?

   b. Are there opportunities for personal input and involvement in the implementation process?

7. In your experience, does leadership pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that changes can have on their staff members?

   a. Do leaders help departments, units, and/or staff find solutions to challenges that emerge during a change process?

   b. Do leaders create a positive vision for what the change will mean to the future of the organization?

8. In your experience, is organizational change consistently implemented in all departments/units?

   a. Are there strong rivalries / conflicts between colleagues in different campuses, branches, and departments/units?

9. In your experience, is change viewed as positive by leaders and staff across the district?

    a. Have you ever experienced reluctance to accommodate and incorporate changes

        in your work?

    b. Do change ever improve and simplify the work of faculty, staff, and

        administrators?

10. In your experience, do change projects that are supposed to solve problems in the district

    end up not doing much good?

Appendix B

Original Scales in the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes,

and Readiness

Dimension: Process of change / Quality of change / Communication

- I am regularly informed on how the change is going.

- There is good communication between project leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes.

- Information provided on change is clear.

- Information concerning the changes reaches us mostly as rumors

- We are sufficiently informed of the progress of change.

- The corporate management team keeps all departments informed about its decisions.

- Two-way communication between the corporate management team and the departments is very good.

- The corporate management team clearly explains the necessity of the change

Dimension: Participation

- Change is always discussed with all the people concerned

- Those who implement changes have no say in developing proposals

- Decisions concerning work are taken in consultation with the staff who are affected.

- My department's management team takes account of the staff's remarks.

- Departments are consulted about the change sufficiently.

- Staff members were consulted about the reasons for the change. I

- Front line staff and office workers can raise topics for discussion.

- Our department provides sufficient time for consultation.

- It is possible to talk about out-of-date regulations and ways of working.

- The way change is implemented leaves little room for personal input.

- Staff members are sufficiently involved in the implementation

Dimension: Attitude of top management toward change

- The corporate management team has a positive vision of the future.

- The corporate management team is actively involved with the changes.

- The corporate management team supports the change process unconditionally.

- Our department's senior managers pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that the changes could have for their staff members.

- Our department's senior managers coach us very well about implementing change.

- Our department's senior managers have trouble in adapting their leadership styles to the changes.

- My manager does not seem very keen to help me find a solution if I have a problem.

- If I experience any problems, I can always turn to my manager for help

- My manager can place herself/himself in my position.

- My manager encourages me to do things that I have never done before.

Dimension: Climate of change or internal context / Trust in leadership

- The corporate management team consistently implements its policies in all departments.

- The corporate management team fulfils its promises.

- If I make mistakes, my manager holds them against me.

Dimension: Politicking

- In our organization, power games between the departments play an important role

- Staff members are sometimes taken advantage of in our organization.

- In our organization, favoritism is an important way to Achieving something

Dimension: Cohesion

- It is difficult to ask for help from my colleagues.

- There is a strong rivalry between colleagues in my department

- I doubt whether all my colleagues are sufficiently competent

- have confidence in my colleagues.

- My department is very open

Dimension: Readiness for change / emotional readiness for change

- I have a good feeling about the change project.

- I experience the change as a positive process.

- I find the change refreshing.

- I am somewhat resistant to change.

- I am quite reluctant to accommodate and incorporate changes into my work

Dimension: Cognitive readiness for change

- I think that most changes will have a negative effect on the clients we serve

- Plans for future improvement will not come too much

- Most change projects that are supposed to solve problems around here will not do much

  good

- The change will improve work

- The change will simplify work

- I want to devote myself to the process of change.

Dimension: Intentional readiness for change

- I am willing to make a significant contribution to the change

- I am willing to put energy into the process of change.

Appendix C

Conversion of Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness Survey Questions to Qualitative Survey Semi Structured Interview Question

Scale Dimensions and Definitions	Original Scales in the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness	Adapted Qualitative Focus Group Interview Questions
Process and communication of change: Trustworthy communication by senior management in general about the change	There is good communication between project leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes. Information provided on change is clear. Information concerning the changes reaches us mostly as rumors We are sufficiently informed of the progress of change.	In your experience, is there good communication between leaders and staff members about the organization's policy toward changes? Is the information provided about organizational change clear and does it reach all departments/units in the organization?
Participation: The extent to which organizational members participate in the change process	Change is always discussed with all people concerned Decisions concerning work are taken in consultation with the staff who are affected. Departments are consulted about the change sufficiently. Staff members were consulted about the reasons for change.	In your experience, departments/units across the district are sufficiently consulted about change efforts and initiatives? Is sufficient time given for consultation with departments/units? Are their opportunities for personal input and involvement in the implementation process?

Scale Dimensions and Definitions	Original Scales in the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness	Adapted Qualitative Focus Group Interview Questions
	Front line staff and office workers can raise topics for discussion.	
	It is possible to talk about outmoded regulations and ways of working.	
	The way change is implemented leaves little room for personal input.	
Attitude of top management toward change: The active involvement and support of top management during the change process	Our department's senior managers pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that the changes could have for their staff members.	In your experience, does leadership pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that changes can have on their staff members?
	Corporate management team has a positive vision of the future.	Do leaders help departments, units, and/or staff find solutions to challenges that emerge during a change process?
	Our department's senior managers coach us very well about implementing change.	Do leaders create a positive vision for what the change will mean to the future of the organization?
	My manager does not seem very keen to help me find a solution if I have a problem.	
	If I experience any problems, I can always turn on my manager for help.	

Scale Dimensions and Definitions	Original Scales in the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness	Adapted Qualitative Focus Group Interview Questions
	My manager encourages me to do things that I have never done before.	
Climate or internal context of change: Overall support provided by management for change process across the organization	Corporate management team consistently implements its policies in all departments.	In your experience, is organizational change consistently implemented in all departments/units?
Cohesion: The perception of togetherness or sharing in the organization and cooperation and trust in the competence of team members.	It is difficult to ask for help from my colleagues. There is a strong rivalry between colleagues in my department	Are their strong rivalries / conflicts between colleagues in different campuses, branches, and departments/units?
Emotional readiness for change: The effort and energy organizational members are willing to invest in the change process	I have a good feeling about the change project. I experience the change as a positive process. I find the change refreshing. I am somewhat resistant to change. I am quite reluctant to accommodate and incorporate changes into my work	In your experience, is change viewed as positive by leaders and staff across the district? Do you ever experience reluctance to accommodate and incorporate changes in their work?
Cognitive readiness for change: The beliefs and thoughts organizational members hold about the outcomes of change.	Plans for future improvement will not come too much.	In your experience, do change projects that are supposed to solve problems in the district end up not doing much good?

Scale Dimensions and Definitions	Original Scales in the Organizational Change Questionnaire-Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness	Adapted Qualitative Focus Group Interview Questions
	Most change projects that are supposed to solve problems around here will not do much good. The change will improve work. The change will simplify work.	Does change ever improve and simplify the work of faculty, staff, and administrators?