AN EXAMINATION OF THE BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP FOR FACULTY OF COLOR AT U.S. UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	The aim and purpose of this study is to understand why there is a dearth of faculty of color ascending to senior levels of leadership in higher education institutions, and to identify strategies to increase the representation of faculty of color in university senior administrative positions.
Background	There is a lack of faculty of color in senior level academic administrative position in the United States. Although there is clear evidence that faculty of color have not been promoted to senior level positions at the same rate as their White colleagues, besides racism there has been little evidence regarding the cause of such disparities. This is becoming an issue of increased importance as the student bodies of most U.S. higher educational institutions are becoming increasingly more inclusive of people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds.
Methodology	Qualitative interviews were used
Contribution	This study adds to the research and information made previously available regarding the status of non-White higher educational members in the U.S. by contributing insights from faculty of color who have encountered and are currently encountering forms of discrimination within various institutions. These additions include personal experiences and suggestions regarding the barriers to diversification and implications of the lack of diversity at higher educational institutions. Given the few diverse administrative or executive leaders in service today in high-

er education, these personal insights provide seldom-heard perspectives for both scholars and practitioners in the field of higher education.

Findings	Limited diversity among faculty at higher educational institutions correlates with persistent underrepresentation and difficulty in finding candidates for leadership positions who are diverse, highly experienced, and highly ranked. This lack of diversity among leaders has negative implications like reduced access to mentorship, scholarship, and other promotional and networking opportunities for other faculty of color. While it is true that representation of faculty of color at certain U.S. colleges and programs has shown slight improvements in the last decade, nationwide statistics still demonstrate the persistence of this issue. Participants perceived that the White *boys club* found to some extent in nearly all higher educational institutions, consistently offers greater recognition, attention, and support for those who most resemble the norm and creates an adverse environment for minorities. However, in these findings and interviews, certain solutions for breaking through such barriers are revealed, suggesting progress is possible and gaining momentum at institutions nationwide.
Recommendations for Practitioners	To recruit and sustain diverse members of the academic community, institutions should prioritize policies and procedures which allocate a fair share of responsibilities between faculty members and ensure equity in all forms of compensation. In addition, institutional leaders should foster a climate of mutual respect and understanding between members of the educational community to increase confidence of people of color and allow for fresh perspectives and creativity to flourish. Where policies for diversification exist but are not being applied, leaders have the responsibility to enforce and set the example for other members of the organization. Assimilation of diverse members occurs when leaders create an inclusive environment for various cultures and advocate for social and promotional opportunities for all members of the organization.
Recommendations for Researchers	Significant research remains on understanding barriers to the preparation of faculty of color for leadership in higher education. While this research has provided first-hand qualitative perspectives from faculties of color, additional quantitative study is necessary to understand what significant differences in underrepresentation exist by race and ethnicity. Further research is also needed on the compound effects of race and gender due to the historic underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. At the institutional and departmental level, the study validates the need to look at both the implicit and explicit enforcement of policies regarding diversity in the workplace.
Future Research	Higher education researchers may extend the findings of this study to explore how faculty of color have ascended to specific leadership roles within the academy such as department chair, academic dean, provost, and president.
Keywords	leadership development, higher education administration, faculty of color, glass ceiling, critical race theory

INTRODUCTION

According to the American Council of Education (2016) there are approximately 4,000 college or university presidents in the United States. Of those 4,000 only 13% identify as a part of a diverse racial ethnic population. These groups are particularly underrepresented in doctoral research institutions where their numbers decline by more than half. Scholars estimate that nearly 60% of current

presidents are 61 years of age or older. Many are expected to retire by 2025. Some scholars have suggested that this may be an opportunity to prepare more faculty of color for senior leadership within the academy. However, there has been a shortage of individuals with diverse backgrounds who have the traditional backgrounds or perceived experiences needed for upper level administrative leadership (i.e., chair, dean, provost positions). Jackson and O'Callaghan (2011) posit that it may be because of a glass ceiling effect, which they describe as occurring, "... when discrimination increases in severity with movement up the occupational hierarchy. As a result, inequality grows over the course of a person's career. It is also apparent when racial and gender inequality is observed after controlling for productivity-relevant factors" (p. 69).

In the past, higher education scholars have studied the various forms of discrimination that are affiliated with the glass ceiling effect including position, salary, promotion potential, and level of responsibility. This body of research assumes that faculty of color desire to serve in leadership roles in the academy beyond the professoriate. However, faculty are not trained to serve as higher education administrators and the rewards and motivations for these vocations are quite different. Therefore, it is critical to investigate the possibility that motivation to serve in upper level administrative leadership is a barrier for faculty of color. Another potential barrier is the mentorship and sponsorship for faculty of color. Many of the faculty that are chosen to serve as administrators were identified by other leaders and mentored into their roles (Freeman, 2011). So, it is possible that women and faculty of color are less likely to be targeted for these senior leadership roles due to limited access to mentorship. Currently, there is little formal training and career planning provided early in faculty members' careers to prepare them for a profession of administration and few may want to transition out of their faculty positions to serve as administrators. Therefore, we also seek to understand the role of leadership initiatives within universities in better preparing faculty members, particularly people of color, to take on senior administrative roles.

The focus of this paper is on people of color in the United States. The aim and purpose of this study is to understand why there is a dearth of faculty of color ascending to senior levels of leadership at U.S. higher education institutions, and to identify strategies to increase the representation of faculty of color in university senior administrative positions. To identify programs, policies, practices and procedures that will serve this purpose, our research questions for this study were: What are the organizational and individual barriers to people of color achieving senior leadership positions within U.S. colleges and universities? What are strategies to address the underrepresentation of faculty of color in the positions? To answer this research questions, we engaged in a qualitative research study to analyze the perspectives of current faculty of color regarding the barriers towards ascension into senior level positions. With an understanding of barriers and effective strategies that have worked for current leaders, we were able to develop practical recommendations to support the advancement of faculty of color within university leadership. Land-grant institutions have been chosen as our focal population because of their unique mission of providing access to high quality public education. Each state within the union has established such an institution within its territory.

Nationally, this issue is important because the numbers show diversity in academic leadership is significantly below that of the student body or general population. Myers (2016) found that students increasingly want faculty demographics to reflect and exceed the proportional racial and ethnic diversity of the areas they serve. Based on Myers' (2016) analysis of the 50 flagship state universities only 16% have greater faculty diversity when compared to student diversity. Myers went on to say:

> Since student bodies turn over every few years, while faculty tend to keep their jobs for decades, it's not surprising that progress on making faculty more diverse has been slow. Nevertheless, targeted efforts have shown what can happen when diversifying faculty becomes a priority. And with nonwhite Americans expected to become a majority within 30 years, pressure to remake faculty more like the nation will only increase. (para. 11)

Previously, literature has focused on identification and preparation of faculty of color for senior academic leadership positions (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2011). However, little research has been conducted to identify the barriers to faculty of color pursuing these roles. Identifying these barriers provides the first step towards being able to implement programmatic changes that can move towards increased ethnic diversity in university administration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The history of people of color in higher education mirrors the history of people of color groups, and other minorities, such as women, in American society. In other words, White males have dominated American higher education (Bledstein, 1976; Fass, 1989; Graham, 1978; Solomon, 1985). Consequently, the historical sources that apply include general discussions of the role of people of color in United States history (Patterson, 2001; Takaki, 1993).

A growing body of research in management science has challenged the assumption that White males are most effective in leadership roles. For instance, Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, and Woehr (2014) have shown that there is no substantial difference between male and female leadership effectiveness. Some research has even found that female leadership is significantly more effective than male leadership in business and education organizations, especially in middle-management positions (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Regarding leadership by people of color, a meta-analysis by Ospina and Foldy (2009) has shown there are mixed results on the leadership effectiveness of people of color, perhaps because existing scholarship on the issue often undervalues the experiences of leaders of color. Nevertheless, we know people of color are underrepresented in leadership positions and face a number of individual and organizational barrier that impede their ability to pursue and maintain leadership positions. The barriers we have broadly identified include biases against people of color, organizational factors such as lower levels of mentoring, double standards, lack of diversity climates, and individual factors such as low levels of motivation to lead.

BARRIERS

One barrier identified in the literature is breaking into and being accepted within the White *boys club*. Historically, White men held authoritative positions within the leadership programs offered in academia and were the decision makers regarding which students were admitted into the program, and which ones would be successful after the program (Mertz, 2009). Through networking, hiring, and promoting those who resembled themselves, these men created a system of power within these programs that perpetuated White male privilege (Mertz, 2009). Any attempt to break through this network required faculty of color to work twice as hard as their White colleagues while battling racial and ethnic bias along the way (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000).

In an organization where most employees are White, people of color who are leaders are less likely to be favorably perceived, evaluated, and supported by employees compared to their majority counterparts (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). According to social identity theory, people categorize themselves into in-groups and others into out-groups. Through intergroup comparisons, individuals regard their group as superior to other groups, which may lead to increased discrimination of out-group members (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Similarly, the cloning effect is a phenomenon in which people are inclined to reproduce themselves as nearly as they can, which is often embedded in the climate and culture of faculty and leadership search committees (Moody, 2012). For instance, if members of hiring committees are not diverse, they may lack knowledge in recruiting underrepresented faculty and resort to hiring those who share the similar backgrounds and characteristics of their own; thus, their judgement might not be fair in the search process (Gasman, 2016). Similarly, Moody (2012) found that "the longing to clone appears in the search process when committee members undervalue a candidate's educational credentials and

career trajectory simply because they are not the same as most of those on the evaluation committee" (p. 9). Such an effect "creates a social climate where the expected expression of identity looks like the traditional White man. Networks end up excluding people of color or women, leaving these identity groups unsupported socially and academically" (Conklin & Robbins-McNeish, 2006). The recruitment effort tends to exert "prejudice against racial minorities and/or lack of leadership commitment to minority recruitment" (Price et al., 2005, p. 567). Such limited recruitment culture can jeopardize the promotion of institutional diversity within higher education. "The lack of diversity on search committees as well as the impact of homophily, or the tendency to bond with similar others, can preclude serious consideration of diverse candidates" (Evans & Chun, 2017, para. 5). Diverse hiring practices are not always well implemented, and "numerical requirements for the proportions of candidates of color considered have not been set yet" (Zappa, 2014, para. 52).

Additionally, the current stereotypical expectations create an environment in which people of color report less mentoring, smaller social networks, and a double standard regarding tenure and promotion within academia (Stanley, 2006). Mentoring and social networks are effective means of providing advice and information about career development and mobility. However, faculty of color are less likely to reap the same level of benefits from mentoring and social networks (McDonald & Westphal, 2013; Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 1998). Underrepresented faculty lack mentors in the academe; consequently, they can find it difficult to connect with mentors that can help them to navigate institutional culture and demands of their departments and disciplines. Faculty of color face an environment that is not welcoming and lacking role-models or mentors (Price et al., 2005). Azziz (2015) stated it this way, "another important challenge to fostering a diverse faculty is the paucity of minority mentors-and more specifically role models-they can turn to and learn from" (para. 14). Not only do faculty of color find that institutions often lack the appropriate infrastructure for mentoring, these faculty may also not be provided with the opportunities that their White colleagues would receive because of limited access to the social capital and networks that a person needs to advance their career.

Minorities often find 'uninviting territory' as they begin their academic careers in some majority setting. There is significant evidence that minority faculty do not receive their proportionate share of sponsorship from majority senior faculty (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015). Due to the operation of a 'buddy system' composed of majority power-holders, pre-tenure faculty from the same majority group find inviting avenues leading them to publications and professional development, while minority faculty often struggle. Lack of mentorship adds to the increasing feeling of isolation. Underrepresented minority faculty face a lack of affective and instrumental support from their senior faculty, which results in receiving "fewer opportunities to collaborate with tenured faculty" (Zambrana, Espino, Castro, Cohen, & Eliason, 2015. p 62).

Many of the barriers faced by faculty of color are indirect and not readily visible to outsiders. Williams and Kirk (2008) indicate that "subtle discrimination manifests as isolation, a lack of quality mentoring and collegiality, as well as limited socialization once women and faculty of color enter the professoriate" (p. 24). Underrepresented faculty are inclined to face an unreceptive campus environment with less mentorship opportunities available for them (Ndandala, 2016) and a less-welcoming reception by colleagues (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). In addition, a double standard exists such that faculty of color experience more emphasis on the expectation for mentoring, advising, and committee work, which minimizes their ability to conduct and publish research and subsequently move up in the ranks of academia (Bass & Faircloth, 2011). Faculty of color also encounter pre-judgments based on race and not on merit, which leads to job dissatisfaction and the necessity to prove their worth (Bass & Faircloth, 2011). Faculty of color often struggle against the presumption that they are incompetent in majority academic settings, whereas majority faculty, especially male, enjoy the blandishment of competence:

> According to studies in a number of fields, women faculty of color are disproportionately challenged about their credentials, questioned about their teaching qualifications, and scrutinized about their scholarship by colleagues and students alike, for reasons that faculty of

> color believe are related to their racial/ethnic group membership. (Mkandawire-Valhmu, Kako & Stevens, 2010, p. 137)

Such challenging academic climates push faculty of color to constantly prove themselves worthy for their positions. The majority senior faculty "[project] unconscious perceptions of underrepresented minority faculty as inherently inferior or unable to fit within values and ideals of the academy (Zambrana et al. 2015)." Faculty of color have experienced longer processes and undergone unfair screening when they apply for tenure track or other faculty positions (Ndandala, 2016; Oliver, McCrink, McDonough, & Rice, 2010). Similarly, they have also experienced a de-valuing of academic work centered on minority issues (Marbley, Rouson, Li, Huang, & Taylor, 2015). These additional stresses detract from the focus on their careers and can lead to a defeatist perspective, which undermines the desire and willingness to pursue leadership roles.

In a *New York Times* article titled "The Faces of American Power, Nearly as White as the Oscar Nominees," Park, Keller, and Williams (2016) provided startling figures regarding 503 of the most powerful people in American culture, government, education and business. They found that just 44 are from diverse racial or ethnic populations. Only 8 out of 102 of the top profiting companies in the United States are led by a member of a diverse racial or ethnic population. No presidents of any Ivy League institution represent a diverse racial or ethnic population. Only 6 out of 100 current U.S. Senators are people of color. Only 5 of the mayors of the 20 most populous cities are members of a diverse racial or ethnic population. Only 2 of the 8 U.S. Supreme Court Justices are persons of color. Only 4 of the 50 governors within the United States are members of a diverse racial or ethnic population.

It is unclear whether the lack of representation of people of color in academic leadership positions is singularly due to racism. An additional reason for a lack of representation in these positions could be that faculty of color may lack models that look like themselves that they can aspire to. Given that most academics go into their fields to advance in the professoriate, faculty of color may perceive going into leadership positions as a detour or distraction to their work as faculty and therefore may have low levels of motivation. Further, in educational institutions, most employees do not have significant formal leadership experiences, are not professionally trained as leaders, and may not recognize the value of being a leader, which consequently lower leadership self-efficacy (i.e., self-beliefs about leadership abilities) and motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). This phenomenon may be more evident among faculty of color who receive less mentoring and build weaker and smaller social networks as discussed above.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS

The barriers uncovered through this literature review suggest that organizational support and practices for building mentoring, social networks, and leadership self-efficacy would enhance the motivation of faculty of color to lead. Further, developing a diversity climate, defined as shared perceptions among employees in an organization that employees are treated fairly and are integrated into work environment regardless of background, could lessen these barriers for faculty of color. Positive diversity climates may further reduce social comparison and the salience of intergroup differences based on race or ethnicity (Chung et al., 2015). Thus, in an educational organization with a positive diversity climate, faculty of color may gain more interest in leadership positions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the last ten years, various higher education scholars have begun to theorize and critique the role of racism in higher education. Prior to the recent work of Patton (2016) much of the theoretical analysis related to racism and White supremacy was borrowed from the fields of law (Bell, 2004) and K-12 education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Patton (2016) extended the work from previous scholars in

this area by establishing a Critical Race Theory in Higher Education (CRT-HE). Three propositions serve as the foundation for this theoretical framework:

> Proposition 1: The establishment of U.S. higher education is deeply rooted in racism/White supremacy, the vestiges of which remain palatable.

> Proposition 2: The functioning of U.S. higher education is intricately linked to the imperialistic and capitalistic efforts that fuel the intersections of race, property, and oppression.

> Proposition 3: U.S. higher education institutions serve as venues through which formal knowledge production rooted in racism/White supremacy is generated. (p. 317)

Any study related to racial and ethnic disparities in higher education must grapple with the role of racism/White supremacy that has been ingrained in the American higher education system since its founding. This project will utilize CRT-HE as a theoretical framework for this study as issues of race and racism are difficult to separate from any discussion of leadership diversity in American higher education. This has borne out in recent major events that have caught the attention of the collective consciousness of America such as the student protests at the University of Missouri. Timothy Wolfe, the former chancellor of the University of Missouri system and former IBM executive was highly criticized for his handling of racial incidents on campus. His lack of understanding of shared governance and cultural sensitivity were widely seen as reasons for his ultimate resignation (McKenna, 2015). The lack of diverse leadership within senior levels of higher education is a cause for concern as student populations continue to become more diverse—by 2025, students of color will outnumber White students in postsecondary education (Braverman, White, & Disilvestro, 2013).

Our framework is further aided by the work of Wolfe and Dilworth (2015) who used CRT-HE to analyze literature on African-American representation in higher education leadership. They categorized the barriers to leadership experienced by people of color as social, institutional, and internal. Social barriers refer to deeply rooted forms of oppression such as stereotypes surrounding the service and intellect of people of color. Institutional or organizational barriers include lack of access to professional networks, mentors, and settings where cultural diversity is recognized. Internal barriers—perhaps most challenging of all—refer to "accepting and assimilating negative perceptions regarding one's abilities and worth as received from the dominant culture" (p. 687).

Wolfe and Dilworth (2015) discuss the importance of pursuing a diversity climate through emphasizing cultural pluralism and multiculturalism rather than cultural competition. This project will be adopting a similar approach. Rather than asking, "Why are members of racial and ethnic groups not able to assume leadership positions within higher education?" We will inquire in what ways perceptions on race and ethnicity are embedded in how potential leaders in higher education are viewed and evaluated for their positions.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a phenomenological qualitative case study approach (Worthington, 2013). To understand the barriers to people of color in obtaining leadership position, we interviewed tenured faculty of color at public, land-grant institutions in the United States. The authors of this study utilized a purposeful sampling approach (Palinkas et al., 2015). Faculty were selected based on a search of faculty profiles at land-grant institutions throughout the United States who met the criteria of being an associate or full professor, had earned tenure, and self-identified from a racially or ethnically diverse background. Approximately one hundred faculty were contacted by email for participation, and the research team conducted semi-structured interviews with nineteen tenured faculty members across fourteen states and campuses. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each over the phone or via video conference technology. We asked participants about the barriers they perceived for faculty of color in advancing to leadership positions and strategies at the individual and institutional level for addressing those barriers. We specifically probed about the aspects of their career ex-

periences and trajectories that contributed to their levels of motivation to serve in leadership positions and asked them to identify the factors that attract them to leadership positions. Anonymity for all participants in the reporting phase was ensured through limiting the identifying information and assigning pseudonyms for each participant (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Summary of Study Participants

	Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Region
1	Anne Walker	F	Indian	Arizona
2	Paul Neon	M	African American	North Dakota
3	Lila Kim	F	Korean	North Carolina
4	Joanna Parker	F	African American	South Dakota
5	Eduardo Cooper	M	African American	Rhode Island
6	Liana Rudolf	F	African American	Tennessee
7	Laura Johnson	F	African American	Colorado
8	Dianna Frank	F	African	Tennessee
9	John Elder	M	African	Virginia
10	Lisa Mason	F	African American	Tennessee
11	Vincent Jacob	M	African	Oregon
12	Thomas Janson	M	African American	Texas
13	Jack Baldwin	M	African American	Rhode Island
14	Leah Layton	F	African American	Rhode Island
15	Susan Winston	F	Latina American	Wyoming
16	Ellen McWilliams	F	Caucasian-Korean	Oklahoma
17	Kayla Janson	F	African American	Ohio
18	Raina Williams	F	African American	Virginia
19	Jason Dawn	M	African American	Pennsylvania

ANALYSIS PROCESS

Analysis of the data relied on an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) method to extract meaning from participants' personal and social world (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The personal and social world of the participants that the authors studied in this article was the US academic environment. The codes and themes from this study derived from comparing the research questions, review of literature, and CRT-HE with the collected interview data. This allowed the authors to categorize the findings into two main themes which were, barriers to becoming an academic administrator and strategies to overcome those barriers. The codes that derived from the analysis were: diversity in leadership, leaders of color, mentorship, motivation, and modes of preparation for higher education leadership.

To address the issues of validity and reliability we engaged in member checking by giving participants' the opportunity to review transcripts for accurate recording and interpretation of their stories as part of the research design (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2013; Schensul, 2011). The results of this study are not generalizable as they are qualitative data but provide valuable insights that transfer across academe. The limited sample size forces the restriction of the application of results to a limited population of faculty of color serving in US higher education institutions; however, they may be insightful more broadly.

FINDINGS

The central questions for this study were: What are the organizational and individual barriers to people of color achieving senior leadership positions within colleges and universities? What are strategies to address the underrepresentation of faculty of color in the positions? From the analysis of the interview data, we identified two main overarching themes: implications of low representation of faculty of color in academic leadership positions, and strategies for overcoming potential barriers for faculty of color seeking academic leadership positions.

IMPLICATIONS OF LOW REPRESENTATION OF FACULTY OF COLOR IN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The first theme identified in this study was the low representation of faculty of color in academic leadership positions. This finding reflects a deep concern by faculty of color of racial and ethnic disparities within their higher education institutions. Dianna captured the general feelings of the participants by stating that "people need to be represented, and they need to be recognized." Other participants such as John explained that "management of any organization should reflect the composition of the entire organization. It should mirror the demographics of the organization."

The participants felt that the lack of representation has many negative implications for faculty of color and their institutions. Low racial and ethnic representation in middle to senior academic positions leads to feelings of isolation. Joanna stated that the "lack of representation of the [diverse] faculty body makes me feel isolated," while Paul reported he often felt "culturally disconnected" and had difficult establishing meaningful and comfortable relationships. Feelings of isolation can lead faculty members to perceive being excluded from decision-making processes. Paul stated that a "cultural disconnect exists between minority and majority in decision making." Leah expressed that isolation, coupled with "more teaching responsibilities," creates an environment where she could not think about other professional opportunities to advance herself. Similarly, Eduardo explained that isolation leads to less involvement with research projects and did not make him feel valued by his department and institution.

Due to the challenges associated with low representation, many faculty of color have difficulty developing a self-concept that they can be leaders. Joanna stated, "[faculty of color] do not see the possibility of being a leader." Lila agreed with this statement and explained that there is a need to create opportunities for "diverse groups of people to participate in leadership [positions]… and receive a fair chance." Some participants also felt that faculty of color have a higher standard to meet for eligibility for leadership positions. Anne stated

> [Minorities have to] work harder for people to see you more as an individual of diversity or gender. The initial threshold that you must cross [is more difficult]. Once you have proven your worth, it becomes easier after that. The initial hurdle is the challenge. More of building that trust, to develop that trust, it takes longer for women and minorities.

It was clear that many participants felt their opportunities for holding a middle to senior administrative leadership position at their institution were hindered by what the participants referred to as White male privilege. Even though the participants seemed optimistic that progress was being made, their concerns were voiced clearly. Jason commented:

> White men are seen as the authority figures that brings legitimacy to classrooms or campuses. The vast majority of higher leadership roles are held by White males, and search committees are going to reflect it. White males will protect each other's interests and maintain the status quo… the administration needs to be diverse to help enhance the experiences [of students and decision-making process].

Participants also discussed many perceived benefits of increased representation in leadership. Ellen explained that having "more representation…opens up doors for opportunities" for others. It was felt that representation has benefits for every level of higher education. For example, empowering faculty of color to take middle level leadership positions enables them to enact change within the institution and further strengthens the pipeline for senior leadership positions. Raina explained that it is important to have "[various] levels of representation, perspectives [and] interactions that value the need for diversity." Liana commented, "Having diverse faculty means more experiences, and different points of views, and it enriches the intellectual and social life of the institution. Diverse students and diverse thoughts. It encourages diverse student recruitment."

Throughout the interviews, many participants stated they felt uneasy with the current climate at their institutions for pursuing leadership opportunities. However, they felt the opportunity to discuss the issue allowed them the liberty to openly express concerns not previously vocalized.

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING POTENTIAL BARRIERS FOR FACULTY OF COLOR SEEKING ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The second finding was the important role that academic leaders in higher education play in empowering and promoting faculty of color and various strategies for overcoming barriers. The literature identified faculty selection, organizational support, and practices of building mentoring, social networks, and leadership self-efficacy as effective strategies for enhancing the motivation of faculty of color to lead (Chung et al., 2015). Participants touched on each of these themes in their responses.

First, regarding the selection of faculty and leaders, Anne explained the importance of diversity in leadership. "The leadership must reflect the people that they are leading. Diversity is an institutional value. It brings many different ideas and perspectives to education. Diverse leadership enables and encourages the diversity in higher education." A term heard repeatedly throughout the interviews was *pipeline*. Anne commented that to achieve a diverse leadership, institutions needed to have "a robust pipeline… encouraging diverse people to apply for those positions… [and] blinding the selection committee." Kayla stated the importance of "diversity training and forming a committee that is diverse… Institutions need to focus on the pipeline." Liana also shared that when "[the] pipeline is thin, not many people from faculty positions move into administration."

Once new faculty come on board in their positions, the role of organizational support, mentorship, and support networks is critical. Ellen offered these recommendations for academic leaders:

> Be intentional about mentoring people from diverse groups… Search for different groups, let the diverse organizations know you have available opportunities. Current leaders need to be acceptable to [mentoring] diverse groups. Connect with other diverse colleagues to help to overcome challenges.

Similarly, Eduardo suggested institutions be intentional about empowering faculty of color early in their career. He recommended assigning a mentor to new faculty beginning at onboarding to monitor progress toward earning tenure and supporting their research interests through seed grants. Kayla also remarked on intentionality through exposure, stating, "If the university really wants to create a diverse administrative body, they should be explicit and purposeful. Programs should be implemented for minority faculty to be introduced to university administrative opportunities." Their responses suggest the need for supportive strategies at each stage of a faculty career.

Regarding the barrier of leadership self-efficacy, various strategies were shared for building up the belief of faculty of color that leadership positions are within their reach. Anne encouraged individual faculty to be assertive in their rights and positioning within the organization: "Refuse to accept anything that the majority could not accept… Speak up… You need to be recognized… Do not hang out with your own group, you need to assimilate into the culture." Kayla added the importance of "having my voice be heard" to overcome the "perception that I may not be as qualified… for the role." The participants felt that if institutions ensure faculty of color are informed about leadership opportunities and provide them with opportunities to engage with leaders in those roles, individual faculty of color would have greater confidence in aspiring to those positions and representation would improve.

Finally, several participants commented on the importance of fostering a diversity climate at the institutional level which transcended formal processes. While implementing diversity through policies and plans is important, discussions of representation and diversity should not be limited to institutional strategic planning contexts. Rather participants felt these topics ought to be expanded to settings throughout higher education and the workplace. Laura stated,

> Leadership [must be] serious about making a change to get a diverse climate that appreciates diversity. You have to have commitment from the top management level. Building the relationships and engaging in the community to not feel isolation… Hold the university accountable.

As Lisa stated, "When you have diversity [in administration], they can look at the phenomenon in a different way, present to the student body with different views, learning will be enhanced." Anne echoed by stating, "[representation] brings many different ideas and perspectives to education."

DISCUSSION

This research on faculty of color at U.S. land-grant institutions highlights the ongoing need for diversification of leadership at higher education institutions. The participants in our study largely supported Patton's (2016) analysis in CRT-HE that elements of racism remain rooted in the higher education enterprise and still affect the lived experiences of faculty and leaders of color. Our findings affirm the various implicit and explicit barriers which have led faculty of color to feel more isolated, disconnected from decision-making, self-doubting, and less motivated to pursue leadership positions within the academy. These responses are consistent with the literature review and represent the social, institutional, and internal barriers faced by people of color discussed by Wolfe and Dilworth (2015). Perceptions regarding White privilege were also prevalent, leading participants to believe people of color are disadvantaged from consideration for leadership positions. Similarly, our findings validate many of the strategies currently in use for overcoming these barriers such as early-career mentoring, social and organizational support, and development of leadership self-efficacy.

To construct a more diverse and equitable environment for all, our findings suggest higher education leaders and practitioners should evaluate both the formal institutional policies and the informal aspects of a diversity climate that might negatively impact people of color at their institutions. For example, when few minorities are in leadership or administrative positions, current and future generations of faculty of color find it very difficult to see themselves as capable of achieving those positions. And with little to no incorporation of non-White cultures and perspectives in work and learning environments, minoritized individuals can feel isolated from colleagues and seniors who do not share similar interests or experiences. According to CRT-HE, this manifests in the work products of faculty of color often being "marginalized, footnoted, or unacknowledged" (Patton, 2016, p. 323). Academic leaders and decision-makers can address these challenges through purposeful and proactive measures to hire, promote, train, and mentor members of underrepresented groups. In addition, at the individual level, underrepresented persons can take action to speak up when discrimination occurs and stand up when promotional opportunities through mentorships, scholarships, networking,

and collaborations arise. Progress on this issue requires a degree of intentionality both at the individual and institutional level.

Among the aspects of a diversity climate most difficult to address are the implicit biases such as the expectations placed on faculty of color. Many participants spoke on the challenging expectations which they feel do not extend to their White colleagues. For example, some spoke of the implicit expectation that faculty of color accept additional responsibilities for committee work, hiring panels, and other forms of representation on campus where minorities are needed. This resulted in additional work and less time to pursue the professional activities needed for career advancement. Another example is what has been termed the *chilly climate* that segregates diverse members primarily from those in power (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). This has also been described as an "atmosphere of disinvite" by Patton (2016, p. 325). This climate results in an environment where the presence of faculty of color is tolerated but not embraced, and concerns remain unarticulated. As Anne stated, "it takes longer for women and minorities" to develop this trust in an environment of underrepresentation.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to achieving greater diversity of leadership is, as Joanna stated, "[faculty of color] do not see the possibility of being a leader." This matches the internal dimension of barriers identified by Wolfe and Dilworth (2015). Without many examples of leaders of color, and without guidance from experienced mentors who share many of the same attributes, it is difficult for marginalized individuals to believe they can achieve these positions. However, one of the more promising findings of our interviews is that faculty of color believe they can improve their leadership self-efficacy through mentoring, shared information, and more positive examples of representation in leadership. Similarly, having representation at various levels of the organization, even at the mid-level, can increase confidence for pursuing higher goals. In other words, greater representation triggers a virtuous cycle of self-efficacy.

As the diversity of higher education student bodies and the U.S. population increases, there is a great need for research to continue into the diversification of leadership in higher education and for voices of practitioners to contribute to this issue. We suggest additional research is needed on understanding barriers to diversification, potential solutions, and the role of leadership development in preparing faculty of color for leadership in higher education. While this research has provided first-hand qualitative perspectives, additional quantitative study is necessary to understand where significant differences in underrepresentation exist by race and ethnicity. Findings of this study can be extended to exploring how faculty of color have ascended to specific leadership roles within the academy such as department chair, academic dean, provost, and president. Further research is also needed on the compound effects of race and gender due to the historic underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. The study also validates the need to look at both the implicit and explicit enforcement of policies regarding diversity in the workplace to address subtle dimensions racism and bias which were highlighted in Patton's (2016) work on CRT-HE.

CONCLUSION

While it is true that statistics on diversity in leadership have improved within higher education institutions in recent years, many challenges in representation and equity persist across the United States. As a result, current management in the academy does not represent the diversity of its students and the population at large, and there is significant lack of knowledge at the leadership level concerning the needs of underrepresented populations. In addition, for those who do not fit the traditional perception of predominately White faculty and administration, the challenge of attaining promotion and tenure remains complex. Improving America's higher education system requires examination of the enduring connections between race and higher education which have prevented full racial and ethnic representation in the academy (Patton, 2016).

This research study was conducted to understand the problem of underrepresentation of people of color in leadership of higher education institutions in the United States. Other than claims about racism, there has been only limited rationality for such underrepresentation. The results of our research highlight a number of barriers still at work against faculty in color in higher education, including social barriers such as lack of mentoring and support networks, institutional barriers like hiring processes and work requirements, and internal barriers such as the diminished outlook of faculty of color on leadership. Various strategies were discussed at the institutional and individual level which, if applied, can lessen these barriers and create more equitable outcomes. The goal of finding and creating ways for diverse members to break through these barriers is certainly reachable at U.S. land-grant universities. Yet, it will require continual effort from practitioners and scholars to enact change for an increasingly diverse population.

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